



**THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS  
INSTITUTE**

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL*

**Report Date: September 28, 2022**

**Review Date: March 8, 2022**

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

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## CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

# ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

677 East 141<sup>st</sup> Street, Bronx, NY | Grades: K - 4 | NYC Community District 7  
470 Jackson Avenue, Bronx, NY | Grades: 5 - 8 | NYC Community District 7

The New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”) approved the original charter for Academic Leadership Charter School (“Academic Leadership”) on behalf of the New York City Schools Chancellor (“NYC Chancellor”) on February 10, 2009. The charter opened in the fall of 2009 initially serving 148 students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) approved Academic Leadership’s application to transfer authorization on October 11, 2017.

### “ MISSION

*Academic Leadership Charter School’s mission is to empower young leaders, creating a student body that outperforms state standards across all subjects. We are determined to give our pupils a competitive edge toward high school and beyond, nurturing exceptional youth for exceptional success.*

### CURRENT CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup>

Chartered Enrollment:  
725

Charter Expiration:  
June 30, 2023

### PROPOSED FUTURE CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup>

Chartered Enrollment:  
931

Charter Expiration:  
June 30, 2028

### KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Community;



Parent participation;



Extended learning time;



Pre-Kindergarten;



Co-teaching; and,



Character education.



## CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND



### NOTEWORTHY

During the 2021-22 school year, Academic Leadership implemented Friday clubs where teachers work with students on themes such as drama, art, finance, and science to facilitate social engagements between students.

### SUMMARY OF COVID-19 RESPONSE

Academic Leadership made adjustments to its educational program to support students' academic and emotional growth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders maintained focus on high academic achievement while implementing more social emotional learning into the curriculum to support students' mental health wellness. Academic Leadership transitioned to a fully remote program in March 2020 and during the 2020-21 school year, offered a full day of hybrid learning where remote and in-person students received instruction synchronously. The program's remote curriculum maintained the same rigor as its in-person curriculum. The charter offered a fully remote program for students and families who faced medical concerns due to the Delta and Omicron COVID-19 variants during the 2021-22 school year. A handful of students in each grade participated in the fully remote program, and a teacher on each grade level provided live lessons for about five periods daily. For the remainder of the periods, the assigned teacher gave students additional work and completed i-Ready lessons. Leaders continue to work on creating more balance between activities that build on academic and life skills while allowing for more social engagement. The charter is currently structured to seamlessly switch to fully remote learning if needed.

# RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

## FULL-TERM RENEWAL

**Full-Term Renewal** *The Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Academic Leadership Charter School for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal with a projected total enrollment of 931 students. The Institute makes this recommendation based on Academic Leadership Charter School meeting the criteria for charter renewal set forth in the Policies for the Renewal of Not-for-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).<sup>1</sup>*



To earn a **Subsequent Full-Term Renewal**, a charter must demonstrate that it has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.

### REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the charter has met the SUNY Trustees’ specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the New York Charter School Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”):

- 1: the charter, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal, meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
- 2: the education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the charter in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,
- 3: given the programs it will offer, its structure, and its purpose, approving the charter to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.<sup>2</sup>

1. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

2. See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During its five year charter term, Academic Leadership is an academic success having met or come close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals. The information below demonstrates the key findings for the SUNY Trustees and highlights the successes of the charter.

### FINDINGS & INFORMATION

#### *Is the charter an academic success?*

Academic Leadership is an academic success. During its five year charter term, Academic Leadership met its key Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics.

#### *Is the charter an effective, viable organization?*

Academic Leadership is a viable organization. Leaders work to closely monitor the effectiveness of the educational program to ensure that students have adequate support and are progressing toward meeting academic goals. The board has practices in place to ensure effective oversight and governance of the charter.

#### *Is the charter fiscally sound?*

Academic Leadership is fiscally sound based on the fiscal evidence collected through renewal review. The charter met its fiscal benchmarks throughout the charter term and presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term.

