New Hope Academy Charter School

School Evaluation Report
2010-11

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the "State University Trustees"), jointly with the New York State Board of Regents, are required by law to provide oversight sufficient to ensure that each charter school that the SUNY Trustees have authorized is in compliance with applicable law and the terms of its charter. The SUNY Trustees, however, consistent with the goals of the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998, view their oversight responsibility more broadly and positively than purely monitoring compliance. Accordingly, they have adopted policies that require the Charter Schools Institute ("the Institute") to provide ongoing evaluation of charter schools authorized by them. By providing this oversight and feedback, the State University Trustees and the Institute seek to accomplish three goals:

- **Document Performance**. The Institute collects information to build a database of a school's performance over time. By evaluating the school periodically, the Institute can more clearly ascertain trends, determine areas of strength and weakness, and assess the school's likelihood for continued success or failure. Having information based on past patterns, the Institute is in a better position to make recommendations regarding the renewal of each school's charter, and the State University Trustees are better informed in making a decision on whether a school's charter should be renewed. In addition, a school will have a far better sense of where they stand in the eyes of its authorizer.

- **Facilitate Improvement**. By providing substantive information about the school's academic, fiscal and organizational strengths and weaknesses to the school's board of trustees, administration, faculty and other staff, the Institute can play a role in helping the school identify areas for improvement.

- **Disseminate Information**. The Institute disseminates information about the school's performance not only to its board of trustees, administration and faculty, but to all stakeholders, including parents and the larger community in which the school is located.

This annual School Evaluation Report includes three primary components. The Executive Summary of School Evaluation Visit provides an overview of the primary conclusions of the evaluation team regarding the current visit to the school, summarizing areas of strength and areas for growth. A summary of conclusions from previous school evaluations is also provided, as background and context for the current evaluation. The second section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as summary historical information regarding the life of the school. Finally, in a third section entitled School Evaluation Visit, this report presents the analysis of evidence collected during an evaluation visit conducted in the current school year, with an italicized paragraph that introduces each specific benchmark and provides a summarizing conclusion.

Because of the inherent complexity of an organization such as a school, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would indicate at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement with respect to the school's performance as compared to the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks. To the extent appropriate and useful, we encourage school boards to use this evaluation report in ongoing planning and school improvement efforts.

Background

Institute evaluations of SUNY authorized charter schools are organized into a set of benchmarks that address the academic success of the school, including teaching and learning (e.g., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school as an organization, including such items as governance and management. Entitled the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks, these established criteria are used on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

While the primary focus of the visit is an evaluation of the school's academic program and organizational capacity, issues regarding compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations may be noted (and subsequently addressed); where the Institute finds serious deficiencies in particular relating to student health and safety, it may take additional and immediate action. However, monitoring for compliance is not the principal purpose of the visit.

This is an analysis of the observations and conclusions from this year's evaluation, along with supporting evidence. Some benchmarks are covered in greater detail than others in an effort to highlight areas of concern at the school and provide additional feedback in these areas. Finally, information regarding the conduct of the evaluation, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, is provided.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

The Charter Schools Institute conducted a school evaluation visit to New Hope Academy Charter School ("New Hope Academy") on March 24, 2011. While New Hope Academy is in its first year of operation, the Institute holds all schools accountable for the Renewal Benchmarks with consideration given to its point in the charter period. A school in its first year is expected to have begun to build systems and procedures that would provide a platform for delivering effective instruction to improve student learning and achievement. Based on the analysis of evidence from this evaluation visit, New Hope Academy has made limited progress toward establishing the systems and procedures in its educational program. They are not sufficient to put the school on a trajectory toward meeting the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) when the school is scheduled for renewal. This conclusion is drawn from a variety of indicators which are discussed more fully later in this report; some of the more salient indicators include the following.

Academic Success

> Areas of Strength
> - New Hope Academy has a system to administer assessments and procedures to collect assessment results.
> - The school has a defined process for the delivery of educational services to students with special needs.

> Areas for Growth
> - The school does not yet have a systematic, school-wide approach to analyzing data and using it to improve student learning.
> - The school has not developed a process to determine alignment of its commercial curriculum programs with state standards and whether the curriculum assists students in meeting state performance standards.
> - With rare exception, quality instruction is not evident at New Hope Academy. Teachers do not maximize learning time.

Organizational Capacity

> Areas of Strength
> - The school is developing an operational structure.
> - The school maintains adequate enrollment.

