



**Charter Schools Institute**  
The State University of New York

## 2014-15 School Evaluation Report

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### Green Tech High Charter School

**VISIT DATE:** APRIL 23, 2015

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## INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report presents the school's 2013-14 Performance Review and Summaries, which provide an analysis of the attainment of the key academic goals in the school's Accountability Plan. Following these achievement results, the report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit on April 23, 2015. While the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the "Institute") conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (the "SUNY Renewal Benchmarks") near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle school evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks. This subset, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization. They provide a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), as well as leadership, organizational capacity and board oversight. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The appendix to the report contains a School Overview with descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. It also provides background information on the conduct of the visit, including information about the evaluation team and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. Finally, the appendix displays the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

**The report below provides benchmark evidence to support these conclusions in order to highlight areas of concern. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive elements of the educational program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness. This report does not contain an overall rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal; however, it does summarize the various strengths of the school and notes areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks.**

## SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since its inception, Green Tech High Charter School (“Green Tech”) has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission to “prepare young men to complete high school with a Regents diploma so they will have the opportunity to succeed in college.” Green Tech has offered students an all-male student environment with a 12:1 student-teacher ratio and an advisory model that ensures all students have a teacher mentor to support their success throughout high school.

Green Tech faced two key challenges this spring. The sudden death of Peter Stoll, a long serving, deeply committed trustee, devastated the board and the school community as a whole. Magnifying the loss of this trustee, the school continues to search for a long-term facilities solution, an initiative Mr. Stoll had been spearheading. The costs for the school’s current leased facility are high and constrain the board’s ability to put additional financial resources into the academic program. Green Tech’s lease expires in October 2015.

### **Opening Information**

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	July 31, 2006
School Opening	August 1, 2008

### **Location and 2014-15 Enrollment**

<b>Address</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Facility</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Grades</b>
321 Northern Blvd, Albany, NY 12210	Albany CSD	Private	342	9-12

## 2013-14 School Performance Review

In 2013-14, the second year of its three-year Accountability Period, Green Tech did not meet its Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics as measured against New York State’s college and career readiness standards. Importantly, the school met its high school graduation goal and came close to meeting its college preparation goal. Green Tech met its science, social studies and No Child Left Behind (“NCLB”) goals.

### **ELA**

During 2013-14, Green Tech did not meet its ELA goal according to the three available measures calibrated to the state’s college and career readiness standard, currently defined as achieving a score of at least 75 on the Regents English exam. With 50 percent of the 2010 Accountability Cohort achieving the standard, Green Tech fell short of its target of 75 percent proficiency. Although the school’s Accountability Performance Level (“APL”) fell short of the state’s Annual Measurable Objective (“AMO”), the APL did exceed the Albany City School District’s (“district’s”) performance on the same measure.

### **Mathematics**

According to the three available measures calibrated to the state’s college and career readiness standard (currently defined as scoring at least an 80 on the Regents Integrated Algebra exam) under the mathematics goal in the school’s Accountability Plan, Green Tech failed to meet the goal during 2013-14. With only 23 percent of students in the 2010 Accountability Cohort scoring at least an 80 on a Regents mathematics exam, the school fell far short of meeting its target of 75 percent. Although the school’s APL did not meet the state’s AMO, it did outperform the district on this measure.

### **Graduation**

Green Tech met its high school graduation goal during 2013-14 as it had during 2012-13. The school graduated 80 percent of its 2010 Graduation Cohort, meeting its absolute target of 75 percent and exceeding the district’s graduation rate. Although nearly all students in the school’s 2012 graduation cohort earned enough credits to advance to the next grade level, only 55 percent of the cohort passed at least three Regents exams by the end of their second year in high school, a leading indicator of successfully graduating from high school.

### **College Preparation**

During 2013-14, Green Tech came close to meeting its college preparation goal with 85 percent of the school’s graduates from the 2010 Graduation Cohort enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college program during the fall after their final year at Green Tech. However, only 44 percent of the school’s graduates demonstrated college readiness by passing a college level exam or by completing college level coursework, falling short of the school’s target of 75 percent.

**Science**

Green Tech met its science goal during 2013-14. With 98 percent of Green Tech's Accountability Cohort scoring at least 65 on a Regents science exam, the school far exceeded its absolute target of 75 percent proficiency. Comparative district data are not yet available but based on the district's performance record, the school is likely to exceed the district's science proficiency rate.

**Social Studies**

Green Tech met its social studies goal during 2013-14. Of the school's 2010 Accountability Cohort, 89 percent of students scored at or above proficiency on the Regents global studies exam and 94 percent met proficiency on the Regents U.S. History exam. Although comparative data are not yet available for 2013-14, the district's performance record indicates Green Tech is likely to exceed the district's performance on both of these exams.

**NCLB**

The school met its NCLB goal as it has not been identified as a Local Assistance Plan, Focus or Priority school under the state's NCLB accountability system.