#### *If the SUNY Trustees renew the charter, are the education corporation’s plans for the charter reasonable, feasible, and achievable?*

Academic Leadership’s plans are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The charter will continue to implement the elements of its academic program that led to academic success during the current charter term.

Academic Leadership is an academic success and has in place an effective program. Leaders establish an environment of high expectations for students and staff members. In the absence of recent, reliable state testing data, the charter has effective practices for assessing student achievement and progress in meeting grade level standards. The charter plans to hire additional senior instructional leaders and a master teacher as it expands to another site.

Based on the Institute’s review of the charter’s performance as posted over the charter term; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by the education corporation; a review of academic, organizational, governance, and financial documentation; and a renewal review of the charter’s academic program, the Institute finds that the charter meets the required criteria for renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Academic Leadership Charter School a Full-Term Subsequent Renewal of five years.



# DP

DATA PRESENTATION

PAGES: 6 - 20

AP

ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE

CP

COMPLIANCE  
PERFORMANCE

CS

COMMUNITY  
SATISFACTION

SD

STUDENT  
DEMOGRAPHICS

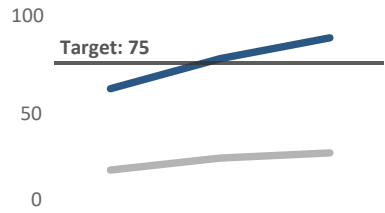


# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

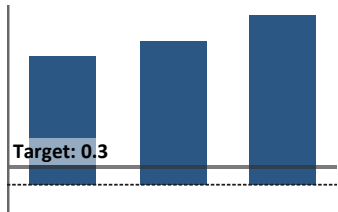
### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**District Comparison.** The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in ELA compared to the district.



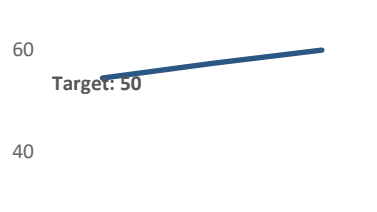
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2017	3-8	22	63
2018	3-8	28	77
2019	3-8	31	88

**Effect Size.** The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2017	3-8	2.16
2018	3-8	2.39
2019	3-8	2.84

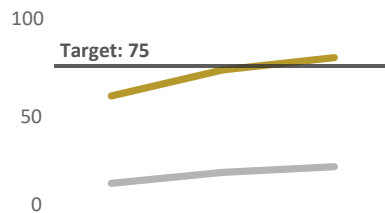
**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2017	54.4
2018	57.3
2019	59.9

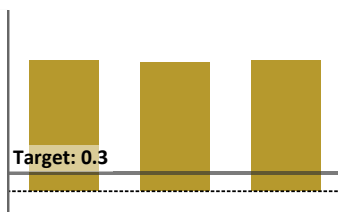
### MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**District Comparison.** The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in mathematics compared to the district.



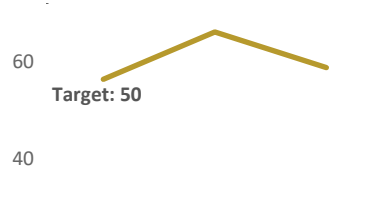
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2017	3-8	18	61
2018	3-8	23	74
2019	3-8	26	80

**Effect Size.** The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2017	3-8	2.17
2018	3-8	2.15
2019	3-8	2.18

**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **mathematics**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2017	56.5
2018	66.3
2019	58.9



# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL



**BASELINE INTERNAL ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2020-21 ELA AND MATHEMATICS - INTERNALLY DEVELOPED\***

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Results
Absolute	2+ students	60%	52%

Measure	Subgroup	Target	Results
Absolute	2+ students	60%	44%

**SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE\*\***

	2017	2018	2019
Students with Disabilities Enrollment	60	55	56
Tested on State Exam	42	38	33
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	31.0	55.3	78.8
District Percent Proficient	6.1	9.6	10.6
ELL Enrollment	64	68	58
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	59	62	53
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	27.1	35.5	22.6

\* For description of internal assessments, see section 1A.  
\*\* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and English language learners ("ELLs") above is not tied to separate goals in the charter school's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam. "Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding. In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s".