> Areas for Growth
> - New Hope Academy does not yet have systems to carry out its academic program.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 15, 2009
Operation of Law	February 16, 2010
School Opening Date	September 2010

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2010 - Present	475 East 57th Street, 3rd floor Brooklyn, NY 11203	K - 2	CSD18

Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Current Partner	Victory Schools, Inc.	Education Management Organization	2010- Present

Current Mission Statement

> The mission of New Hope Academy Charter School (NHACS) is to provide a safe, structured and quality learning community where our students' creativity and potential will flourish. We will enhance the learning experience of our students by integrating Science & Technology into core subject areas, the arts, and various enrichment programs. Our school's culture will treat every child as "gifted."

Current Key Design Elements

- Interdisciplinary projects or reports (individual or classroom based) that highlight the concepts learned in science or technology will be required;
- Annual year-end science and technology fairs to showcase student work;
- Victory Schools, SUNY Downstate Medical Center and Medgar Evars College support teachers on a continuous basis to ensure that the curriculum appropriately infuses technology in lesson plans; and
- Enrichment activities infused into coursework at all levels through teacher created activities, inquiry-based learning, and web-based activities. Specific programs will include: character and leadership development, a mentoring program which will allow older students to mentor younger students in the school, and a debate program that will underscore the importance of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment[1]	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2010-11	168	172	K-2	K-2	185

Current Board of Trustees[2]

Board Member Name	Term Expires	Position/Committees
Pastor Orlando Findlayter	2015	Chair
Judith Rapley	2015	Vice Chair
Xiomara Flowers	2015	Secretary
Dr. Judith Stewart	2015	Education Chair
Pastor Hugh Hall	2015	
Rowan Creary	2015	Finance Chair
Raymond L. Thomas	2015	Grievance Chair
Cetra Wilkins	2015	Parent Organization President

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2010- Present	Kellie McLaurin, Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2010-2011	First Year	Institute	March 24, 2011

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[1] Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)
[2] Source: School renewal application and Institute board information.

<u>**SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT**</u>

<u>**Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence**</u>

Use of Assessment Data (Benchmark 1.B)

New Hope Academy administers multiple assessments and has procedures to collect assessment results. However, the school does not have a systematic, school-wide process to analyze assessment results or use assessment data to improve student learning.

Teachers report they administer the DIBELS literacy assessment three times throughout the academic year, and they regularly administer end-of-unit assessments which are purportedly aligned with the school's purchased math and English language arts curricula. New Hope Academy's principal gathers and catalogues student work samples from projects, daily lessons and end-of-unit assessments. The principal reports that she creates student assessment portfolios as a record of student and classroom academic performance. However, teachers report there is no school-wide process for using student assessment portfolios or the literacy assessments to improve their instruction.

Teachers analyze student assessment results independently and also decide independently if lesson content requires re-teaching. Teachers also report that they use the literacy assessment results to assign students to specific reading groups. The principal provides teachers with a school-wide, data dashboard, entitled the "At-a-Glance Spreadsheet". The spreadsheet lists student performance, by classroom, on the DIBELS assessments and end-of-unit curriculum assessments. However, teachers report that, other than reviewing the assessment data, there is no school-wide procedure for using the data dashboard to focus teacher instruction on specific student needs. For example, the DIBELS results are used by classroom teachers to determine individual reading levels, create small reading groups and provide appropriate reading materials to students. The data is not used as a basis for planning or improving lessons.

Curriculum (Benchmark 1.C)

New Hope Academy's purchased English language arts, mathematics and social studies curricula are clearly defined. However, the school has not determined if purchased curriculum programs are aligned with state standards. The school does not have a process for reviewing, revising or aligning the curriculum.

The school relies on purchased mathematics, English language arts and social studies materials for its curriculum framework and lesson planning guidance. However, teachers have not determined if the school's ELA, math, social studies or science material are aligned with state standards or if the curriculum programs assist students in meeting state standards. Teachers report collaborating within grade-level teams to develop lesson plans; yet, they do not meet in content areas to plan or vertically align the curriculum between grade levels. Teachers use their purchased materials and planning guides to develop weekly lesson plans, and they independently collaborate with external consultant-coaches to revise these plans. However, there is no school-wide process to coordinate the curriculum revising process. As a result the school does not have coherent curriculum within or between grade levels. Although the school intends to add a third grade next academic year, teachers have not

developed a process to articulate the current second grade curriculum with the proposed third grade curriculum.

Pedagogy (Benchmark 1.D)

Quality instruction is not evident at New Hope Academy, and teachers do not maximize learning time. The school has a common lesson plan format. Despite this, teachers do not implement effective lessons.