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY Green Tech Charter High School



	2011-12				MET	2012-13				MET	2013-14				MET
	2008 Cohort N		%			2009 Cohort N		%			2010 Cohort N		%		
<b>English Language Arts</b>															
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b>															
1. Each year, 85 percent of students in the high school Accountability Cohort will meet the college and career ready standard (currently scoring 75 on the New York State Regents English exam) by the completion of their fourth year in the cohort.	43	88.4			YES	49	94			YES	63	50			NO
2. Each year, 85 percent of students who scored at Level 1 or 2 on their NYS 8 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA exam will score at least 75 on the Regents English exam.	Low Performing Entrants N		%			Low Performing Entrants N		%			Low Performing Entrants N		%		
	N		%			N		%			NR		NR		
3. Each year, the Accountability Performance Level (APL) on the Regents English exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	PI		AMO			APL		AMO			APL		AMO		
	181		188		NO	160		163		NO	146		166		NO
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURE</b>															
4. Each year, the Accountability Performance Level (APL) in Regents English of students in the fourth year of their high school Accountability Cohort will exceed the APL of comparable students from the local school district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools					Comparison: Albany City Schools					Comparison: Albany City Schools				
	School		District			School		District			School		District		
	88.4		57.0		YES	94.0		n/a		(YES)	146.0		111		YES
<b>GROWTH MEASURES</b>															
5. Each year, under the state's high school Growth Model (under development) the relative growth of selected students will exceed the state's median growth.	2010 Cohort N		Base	Target	Result		2011 Cohort		Base	Target	Result				
	57		49	49.5	45	NO									
<b>Mathematics</b>															
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b>															
1. Each year, 85 percent of students in the high school Accountability Cohort will meet the college and career ready standard (currently scoring 80 on a New York State Regents mathematics exam) by the completion of their fourth year in the cohort.	43	97.7			YES	49	96			YES	63	23			NO
2. Each year, 85 percent of students who scored at Level 1 or 2 on their NYS 8 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA exam will score at least 80 on the Regents English exam.	Low Performing Entrants N		%			Low Performing Entrants N		%			Low Performing Entrants N		%		
	N		%			N		%			NR		NR		
3. Each year, the Accountability Performance Level (APL) on the Regents English exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	PI		AMO			APL		AMO			APL		AMO		
	198		186		YES	123		142		NO	120		148		NO
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURE</b>															
4. Each year, the Accountability Performance Level (APL) on a New York State Regents mathematics exam of students in the fourth year of their high school Accountability Cohort will exceed the APL of comparable students from the local school district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools					Comparison: Albany City Schools					Comparison: Albany City Schools				
	School		District			School		District			School		District		
	97.7		61		YES	96		100		NO	120		105		YES
<b>Growth Measure</b>															
5. Each year, under the state's high school Growth Model (under development) the relative growth of selected students will exceed the state's median growth.	2010 Cohort N		Base	Target	Result		2011 Cohort		Base	Target	Result				
	57		47	48.5	46	NO									

Data Sources: New York State and City data, workbooks submitted by schools and databases compiled by the Institute.

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY Green Tech Charter High School



	2011-12			MET	2012-13			MET	2013-14			MET			
	Cohort	N	% promoted		Cohort	N	% promoted		Cohort	N	% promoted				
<b>High School Graduation</b>															
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b>															
1. Each year, 75 percent of students in first and second year high school Total Graduation Cohorts will earn at least ten credits (if 44 needed for graduation) or five credits (if 22 needed for graduation) each year.	2008	43	67.4%	NO	2009				2012	98	99.0	YES			
	2009	87	85.0%	YES	2010				2013	109	88.0	YES			
	2010	103	78.0%	YES	2011	107	68.0%	NO	All	207	93.2%	YES			
	2011	108	86.0%	YES	2012	103	96.0%	YES							
	All	341	81.0%	YES	All	210	81.7%	YES							
2. Each year, 75 percent of students will score at least 65 on at least three different Regents exams required for graduation by the completion of their second year in the cohort.	% passing ≥ 3 Regents				% passing ≥ 3 Regents				% passing ≥ 3 Regents						
	2010 Cohort N				2011 Cohort N				2012 Cohort N						
	103		41.7%	NO	107		48.0%	NO	106		55.0%	NO			
3. Each year, 75 percent of students will graduate after the completion of their fourth year.	2008 Cohort N %				2009 Cohort N %				2010 Cohort N %						
	43		67.4%	NO	55		80.0%	YES	69		80.0%	YES			
4. Each year, 95 percent of students will graduate after the completion of their fifth year.	2007 Cohort N % Graduating				2008 Cohort N % Graduating				2009 Cohort N % Graduating						
					43		70.0%	NO	52		90.0%	NO			
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURE</b>															
5. Each year, the percent of students graduating after the completion of their fourth year will exceed that of the local school district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools School District				Comparison: Albany City Schools School District				Comparison: Albany City Schools School District						
	67.4		45	YES	83%		54%	YES	80%		50%	YES			
<b>College Preparation</b>															
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</b>															
1. Each year, the average performance of students in the 10th grade will exceed the state average on the PSAT tests in Critical Reading and Math.	N School State				N School State				N School State						
	Reading	63	34.7	41.2	NO	Reading	80	37.3	42.5	NO	Reading	92	34.7	41.1	NO
	Math	63	36.8	42.0	NO	Math	80	38.8	44.0	NO	Math	92	35.7	42.8	NO
2. Each year, the average performance of students in the 12th grade will exceed the state average on the SAT or ACT tests in reading and mathematics.	N School State				N School State				N School State						
	Reading	41	381	483	NO	Reading	44	420	496	NO	Reading	45	386	488	NO
	Math	41	373	500	NO	Math	44	441	514	NO	Math	45	418	502	NO
<b>SCHOOL DESIGNED MEASURES</b>															
3. College Preparation Each year, 75 percent of graduating students will demonstrate their preparation for college by passing an Advanced Placement (AP) exam, a College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exam or a college level course.	N %				N %				N %						
	43		0.0%	NO	44		9.0%	NO	55		44.0%	NO			
4. College Attainment and Achievement Each year, 75% of graduating students will attend a 2-year or 4-year college or university.	N %				N %				N %						
	31		67.7%	NO	44		91.0%	YES	55		85.0%	YES			

Data Sources: New York State and City data, workbooks submitted by schools and databases compiled by the Institute.