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



### HAS THE CHARTER MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

During its five year subsequent charter term, Academic Leadership met its key academic Accountability Plan goals for ELA and mathematics. Notably in 2018-19, the charter exceeded the targets for all five measures in both subject areas. In 2020-21, the charter administered internally developed assessments to monitor the achievement of its students in both subject areas. Academic Leadership also met its science and Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”) goals over the term.

In 2017-18 and 2018-19, the first two years of the charter’s Accountability Period, Academic Leadership posted high results in ELA and mathematics. The charter’s students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates that exceeded the district’s performance by at least 49 percentage points each year in both subjects. In 2018-19, the charter posted proficiency rates that exceeded the absolute target of 75% by 13 percentage points in ELA and five percentage points in mathematics. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, Academic Leadership performed higher than expected to a large degree every year in both subjects. The charter also posted mean growth percentiles in ELA and mathematics that surpassed the target of 50 each year. Notably in 2018-19, Academic Leadership outperformed over 97% of all public schools statewide in ELA and over 91% of all schools in mathematics.

Given the absence of reliable and credible performance data from the state’s ELA and mathematics assessments for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Institute worked with charters and testing experts to develop a set of performance measures for use with internal and nationally normed assessments. The measures provide a guidepost for schools and the general public to understand performance growth and grade level proficiency in ELA and mathematics. This year, the measures serve to establish a baseline for future analyses of school performance. The measures are:

1. Growth Measure: Each year, students grow at the normed rate according to the beginning of year baseline score.
2. Equity Measure 1: Each year, the median growth of students with low initial absolute achievement is greater than the target.
3. Equity Measure 2: Each year, the median growth of students with disabilities, English language learners, and/or other disadvantaged student groups is greater than the median growth of the charter’s general education students.
4. Absolute Measure: Each year, 75 percent of 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above the equivalent of grade level standards.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

In the absence of credible and reliable state exam data in 2020-21, Academic Leadership monitored the attainment of its key academic Accountability Plan goals using internally developed assessments in ELA and mathematics. The charter established absolute achievement targets approved by the Institute. That year, 52% of students met the benchmark in ELA and 44% met the benchmark in mathematics, falling under the target of 60% for both subjects. The charter has the opportunity to develop more detailed action plans to respond to these internal assessment results as well as establish protocols to monitor any disparities across student subgroups.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### BENCHMARK SUMMARY

#### ASSESSMENT

Academic Leadership's assessment system improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The charter has strong systems and routines to regularly administer assessments in ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. Academic Leadership administers three i-Ready assessments annually and internally developed mock state test assessments on a six week cycle. Grade team staff members write science and social studies mock assessments based on curricular resources and released test items from past New York State assessments. Instructional leaders develop mathematics and ELA assessments often using released items from past New York State assessments. To score assessments, instructional staff members work together to establish answer keys and norm scoring. After an assessment is administered, instructional staff members grade exams and input results into an Excel spreadsheet, thus making assessment data immediately accessible to teachers and school leaders. Teachers share trends in student performance, both strengths and areas of growth, and identify the percent of students performing at grade level leaders use data to develop professional development and guide schoolwide instructional staff in determining trends in student achievement. Leaders provide planning time within professional development sessions for grade teams to modify unit plans and lesson plans based on assessment results. Teachers use assessment results to adjust classroom instruction and determine which students receive small group instruction and additional classroom support. Specifically, assessment results inform teachers on which students to prioritize for extra support during lessons. Leaders utilize assessment data to identify professional development and coaching priorities, such as shifting to project-based curricula in science and social studies to support literacy and mathematics instruction. As Academic Leadership plans to grow, instructional staff and leadership have the opportunity to codify expectations for how classroom teachers can differentiate instruction based on assessment data.