Students generally are not engaged with lessons, and the school's instructional materials are not challenging for the majority of students. For example, students finish reading assignments quickly and are not challenged with additional instruction or more rigorous reading material. Although the school emphasizes it is a science and technology school, technology is not used to increase classroom rigor. Within some classrooms technology use is absent. In many classrooms the SMART-Boards are often used as a projector, whereby students copy notes from projected worksheets.

Teachers do not maximize learning time, and lesson pacing is not effectively monitored. Some teachers end their lessons prior to the end of a scheduled period while other teachers do not efficiently pace their lessons and run out of time. Inefficient lesson pacing leads to a cumulative loss of instructional time. There is low-level misbehavior when students do not have an academic task to accomplish. Teachers use an inordinate amount of instructional time to quiet disruptive behavior resulting in a failure to meet lesson objectives.

The school has a common lesson plan template, and although lesson plans are emailed to the school's principal, teachers report they do not receive written feedback on lessons. Weekly lesson plans often repeat activities for each day of the week. For example, "work in small groups" is repeated for each day within a sample weekly lesson plan. However, the phrase does not indicate what type of instruction occurs in these small groups. Lesson plan objectives are not posted in classrooms, and when teachers state lesson objectives to their students, the lesson objectives are not clarified. Additionally, many implemented lessons do not follow written lesson plans.

Instructional Leadership (Benchmark 1.E)

New Hope Academy's complex leadership structure inhibits clear communication of high expectations for teacher performance and student achievement. Teachers are observed and evaluated; however, they are not held accountable for delivering quality instruction.

New Hope Academy's complicated instructional leadership structure prevents clear communication between school leadership and teaching staff. The school has external consultant-coaches for each teacher. Teachers report that the consultant-coaches do not provide feedback on instructional effectiveness, but provide stock lesson planning and lesson delivery guidance. The multitude of coaches, as well as professional development consultants, hinders the coherence of school-wide instructional practices.

Classroom teachers meet regularly with the school's principal and with the school's contracted consultant-coaches once per week. The principal reports formally observing teachers three times throughout the current academic year, yet these teacher observations are not documented. Teachers also report that the principal "pops-in" and observes classroom regularly; however, written feedback

from these observations is not provided. At the time of the visit, teachers did not have written feedback on how to improve instruction or strategies to improve student learning.

At-Risk Students (Benchmark 1.F)

The school has a written process to identify and serve academically struggling students; however, not all teachers understand or implement process strategies effectively. The school does support the needs of special education students by providing a special education coordinator who oversees their individualized education programs.

Teachers report that there is a written intervention process, whereby they are supposed to provide an initial level of academic support for academically struggling students. The second intervention tier involves assistance from the school's special education teacher, and third intervention tier may require referral for special education services.   Within the school's written procedures, teachers refer academically struggling students to the school's pupil personnel committee which selects students for academic interventions. Though the school has a written process, teachers are unaware of how students are selected, how progress is monitored during intervention tiers or how students exit the intervention process. Teachers also report there are no criteria for evaluating students during the initial classroom intervention tier.

The school has a defined process for the identification, monitoring and delivery of educational services to students with special needs. The school supports the needs of special education students by employing a special education coordinator who monitors and provides service to these students, as well as to Title 1 students. The school also supports the needs of special education students by providing ongoing special needs professional development for classroom teachers.

Student Order and Discipline (Benchmark 1.G)

New Hope Academy does not have a school-wide behavior management system.   As a result, classroom behavior management is largely ineffective.

New Hope Academy does not have a consistent, school-wide behavior management system.   Low-level misbehavior is generally evident and tolerated throughout the school. Teachers create their own behavior management procedures to suppress some misbehavior; however, these behavior management techniques differ in each classroom. Some teachers log student misbehavior on charts, while other teachers use their teaching assistants to take students aside and discipline individually without recording behavioral infractions.   The inconsistent application of behavior management procedures allows some students to disrupt instruction.

Professional Development (Benchmark 1.H)

New Hope Academy has a multitude of professional development providers within the school who compromise the school's professional development program.

The school's principal reports that the school's professional development program combines teacher created and led professional development sessions, external consultant developed professional development sessions and external consultant coaching sessions. The external consultants supply one half-day per month of professional development activities in addition to their weekly teacher coaching duties. The external professional development consultants, in conjunction with the school's

principal, create the half-day, school-wide sessions. The principal reports the professional development topics for these half-days are based on a set of pre-determined, school-wide teacher needs. However, teachers report that the topics are selected on an on-going basis by the teaching staff rather than a school-wide needs-assessment.

The school's professional development program relies on a multitude of external personnel who do not provide coordinated, consistent training to the school's teaching staff; the program does not adequately support the large novice teaching staff.   There is no evidence that the external consultants develop long-term professional development goals, hold teachers accountable for professional development learning outcomes or address specific school needs, such as classroom management. Teachers also report that the combination of the school's professional development sessions and time spent with coaches consumes significant planning time, which would otherwise be spent collaboratively planning lessons.