## **Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence**

**Instructional Leadership.** Green Tech has strong instructional leadership.

- Using an online system to store and share observation data and to set goals with the teaching staff, instructional leaders establish clear expectations for teachers' classroom practice. While teachers are able to articulate goals associated with classroom practice, they are not able to articulate the leaders' expectations for student achievement.
- The principal and curriculum and instructional program facilitator serve as Green Tech's instructional leaders and provide consistent feedback to teachers to improve pedagogy and student learning. This year, the school implemented a peer observation and coaching system. Teachers perform four peer observations per quarter and provide coaching feedback after each observation. Teachers report finding the observations useful for exchanging pedagogical ideas and for gauging effectiveness. Teachers enter data from peer observations into a standardized form in the school's online observation system enabling instructional leaders to triangulate on this data.
- Teachers have limited opportunities to plan units and daily lessons across content areas and grade levels, with scheduled meeting times roughly three hours per week. While this time represents an improvement over practices earlier in the charter term, teachers rely mainly on their own initiative and informal discussion to plan instruction outside of school hours.
- Green Tech's professional development program is also limited as leaders front-load most professional development activities before and at the beginning of the school year, which renders the program minimally responsive to needs of teachers identified during the school year. Green Tech does not systematically onboard new teachers hired during the school year with activities aligned to summer professional development topics.
- The school identifies clear, professional priorities including increasing teachers' capacity to develop complex learning tasks that develop students' higher-order thinking skills, increasing teachers' ability to formulate deep and rich questions that promote higher order thinking during instruction and developing teachers' skills to promote active participation in learning activities from all students in every class. Visit team members' classroom observations show instruction does not yet evidence teachers' mastery of these pedagogical skills.
- Green Tech leaders conduct regular teacher evaluations using clear criteria to identify teachers' strengths and areas of weakness. The principal conducts one formal evaluation per semester for each teacher and holds teachers accountable for performance by creating improvement plans for those who do not meet expectations. The principal placed two teachers on improvement plans this year. The school does not experience a high amount of teacher turnover and most teachers who have left chose to leave for personal reasons.

**Curriculum.** Green Tech’s curriculum continues to support teachers in their instructional planning.

- With support from instructional leaders, teachers use the Common Core State Standards as a guiding framework to create curriculum maps, pacing calendars and scope and sequence documents for each course using an Understanding by Design (“UBD”) approach to curriculum design. From these documents, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it.
- School leaders express high expectations for the quality, content and format of teacher’s instructional plans, though subject area departments maintain discretion in developing content and lesson activities.
- Across the school, teachers utilize a wide variety of external sources for rich, engaging material to plan purposeful and focused lessons. Teachers submit lesson plans to the principal, program facilitator, relevant department chair and special education staff on a weekly basis before implementation. Although the program facilitator generally reserves ongoing feedback on curriculum documents and lesson plans for new or struggling teachers, she completes a comprehensive audit of each teacher’s binder of curricula, lesson plans and samples of student work at least twice per year. Other leaders provide feedback as necessary to raise the level of rigor in plans.
- Teachers undertake an informal, but intentional, process for reviewing and revising its curriculum maps at the end of each school year. Teachers compare assessment data from past years and their own reflections on lesson efficacy in order to determine curriculum effectiveness and to make revisions. While ongoing review of curriculum documents is a best practice, the school has no systematic means to measure the impact of these changes.

**Use of Assessment Data.** Green Tech has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning; in addition to using data to adjust specific instructional plans, the school leverages performance information to strengthen its educational program overall.

- Green Tech regularly administers assessments aligned to its curriculum and state performance standards. All newly enrolled students take the Performance Series ELA and math assessments to establish baseline skill levels and to determine placement in small remedial lab or honors classes, as appropriate.
- Over the past two years, school leaders recognized the need for additional, ongoing assessments to provide fresh data sets to monitor student progress. Teachers now administer quarterly benchmark exams compiled from past Regents exam item banks. As teachers create these assessments largely independently, the validity, reliability and predictive value of these assessments are not yet determined. Some teachers score exams collaboratively in order to ensure norming across classes.
- The school’s chief statistician collects, manages and analyzes all assessment data and creates detailed item-analyses of multiple-choice items. These documents provide leaders and teachers

with informative reports on score distribution as well as year-over-year student performance comparisons.

- Teachers use assessment data to inform daily instruction, modify curriculum documents and to identify students for intervention services such as Zeroes Aren't Permitted ("ZAP") remediation periods. Leaders use this data to revise curriculum, inform professional development topics and assess teacher strength, as well as to determine the need for more frequent observations or planning support.
- Green Tech frequently communicates to parents about students' progress and growth via eight progress reports, four report cards and three parent-teacher conferences per school year. Teachers also call and email parents with student performance updates.