#### CURRICULUM

Academic Leadership's curricula are progressing toward supporting teachers in their instructional planning. The charter uses in-house curricular maps and pacing guides that provide an underlying structure to the charter's curricula and generally guide teachers on what topics to teach and when to teach them. Veteran teachers develop the in-house curricular maps, and then all teachers have the freedom to build lesson plans from an array of commercially available curricular resources approved by charter leaders. In ELA, teachers build the curriculum from Savvas Realize, Progress NY, Imagine Language and Literacy, ReadyGEN, Open Core, and resources such as Cricket and Cobblestone magazines. Similarly, the mathematics curriculum is developed by pulling resources from Savvas Realize, Go Math!, Ready NY, EngageNY, and Investigations3 Math, and others. Science and social studies curricula rely primarily on Savvas trade books, supplemented with Scott Foresman Science, FOSS, and Cobblestone Magazine resources. Throughout the year, teachers have opportunities to meet with staff from other grades and campuses to ensure vertical alignment of the curricula. Professional development time is devoted to planning so that grade teams can review unit plans and write lesson plans together, and to support classroom teachers in making lessons their own through internalizing the content.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Therefore, teachers have autonomy in how they select materials and modify resources to provide differentiated instruction from a variety of leader approved online and print materials. While the charter uses a variety of research based, high quality curricular materials to develop its unit and lesson plans, leaders can continue to work on strengthening the charter’s internal processes for modifying materials to differentiate instruction and for ensuring curricular materials are consistently rigorous and aligned to state standards.

### PEDAGOGY

Effective instruction is evident throughout most Academic Leadership classrooms. While the charter’s instructional priorities support purposeful lessons with clear objectives across subject areas, Institute staff members observed lessons aligned to clear objectives only in some classrooms. In the classrooms where learning activities aligned to clear objectives, lessons were purposeful and organized around particular concepts, skills, and standards. Students engaged in lessons and activities, which maximized learning time. Teachers facilitated opportunities for students to demonstrate deeper understanding of objectives. Institute team members observed effective time management and pacing, which allowed students to stay engaged while mastering new skills and learning new concepts. In some of the classrooms observed, teachers checked for understanding during lessons and adjusted instruction to foster students’ depth of understanding. While Academic Leadership instructional leaders prioritize teachers internalizing content and personalizing lessons, the charter has the opportunity to strengthen its internal processes for developing teachers’ skills in modifying lesson plans to ensure that lesson delivery and instruction are consistent across classrooms, grades, and content areas.

### INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Instructional leadership at Academic Leadership is developing and expanding. Leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed. After the departure of the middle school principal in 2019, the charter adapted the principal position to include instructional oversight of both elementary and middle school programs. As a result, teachers rely heavily on grade team and content leaders at each campus to provide professional development, observation, feedback, and support with behavior management. Instructional leaders provide coaching and supervision that improves teacher effectiveness and meets the needs of teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, instructional leadership prioritized providing learning materials for staff members that focus on supporting students’ mental health. Grade team and content leaders also regularly deliver professional development and instructional coaching sessions. Instructional leaders observe classrooms at least twice a month and provide feedback to teachers after each observation in personal meetings as well as informal check-ins. Each teacher is formally observed annually, and leaders provide feedback aligned with Academic Leadership’s in-house evaluation rubric. Grade teams submit lesson plans and assessments for review, and leaders provide feedback two weeks before delivering the content. Teachers are expected to modify lesson plans and assessments to improve instructional effectiveness based on feedback. Grade team and content leaders contribute to curriculum planning within and across grade levels. The charter provides autonomy to teachers in incorporating

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

teachers' personal interests and building daily lessons, which teachers appreciate. While Academic Leadership has a strong culture of continuous improvement, leaders can continue to develop a comprehensive professional development program that improves the pedagogical skills of all teachers. The charter's model to promote from within provides ample opportunities for teachers to grow into leadership positions, but it risks overburdening veteran and skilled staff members who must fulfill multiple roles. The addition of more instructional leadership roles, which is planned for the next charter term, if approved, will provide more support, coaching, and development to teaching staff.