Mission & Key Design Elements (Benchmark 2.A)

New Hope Academy implements some key design elements within its charter.

The school implements a science curriculum within kindergarten and first grade.   The school promotes a scientific setting by having students wear lab coats and goggles, and having students address one another as scientists. For example, kindergarten students address each other as "Dr." The school's principal reports that the donning of lab coats is a transformative process for students and that students behave differently once in their scientific garb.   In addition to wearing lab coats, teachers introduce their students to the scientific inquiry processes. For example, within science classes, teachers ask students to develop hypotheses and ask students how they test their hypotheses.

Organizational Capacity (Benchmark 2.C)

New Hope Academy does not yet have systems to carry out its academic program; the school is developing an operational structure. The school maintains adequate enrollment.

The principal reports she is developing grade level lead teachers who will support and mentor teachers who are new to the profession. The principal also cites the recent hiring of an on-site business manager to support the school's financial system as indicative of her capacity building initiative. The lead teachers and new business manager's effectiveness are yet to be determined. The principal reports she has the flexibility to recruit and hire new staff and that the board acts in an advisory capacity for her hiring strategies. The school has maintained adequate enrollment with a high daily attendance rate.

Governance (Benchmark 2.D-E)

New Hope Academy's school board provides oversight to the total educational program.

The board has eight members who possess diverse experiences. Two board members are experienced educators, both in teaching and school administration. Other members are financial professionals and community leaders who actively engage in community outreach. The board composition and board committees provide adequate oversight for the school.

Board members report that the school's principal updates the board weekly, via email, regarding all school matters. The school's management company also produces a quarterly report to the board. At the time of the Institute's visit, the board was in the process of completing the principal's evaluation. The board gathers evaluation data from three sources: the school's education management organization (EMO)*, an independent consultant and board members themselves. Board members report the principal knows and understands the process, and the principal affirms her understanding of the evaluation process.

The board chair reports that the school contracts with a management company for the school's financial and academic programs. The EMO provides academic program professional development, teacher consultant-coaches and principal-leadership coaching.

Conduct of the Visit

The Charter Schools Institute conducted the school evaluation visit at New Hope Academy Charter School on March 24, 2011. Listed below are the names and backgrounds of the individuals who conducted the visit:

Team Leader: Dr. Paul Wright was recently appointed Director of School Evaluation at the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Dr. Wright will be responsible for the Institute's extensive school evaluation program, overseeing and in many cases leading school evaluation visits by Institute staff as well as coordinating the independent evaluations done on the Institute's behalf. Dr. Wright will lead ongoing efforts to refine the Institute's nationally regarded evaluation protocols and reporting tools; including oversight of the production of the Institute's school evaluation reports which provide valuable information to schools and the public about school progress. He will also coordinate internal staff training on school evaluation. Prior to joining the Institute, Dr. Wright directed Quality Education Partnership, Inc., a national consulting network that conducted evaluations of traditional and charter schools and created strategic management plans for school improvement. The former Development Director for School Design and Strategic Planning of Mesa Public Schools in Arizona, Dr. Wright developed unique schools of choice serving a wide spectrum of learners in coordination with Mesa Public Schools. Dr. Wright also served as Vice President for Student Services at the Leona Group, an Educational Management Organization providing educational services to students throughout Arizona. Dr. Wright received his Ed. D. and his M. Ed. from Arizona State University and his B.A. in Psychology from the State University of New York at Albany.

Institute Team Member: **Ron Miller, Ph.D** is the Vice President for Accountability at the Charter Schools Institute. After teaching for seven years in New York City public schools, Dr. Miller joined the central offices of the New York City Department of Education, where he conducted evaluative research and organizational studies. As Director of the Office of School Planning and Accountability, he served as the educational accountability officer for the Department. In that capacity, he developed school accountability reports for the city schools and coordinated staff development on their use for district administrators in all the high school and community school districts. In addition, he worked with school leaders to develop their competence to use data for school improvement. In this role he developed PASS, a school performance review system which was adopted in 600 city schools. Dr. Miller has regularly presented papers at annual meetings of the American Educational Research Association and has served as Adjunct Assistant Professor at

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* New Hope Academy's EMO is Victory Education Partners

Teachers College Columbia University and Pace University. He holds a BA degree from the University of California at Berkeley and a Ph.D. in Applied Anthropology from Columbia University

Institute Team Member: Jenn David-Lang has worked in the field of education for 20 years. She has had a wide range of experiences in both teaching and administration. She founded and directed Providence Summerbridge, a nonprofit to raise the academic achievement of urban middle school students. She has taught math, English, and Humanities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. For several years she worked at the New York Charter School Resource Center providing assistance to charter school start-up groups. After receiving her administrative license and Ed. M. from the Bank Street College of Education, she served in a variety of administrative and consulting positions training new teachers, serving as a math coach, supporting principals, and helping to start a number of New York City schools. Four years ago she founded The Main Idea, a service to provide professional development to over 2000 school leaders across the country.