**Pedagogy.** While some classrooms exhibit high quality instruction and strong student engagement, this is not evident throughout the school. As shown in the chart below, during the visit, Institute team members conducted 10 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school evaluation visits.

**Number of Observations**

		Grade				Total
		9	10	11	12	
Content Area	ELA	1	1	1		3
	Math	2	2			4
	Science	1			2	3
	Social Studies					
	Total	4	3	1	2	10

- Teachers deliver lessons with clear objectives that align to the school's curriculum (10 out of 10 classroom observations). Notably, the school has combined U.S. History and English sections into one course that seamlessly integrates standards and learning objectives from both substantive areas.
- Most teachers effectively check for student understanding (6 out of 10 classroom observations) using techniques such as cold-calling and high-order questioning. In some classrooms, teachers use only cursory methods such as asking the entire class for a yes or no response to gauge students' grasp of the material.
- A minority of teachers challenge students with tasks requiring higher-order thinking and problem solving skills (4 out of 10 classroom observations). Most teachers do not ask questions that would develop depth of understanding despite this skill being an identified instructional priority. Teachers more often ask for factual recall or basic explanations of complex concepts. In a notable exception, a teacher facilitated a lively student-led discussion centered on the

question “Should extinct species be brought back?” Students made connections and synthesized information across multiple content areas, including ELA, history and science.

- Instructional leaders identified total student participation as a school-wide priority at the time of the visit. This focus is evident in classrooms as the majority maintain a consistent focus on academic achievement (9 out of 10 classroom observations). Teachers primarily use questioning techniques and appropriate pacing during instruction to keep students engaged and on-task.

**At-Risk Students.** Green Tech addresses the educational needs of students with disabilities, but the school’s strained capacity and resources limit the services available to support students at risk of academic failure during the school day. Green Tech has no English Language Learners (“ELLs”) currently enrolled.

- Green Tech uses the Home Language Identification Survey and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners. In previous years, the school employed an appropriately certified English for speakers of other languages (“ESOL”) teacher to provide language acquisition supports; however, the school currently has no ELLs enrolled.
- The school relies largely on the Performance Series diagnostic exam results and teacher concerns to identify students struggling academically. Green Tech places students who score below a certain threshold in an extra period of ELA or mathematics small class instruction for the entire school year.
- Though most students with disabilities enter with an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) already in place, the school’s special education coordinator monitors the progress of at-risk students and works with teachers and parents to assess the possible need for additional referrals to the committee on special education (“CSE”) for evaluation. With a special education coordinator as well as two full-time and one part-time special education teachers, the school has adequate staffing to provide both push-in and resource room services for the 23 students with identified disabilities requiring academic supports.
- Instructional leaders analyze assessment data and use it to place general education students at risk for academic failure in remedial lab classes. The process used to assign students to weekly ZAP meetings highlights the capacity constraints impacting the academic program. While students may struggle in multiple classes, each student attends a ZAP meeting only for the subject area in which she has the lowest score because scheduling constraints limits Green Tech’s ability to provide comprehensive supports for students at risk of academic failure. The school offers a variety of non-mandatory after-school tutoring options and encourages students to attend. These activities, while numerous, provide very limited opportunities for teachers to individualize and target interventions to meet specific student needs or accelerate the services a student receives.
- The school monitors the progress and success of at-risk students using the same comprehensive, school wide assessments as the rest of its general education population.

- Teachers are aware of students' IEP goals as they relate to content areas and are generally aware of students' progress toward meeting those goals, although the school's two special education teachers and coordinator maintain primary responsibility for tracking this progress and attainment.
- Green Tech provides limited training and professional development activities to enable teachers to meet at-risk students' needs in general education settings. Professional development activities the school does offer, such as techniques for differentiation of instruction, occur before school begins in September and are mandatory for new staff only.
- In contrast to previous years, the school now provides a weekly opportunity for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff to discuss student progress, to suggest effective instructional strategies and to collaborate on lesson plans.

**Organizational Capacity.** While the school continues to work to perfect a college prep focus among the young men attending Green Tech, its board of trustees and leadership have established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.

- Improvement in Green Tech's high school graduation and college acceptance rates during the current charter term provides evidence that the school has adequate staff, operational systems and procedures in place to carry out its academic program. Notably, this year's graduating class has secured \$4 million in college scholarships.
- The organization has distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The school employs a director of finance and operations, a guidance counselor and two deans of students that enable the school's instructional leaders to focus on curriculum, instruction and continual improvement of the school's academic program.
- Green Tech has a clearly established discipline system that reinforces student behavior with merits and demerits. The student handbook and code of conduct articulate the rewards and negative consequences for accumulating each.
- Green Tech experiences little teacher turnover; of the 36 teachers at the school for the 2013-14 school year, 32 returned to Green Tech to teach during the 2014-15 school year. The impact on turnover, if any, of the board's recent action to suspend Green Tech's merit pay program is not yet clear.
- The board continues to work diligently to balance supports for the academic program with facility costs.
- The school's enrollment is adequate. It does not maintain a waitlist.
- The school evaluates and modifies its recruitment strategies. For example, the school now translates its recruitment materials to the five languages primarily spoken at local refugee centers. Green Tech continues to target recruitment at community and faith-based organizations where English is not the primary spoken language. Despite using targeted

strategies to recruit ELLs, the school did not enroll any students requiring English language acquisition supports at the time of the school visit.