### AT RISK

Academic Leadership creates intervention programs to support students struggling academically, ELLs, and students with disabilities. Leaders and teachers describe Academic Leadership as having an inclusive instructional environment and stressed that, to the extent possible, the charter delivers push-in supports to students rather than pulling students out of class to receive services. The Institute observed intervention specialists providing small group and individual student supports during lessons. At the beginning of each school year, the special education coordinator meets with all teachers to determine a roster of students who may benefit from additional, targeted supports. Teachers administer a baseline assessment, review previous student academic achievement results, and then use these data to determine Response to Intervention ("RTI") student groupings. If students do not respond to increased academic supports, or if new concerns are identified, student needs are re-evaluated for possible referral to the district committee on special education ("CSE"). Leaders and teachers review student academic performance on unit and mock assessments to track student progress toward individualized education program ("IEP") and English language acquisition goals. Student support staff attend teacher team meetings and have a process for collaborating with general education teachers to discuss and monitor student needs. As with some of the general education teachers, the student support team fulfills multiple roles at the charter. A special education coordinator provides program coordination and compliance support to both the elementary and middle school programs while also delivering special education services and support at the elementary level. While the two full time special education teachers provide support to students at the middle school level, the special education teachers also co-teach core academic classes and provide class coverage as needed.

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Academic Leadership's organization operates in a manner that allows the academic program to function. However, given general issues in the education field resulting from COVID-19, staffing issues present a challenge for the charter. The charter's founder continues to serve as the executive director and provides support in the following areas: construction of a new building, interactions with the board of trustees, student recruitment, and recruiting and hiring new staff members. One principal oversees both the elementary and middle school programs. All school operations and programs report to the principal including classroom teachers, co-curricular teachers, support staff, and finance, operations, and administrative associates. Staff members know who to go to for support and identified the principal as the line of accountability to the

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

executive director. Leaders report plans to hire additional senior instructional leaders and a master teacher, and expressed struggles with finding new hires who are willing to commit to a longer nine period school day and an extended year. Leaders recognize the need for more classroom teachers. The leadership team meets once per month to reflect on goals and student academic progress. Leaders make changes to the charter's programs, if necessary, such as adopting a more thematic approach to cross subject lesson planning to give students more exposure to ELA and mathematics content in all classes. The executive director expressed setting high expectations for teacher recruitment to ensure that candidates align with Academic Leadership's mission, vision, and approach to teaching.

### BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

Academic Leadership's board works effectively to achieve the charter's Accountability Plan goals. Board members possess a wide range of skills, and the board is seeking to add additional members, specifically to increase the board's diversity. The board utilizes three standing committees: finance; real estate; and, education, which report to the full board. Board members identified several priorities including maintaining oversight of the charter's progress toward meeting its academic goals and a focus on building the charter's internal capacity. The board stays up to date with data dashboards every six weeks and through presentations from school leaders during board meetings. Board members are also well versed on key issues related to the school and evaluate themselves. In response to the shift to remote learning and the continuing issues related to the pandemic, board members arranged for supports to ensure student learning interruptions were minimal and that students and families received social emotional supports. Although the board evaluates school leaders annually, board members have the opportunity to clearly articulate, define, and strengthen the measures, goals, or metrics used to evaluate leaders.

During the charter term, the board spent considerable time and energy on the development of a new 60,000 sq. ft. facility. It hired a consultant to assist the board and selected a general contractor based on bids. The board funded and monitored a contingency fund and engaged in a Build NYC Resource Corp. tax-exempt bond financing process with assistance of counsel that culminated in a \$17.7 million issuance in June of 2021 with a BBB- rating from Standard & Poors. The building should become available in the latter part of the 2022-23 school year.

## COMPLIANCE REPORTING



### HAS THE CHARTER SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIED WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER?

*Academic Leadership substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter. During the current charter term the education corporation demonstrates compliance with the terms of its charter including the timely submission of required reporting to the Institute.*

#### ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

**Annual Reports** While Academic Leadership’s website contained some older annual reports and current audits, the charter did not post the most recent annual report in violation of the Act. The Institute will work with Academic Leadership to have it post the annual report.