Institute Team Member: Dr. Joanne Falinski is currently working as an Educational Consultant for charter schools and charter school associations. Prior to this she worked as the Supervisor of Instruction for the Bronx Charter School for Better Learning and as Vice President for School Evaluations for the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Dr. Falinski has worked as an elementary classroom teacher, an elementary principal and as an assistant professor in teacher education. She received her B.S. in Education from SUNY at Oneonta, and her Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from Syracuse University in Educational Administration

APPENDIX A: RENEWAL BENCHMARKS USED DURING THE VISIT

An excerpt of the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks follows.
Visit the Institute's website at: http://www.newyorkcharters.org/
documents/renewalBenchmarks.doc to see the complete listing of Benchmarks.

Benchmarks 1B – 1H, and Benchmarks 2A – 2E were using in conducting this evaluation visit.

	Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?
Evidence Category	**State University Renewal Benchmarks**
State University Renewal Benchmark 1B **Use of Assessment Data**	**The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and state performance standards; • the school systematically collects and analyzes data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, and makes it accessible to teachers, school leaders and the school board; • the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy; • the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school's Accountability Plan goals are being achieved; • the school's leaders use assessment data to monitor, change and improve the school's academic program, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, staffing and intervention services; • the school's teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students; • a common understanding exists between and among teachers and administrators of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, e.g., changes to the instructional program, access to remediation, promotion to the next grade; • the school regularly communicates each student's progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and • the school regularly communicates to the school community overall academic performance as well as the school's progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1C **Curriculum**	**The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to achieve as specified by New York State standards and performance indicators; • the school has carefully analyzed all curriculum resources (including commercial

	materials) currently in use in relation to the school's curriculum framework, identified areas of deficiency and/or misalignment, and addressed them in the instructional program;
	• the curriculum *as implemented* is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade;
	• teachers are fully aware of the curricula that they are responsible to teach and have access to curricular documents such as scope and sequence documents, pacing charts, and/or curriculum maps that guide the development of their lesson plans;
	• teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school's curriculum;
	• the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and
	• the curriculum supports the school's stated mission.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1D **Pedagogy**	**High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.** Elements that are generally present include: • teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach; • instruction is rigorous and focused on learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson; • lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators; • instruction is differentiated to meet the range of learning needs represented in the school's student population, e.g. flexible student grouping, differentiated materials, pedagogical techniques, and/or assessments; • all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time; • learning time is maximized (e.g., appropriate pacing, high on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students), transitions are efficient, and there is day-to-day instructional continuity; and • teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1E **Instructional Leadership**	**The school has strong instructional leadership.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement; • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement); • the school's instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school's instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school's leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school's instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual

	teachers;
	• the school's leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and
	• the school's leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school's academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1F **At-Risk Students**	**The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students' needs; • all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; • the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; • the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; • all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students' Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; • the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and • the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1G **Student Order & Discipline**	**The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; • classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; • low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and • throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1H **Professional Development**	**The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program; • the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school's

	mission, curriculum, and instructional programs;
	• annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests;
	• professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school's Accountability Plan goals;
	• teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities;
	• the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers' varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities;
	• the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and
	• the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.

	Renewal Question 2 **Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?**
Evidence Category	**State University Renewal Benchmarks**
State University Renewal Benchmark 2A **Mission & Key Design Elements**	**The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.** Elements that are generally present include: • stakeholders are aware of the mission; • the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and • the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2B **Parents & Students**	**Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school; • the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; • few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; • a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; • parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and • the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2C **Organizational Capacity**	**The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; • staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school's mission; • the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving

	its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision; • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school's leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school's management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school's management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2D **Board Oversight**	**The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school; • the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight; • the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school's management and leaders; • the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity; • the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school's management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management organization(s), and/or partner organizations that provide services to the school), and has acted on the results where such evaluations demonstrated shortcomings in performance; • where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school's academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion; • the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and • the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2E **Governance**	**The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school's goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities;

- the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;
- the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter;
- the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner;
- the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints;
- the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies;
- the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and
- the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.