- Green Tech regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs as evidenced by changes to the teacher evaluation program, ongoing revisions to supports for at-risk students and the school's extensive use of data to improve its instructional practices. Additionally, teachers compile lessons, units and student work samples in binders that instructional leaders use to assess the total academic program. This evaluation occurs twice a year and allows leaders to implement necessary changes in response to programmatic gaps. The chief statistician also collects data throughout the year to monitor the school's performance in comparison to prior years.

**Board Oversight.** Green Tech's board works effectively to support the school in fulfilling its mission. It also establishes clear and measureable priorities for the fiscal health and effective operation of the organization in general.

- Six trustees with legal, fiscal, education and governance experience currently comprise Green Tech's board. The recent death of a long-serving trustee who had been leading facility planning for the school created a tremendous loss for the board. The board seeks to recruit at least one new member and is focusing its search on candidates with fundraising experience.
- The principal and operations director provide monthly reports to the board that include student assessment data and information about the school's financial standing highlighting areas including enrollment, cash flow and assets and liabilities. The board receives sufficient information to govern the organization effectively.
- Green Tech's board established clear priorities for the 2014-15 school year including revising its facility financing. It also has established measurable post-secondary goals for the school's graduates with clear indicators of success.
- The board does not formally evaluate its own performance but has put in place concise and measureable indicators to evaluate the principal using the school's Accountability Plan as a base.
- While generally compliant with the terms of its charter contract, the education corporation has not submitted board meeting minutes since December 2014.

## APPENDIX

### SCHOOL OVERVIEW

#### Mission Statement

Green Tech High Charter School prepares young men to complete high school with a Regents diploma so they will have the opportunity to attend college or choose an alternative, responsible career path as they enter adulthood. Green Tech High will succeed in this mission by providing a complete high school curriculum, backed by a philosophy and culture, that ensures every student will attain the skills and coursework necessary for a Regents diploma, including the use of computer technology, providing an understanding of how technology impacts our future and instills a knowledge of environmental factors including human impact and sustainability.

#### Board of Trustees<sup>1</sup>

Board Member Name	Position
David E. Nardolillo	Chair
Vincent Commisso	Treasurer
Pamela Williams	Secretary
Denard Cummings	Trustee
Franklin Esson	Trustee
Gen Zachary	Parent Representative

#### School Leadership History

School Year(s)	School Leader(s) Name and Title(s)
2008-09 to 2011-12	John Taylor, Principal
August 2012 to Present	Dr. Paul Miller, Principal

#### School Characteristics

School Year	Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades
2008-09	175	80	9-10	9-10
2009-10	275	149	9-12	9-11
2010-11	360	249	9-12	9-12
2011-12	360	304	9-12	9-12
2012-13	360	346	9-12	9-12
2013-14	360	333	9-12	9-12
2014-15	360	342	9-12	9-12

<sup>1</sup> Source: Institute records at the time of the school visit.

## Student Demographics<sup>2</sup>

	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15 <sup>3</sup>
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Albany CSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Albany CSD Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	95	53	93	51	94
Hispanic	2	15	5	16	4
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0	8	0	9	0
White	3	21	1	21	2
Multiracial	0	3	0	4	0
<b>Special Populations</b>					
Students with Disabilities	7	15	6	14	6
English Language Learners	0	8	0	9	0
<b>Free/ Reduced Lunch</b>					
Eligible for Free Lunch	74	60	74	68	--
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	10	7	11	4	--
Economically Disadvantaged	80	76	81	72	80

## School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2008-09	First-Year Visit	Institute	March 12, 2009
2009-10	Evaluation Visit	External (Class Measures)	May 25-26, 2010
2010-11	Evaluation Visit	Institute	May 12, 2011
2012-13	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	December 11-12, 2012
2014-15	Evaluation Visit	Institute	April 23, 2015

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2012-13 and 2013-14 New York State Education Department School Report Cards.

<sup>3</sup> The Institute derived the 2014-15 Students with Disabilities, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics from the school's October 2014 student enrollment report to NYSED (2014-15 BEDS Report). District data are not yet available. Because NYSED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

## CONDUCT OF THE SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

### School Visit Team

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Member	Title
April 23, 2015	Heather Wendling	Director for New Charters
	Jeffrey Wasbes	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability

### Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle	
Charter Term	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year of Three-Year Subsequent Charter Term
Accountability Period <sup>4</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year of Three-Year Accountability Period
Anticipated Renewal Visit	Fall 2015

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<sup>4</sup> Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision in the last year of a charter term, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the charter term. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the charter term. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous charter term through the next to last year of the current charter term.

## State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

Version 5.0, May 2012

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### Introduction

The State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks<sup>1</sup> (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) serve two primary functions at renewal:

- They provide a framework for the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) to gather and evaluate evidence to determine whether a school has made an adequate case for renewal. In turn, this evidence assists the Institute in deciding if it can make the required legal and other findings in order to reach a positive recommendation for renewal. For example, the various benchmarks that the Institute uses to determine whether the school has had fiscally responsible practices in place during the last charter period allow the Institute to determine with greater precision whether the school will operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter period, a finding that the New York Charter Schools Act requires the SUNY Trustees to make.
- At the same time that the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks provide a framework for the Institute to collect and review evidence, they also provide the school with a guide to understanding the Institute’s evaluative criteria. As the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks (or some sub-set of them) as the framework for conducting its ongoing school evaluation visits, school leaders should be fully aware of the content of the Benchmarks at the time of renewal.

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks are organized into four inter-connected renewal questions that each school must answer when submitting a renewal application. The benchmarks further reflect the interwoven nature of schools from an academic, organizational, fiscal and/or legal perspective. For example, the Institute could reasonably place many of the academic benchmarks under the heading of organizational effectiveness. More generally, some redundancy exists because the Institute looks at the same issue from different perspectives.

Precisely how the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, during both the renewal process and throughout the charter period, is explained in greater detail in the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Practices”), available on the Institute’s website at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm). Responses to frequently asked questions about the Institute’s use of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks appear below:

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<sup>1</sup> Research on public school reform, known as the effective schools movement, has embraced the premise that, given certain organizing and cultural characteristics, schools can teach all children the intended curriculum and hold them to high academic standards. Over the decades, the accumulated research into effective schools has yielded a set of common characteristics that all effective schools share. These characteristics are so consistently prevalent among successful schools that they have come to be known as the *Correlates of Effective Schools*. The Renewal Benchmarks adapt and elaborate on these correlates.

- Revised May 2012 -

- The Institute does not have a point system for recommending renewal. A school cannot simply tally up the number of positive benchmark statements in order to determine the Institute’s recommendation.
  - Some benchmarks are weighed more heavily than others. In particular, the Institute gives the greatest weight to how well the school has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
  - Despite the fact that the Accountability Plan comprises only a single benchmark, a school’s performance on that benchmark is critical. In fact, it is so important that while the Institute may recommend non-renewal for fiscal and organizational failures (if sufficiently serious), excellence in these areas will not excuse poor academic performance.
- The Institute does not use every benchmark during every kind of renewal review, and how the benchmarks are used differs depending on a school’s circumstances. For example, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (Benchmarks 1B-1F, 2C and 2D) are given far less weight in making a renewal decision on schools that the Institute has previously renewed. Similarly, less weight is accorded to these benchmarks during an initial renewal review where a school has consistently met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
  - The Institute also may not consider every indicator subsumed under a benchmark when determining if a school has met that benchmark, given the school’s stage of development or its previous track record.
- Aside from Benchmark 1A on academic Accountability Plan goals (which is singular in its importance), no school should fear that a failure to meet every element of every benchmark means that it is not in a position to make a case for renewal. To the contrary, the Institute has yet to see a school that performs perfectly in every respect. The Institute appreciates that the benchmarks set a very high standard collectively. While the Institute certainly hopes and expects that schools aim high, it is understood that a school’s reach will necessarily exceed its grasp in at least some aspects.

In this fifth edition of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, the Institute has made some revisions to the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks, namely those benchmarks used for ongoing school evaluation visits, to streamline the collection of evidence. For example, the Institute has incorporated Student Order and Discipline into Pedagogy, and Professional Development into Instructional Leadership. The Institute has rewritten some of the overarching benchmark statements to capture the most salient aspects of school effectiveness, organizational viability, legal compliance, and fiscal soundness. Some of the bulleted indicators within benchmarks have been recast or eliminated. Finally, the Institute has added some indicators to align the benchmarks with changes in the Charter Schools Act (e.g., provisions in meeting enrollment and retention targets when assigned and abiding by the General Municipal Law).

It is important that the entire school community understand the renewal process. All members of a school’s leadership team and board should carefully review both the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks and the SUNY Renewal Practices. Note that a renewal overview document for parents, teachers and community members is also available on the Institute’s website at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm). Please do not hesitate to contact the Institute with any questions.

## State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

<b>Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?</b>	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1A</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Academic Accountability Plan Goals</b></p>	<p><b>Over the Accountability Period, the school has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.</b></p> <p>The Institute determines the extent to which the school has met the Accountability Plan goals in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language arts;</li> <li>• mathematics;</li> <li>• science;</li> <li>• social studies (high school only);</li> <li>• NCLB;</li> <li>• high school graduation and college preparation (if applicable); and</li> <li>• optional academic goals included by the school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1B</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use of Assessment Data</b></p>	<p><b>The school has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum and state performance standards;</li> <li>• the school has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing assessments;</li> <li>• the school makes assessment data accessible to teachers, school leaders and board members;</li> <li>• teachers use assessment results to meet students’ needs by adjusting classroom instruction, grouping students and/or identifying students for special intervention;</li> <li>• school leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development and coaching strategies; and</li> <li>• the school regularly communicates to parents/guardians about their students’ progress and growth.</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1C</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Curriculum</b></p>	<p><b>The school’s curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school has a curriculum framework with student performance expectations that provides a fixed, underlying structure, aligned to state standards and across grades;</li> <li>• in addition to the framework, the school has supporting tools (i.e., curriculum maps or scope and sequence documents) that provide a bridge between the curriculum framework and lesson plans;</li> <li>• teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on these documents;</li> <li>• the school has a process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents and its resources for delivering the curriculum; and</li> <li>• teachers plan purposeful and focused lessons.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1D</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pedagogy</b></p>	<p><b>High quality instruction is evident throughout the school.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school’s curriculum;</li> <li>• teachers regularly and effectively use techniques to check for student understanding;</li> <li>• teachers include opportunities in their lessons to challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher-order thinking and problem solving skills;</li> <li>• teachers maximize learning time (e.g., appropriate pacing, on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students); transitions are efficient; and</li> <li>• teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Instructional Leadership</b></p>	<p><b>The school has strong instructional leadership.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge and</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?</b>
<b><u>Evidence Category</u></b>	<b><u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u></b>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1F</b></p> <p><b>At-Risk Students</b></p>	<p>pedagogical skills) and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the instructional leadership is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff;</li> <li>• instructional leaders provide sustained, systemic and effective coaching and supervision that improves teachers’ instructional effectiveness;</li> <li>• instructional leaders provide opportunities and guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels;</li> <li>• instructional leaders implement a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers;</li> <li>• professional development activities are interrelated with classroom practice;</li> <li>• instructional leaders regularly conduct teacher evaluations with clear criteria that accurately identify teachers’ strengths and weaknesses; and</li> <li>• instructional leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement.</li> </ul> <p><b>The school meets the educational needs of at-risk students.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities, English language learners and those struggling academically;</li> <li>• the school has adequate intervention programs to meet the needs of at-risk students;</li> <li>• general education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the general education program;</li> <li>• the school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students;</li> <li>• teachers are aware of their students’ progress toward meeting IEP goals, achieving English proficiency or school-based goals for struggling students;</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 1</b> <b>Is the School an Academic Success?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school provides adequate training and professional development to identify at-risk students and to help teachers meet students' needs; and</li> <li>• the school provides opportunities for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff including the school nurse, if applicable.</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 2 Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2A</b>	<b>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</b>
<b>Mission &amp; Key Design Elements</b>	<p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school faithfully follows its mission; and</li> <li>• the school has implemented its key design elements.</li> </ul>
<b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2B</b>	<b>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</b>
<b>Parents &amp; Students</b>	<p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school regularly communicates each child's academic performance results to families;</li> <li>• families are satisfied with the school; and</li> <li>• parents keep their children enrolled year-to-year.</li> </ul>
<b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2C</b>	<b>The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.</b>
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	<p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program;</li> <li>• the organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities;</li> <li>• the school has a clear student discipline system in place at the administrative level that is consistently applied;</li> <li>• the school retains quality staff;</li> <li>• the school has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals;</li> <li>• the school maintains adequate student enrollment;</li> <li>• the school has procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly; and</li> <li>• the school regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs and makes changes if necessary.</li> </ul>

<b>Renewal Question 2</b> <b>Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</b>	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2D</b></p> <p><b>Board Oversight</b></p>	<p><b>The school board works effectively to achieve the school’s Accountability Plan goals.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• board members possess adequate skills and have put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school and oversee management of day-to-day operations in order to ensure the school’s future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization;</li> <li>• the board requests and receives sufficient information to provide rigorous oversight of the school’s program and finances;</li> <li>• it establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals, (including Accountability Plan, fiscal, facilities and fundraising), and has in place benchmarks for tracking progress as well as a process for their regular review and revision;</li> <li>• the board successfully recruits, hires and retains key personnel, and provides them with sufficient resources to function effectively;</li> <li>• the board regularly evaluates its own performance and that of the school leaders and the management company (if applicable), holding them accountable for student achievement; and</li> <li>• the board effectively communicates with the school community including school leadership, staff, parents/guardians and students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2E</b></p> <p><b>Governance</b></p>	<p><b>The board implements, maintains and abides by appropriate policies, systems and processes.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the board effectively communicates with its partner or management organizations as well as key contractors such as back-office service providers and ensures that it receives value in exchange for contracts and relationships it enters into and effectively monitors such relationships;</li> <li>• the board takes effective action when there are organizational, leadership, management, facilities or fiscal deficiencies; or where the management or partner organization fails to meet</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 2 Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
	<p>expectations; to correct those deficiencies and puts in place benchmarks for determining if the partner organization corrects them in a timely fashion;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the board regularly reviews and updates board and school policies as needed and has in place an orientation process for new members;</li> <li>• the board effectively recruits and selects new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;</li> <li>• the board implements a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with that set forth in the charter and with the General Municipal Law—and consistently abides by them throughout the term of the charter;</li> <li>• the board generally avoids conflicts of interest; where not possible, the board manages those conflicts in a clear and transparent manner;</li> <li>• the board implements a process for dealing with complaints consistent with that set forth in the charter, makes the complaint policy clear to all stakeholders, and follows the policy including acting on complaints in a timely fashion;</li> <li>• the board abides by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee election and the removal and filling of vacancies; and</li> <li>• the board holds all meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and records minutes for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2F</b></p> <p><b>Legal Requirements</b></p>	<p><b>The school substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school compiles a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL and Open Meetings Law;</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 2</b> <b>Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school substantially complies with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations;</li> <li>• the school abides by the terms of its monitoring plan;</li> <li>• the school implements effective systems and controls to ensure that it meets legal and charter requirements;</li> <li>• the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel who reviews and makes recommendations on relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and who also handles other legal matters as needed; and</li> <li>• the school manages any litigation appropriately and provides litigation papers to insurers and the Institute in a timely manner.</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 3 Is the School Fiscally Sound?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3A</b></p> <p><b>Budgeting and Long Range Planning</b></p>	<p><b>The school operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures;</li> <li>• board members, school management and staff contribute to the budget process, as appropriate;</li> <li>• the school frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions;</li> <li>• the school routinely analyzes budget variances; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions; and</li> <li>• actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3B</b></p> <p><b>Internal Controls</b></p>	<p><b>The school maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures.</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school follows a set of comprehensive written fiscal policies and procedures;</li> <li>• the school accurately records and appropriately documents transactions in accordance with management’s direction, laws, regulations, grants and contracts;</li> <li>• the school safeguards its assets;</li> <li>• the school identifies/analyzes risks and takes mitigating actions;</li> <li>• the school has controls in place to ensure that management decisions are properly carried out and monitors and assesses controls to ensure their adequacy;</li> <li>• the school’s trustees and employees adhere to a code of ethics;</li> <li>• the school ensures duties are appropriately segregated, or institutes compensating controls;</li> <li>• the school ensures that employees performing financial functions are appropriately qualified and adequately trained;</li> <li>• the school has systems in place to provide the appropriate information needed by staff and the board to make sound financial decisions and to fulfill compliance requirements;</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 3 Is the School Fiscally Sound?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3C</b></p> <p><b>Financial Reporting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a staff member of the school reviews grant agreements and restrictive gifts and monitors compliance with all stated conditions;</li> <li>• the school prepares payroll according to appropriate state and federal regulations and school policy;</li> <li>• the school ensures that employees, trustees and volunteers who handle cash and investments are bonded to help assure the safeguarding of assets; and</li> <li>• the school takes corrective action in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, the Institute, and/or the State Education Department or the Comptroller, if needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>The school has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and the State Education Department with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles.</b></p> <p>The following reports have generally been filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable;</li> <li>• annual budgets and cash flow statements;</li> <li>• un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment;</li> <li>• bi-monthly enrollment reports to the district and, if applicable, to the State Education Department including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students; and</li> <li>• grant expenditure reports.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3D</b></p> <p><b>Financial Condition</b></p>	<p><b>The school maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the school are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations and fundraising).</b></p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly;</li> </ul>

	<b>Renewal Question 3</b> <b>Is the School Fiscally Sound?</b>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally three months);</li> <li>• the school prepares and monitors cash flow projections;</li> <li>• If the school includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis;</li> <li>• If necessary, the school pursues district state aid intercepts with the state education department to ensure adequate per pupil funding; and</li> <li>• the school accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.</li> </ul>

<b>Renewal Question 4</b> <b>If the School’s Charter is Renewed, What are its Plans for the Term of the Next Charter Period, and are they Reasonable, Feasible and Achievable?</b>	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4A</b></p> <p><b>Plans for the School’s Structure</b></p>	<p><b>Key structural elements of the school, as defined in the exhibits of the Application for Charter Renewal, are reasonable, feasible and achievable.</b></p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school is likely to fulfill its mission in the next charter period;</li> <li>• the school has an enrollment plan that can support the school program;</li> <li>• the school calendar and daily schedules clearly provide sufficient instructional time to meet all legal requirements, allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals and abide by its proposed budget;</li> <li>• key design elements are consistent with the mission statement and are feasible given the school’s budget and staffing;</li> <li>• a curriculum framework for added grades aligns with the state’s performance standards; and</li> <li>• plans in the other required Exhibits indicate that the school’s structure is likely to support the educational program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4B</b></p> <p><b>Plans for the Educational Program</b></p>	<p><b>The school’s plans for implementing the educational program allow it to meet its Accountability Plan goals.</b></p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for those grades served during the last charter period, the school has plans for sustaining and (where possible) improving upon the student outcomes it has compiled during the last charter period including any adjustments or additions to the school’s educational program;</li> <li>• for a school that is seeking to add grades, the school is likely to meet its Accountability Plan goals and the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks at the new grade levels; and</li> <li>• where the school will provide secondary school instruction, it has presented a set of requirements for graduation that students are likely to meet and that are consistent with the graduation standards set by the Board of Regents.</li> </ul>

<b>Renewal Question 4</b> <b>If the School’s Charter is Renewed, What are its Plans for the Term of the Next Charter Period, and are they Reasonable, Feasible and Achievable?</b>	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4C</b></p> <p><b>Plans for Board Oversight and Governance</b></p>	<p><b>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable plan for board oversight and governance.</b></p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school trustees are likely to possess a range of experience, skills, and abilities sufficient to oversee the academic, organizational and fiscal performance of the school;</li> <li>• plans by the school board to orient new trustees to their roles and responsibilities, and, if appropriate, to participate in ongoing board training are likely to sustain the board’s ability to carry out its responsibilities;</li> <li>• if the school plans to change an association with a partner or management organization in the term of a future charter, it has provided a clear rationale for the disassociation and an outline indicating how it will manage the functions previously associated with that partnering organization; and</li> <li>• if the school is either moving from self-management to a management structure or vice-versa, or is changing its charter management organization/educational service provider, its plans indicate that it will be managed in an effective, sound and viable manner including appropriate oversight of the academic and fiscal performance of the school or the management organization.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4D</b></p> <p><b>Fiscal &amp; Facility Plans</b></p>	<p><b>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable fiscal plan including plans for an adequate facility.</b></p> <p>Based on the elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school’s budgets adequately support staffing, enrollment and facility projections;</li> <li>• fiscal plans are based on the sound use of financial resources to support academic program needs;</li> <li>• fiscal plans are clear, accurate, complete and based on reasonable assumptions;</li> <li>• information on enrollment demand provides clear evidence for the reasonableness of projected enrollment; and</li> <li>• facility plans are likely to meet educational program needs.</li> </ul>