**Board Meeting Minutes** While the board regularly keeps meeting minutes and sends them to the Institute, it has not posted minutes on the charter’s website since December of 2021 in violation of N.Y. Executive Law § 106(3), which requires posting within two weeks. The Institute will work with Academic Leadership to ensure the minutes are available on the charter’s website.

**Bylaws** The Academic Leadership bylaws need minor revisions to be in compliance with the N.Y. Education Law, Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, and the General Municipal Law. The Institute will work with the charter to amend the bylaws prior to the beginning of the next charter term, if granted.

**Code of Ethics** Academic Leadership’s code of ethics needs revision and must incorporate a conflicts of interest policy. The Institute will work with board to help it approve a comprehensive, updated document to be distributed to the board and employees.

**FOIL** Academic Leadership’s website did not contain any of the required N.Y. Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”) information at the time of the renewal review including addresses and contacts for FOIL requests and appeals, the link to the N.Y.S. Committee on Open Government, and the subject matter list of records held by the charter. The Institute will work with Academic Leadership to update the website prior to the next charter term.

**Policies and Procedures** Several of the charter’s policies and procedures need minor revision. The 504 policy, as presented in the family handbook is under-developed, and the formal policy does not provide specific, school-based information. The discipline policy does not contain a reference to the federal Gun Free Schools Act, which is partially but not fully captured

## COMPLIANCE REPORTING

by a separate dangerous weapons policy that references state not federal law. The students with disabilities discipline policy omits certain information about manifestation determination reviews and does not reference behavioral intervention plans. The attendance policy does not provide all of the information needed regarding dropping students from enrollment in accordance with Education Law subdivision 3202(1-a). The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) policy and notice omits certain required information. Lastly, the complaint policy on the website is outdated, sets up an impermissible two-step process for bringing complaints to the board, and reflects the prior authorizer as the entity to handle appeals.

In rare cases, the Academic Leadership board does not record in its meeting minutes the votes to go into and out of executive session as required by the N.Y. Open Meetings Law or the vote of each trustee on a vote. The Institute will work with Academic Leadership to remedy the above deficiencies and update policies and procedures as needed.

### ***Teacher Certification***

The Act allows charters to hire up to 15 uncertified faculty members contingent upon those teachers meeting certain requirements including: two years of Teach for America experience; three years of teaching experience; status as a higher education professor; exceptional experience in a subject; or, teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or career and technical education courses.

At the time of the visit the charter employed three teachers over the allowable limit of uncertified teachers but three of the uncertified teachers did not meet the teaching experience levels required by the Act. Academic Leadership provides a pay differential to certified teachers and has a tuition reimbursement program for teachers who have been with the charter three years and commit to another three years.

## COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

To report on parent satisfaction with the charter’s program, the Institute used satisfaction survey data, information gathered from a focus group of parents representing a cross section of students, and data regarding persistence in enrollment.

### PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSE RATE	OVERALL SATISFACTION	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	STRONG FAMILY & COMMUNITY TIES	TRUST
43%	92%	90%	91%	95%

#### *Parent Survey Data*

The Institute compiled data from the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) 2020-21 family satisfaction survey. In 2021-22, 43% of families who received the survey responded. The Institute and NYCDOE both recognize that response rates for the family survey are lower than previous years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the families who responded, 92% expressed satisfaction with the charter’s program.

#### *Parent Focus Group*

The Institute asks all charters facing renewal to convene a representative set of parents for a focus group discussion. A representative set includes parents of students in attendance at the charter for multiple years, parents of students new to the charter, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. The 18 Academic Leadership family members in attendance expressed high levels of satisfaction with the charter’s response to the pandemic, and its management of the transition from remote to in-person learning. Families reported that teachers and leaders were attentive to struggling students during the pandemic and staged small group interventions in response to family requests. The majority of parents present for the focus group expressed gratitude for the level of communication the charter maintained over time through email, phone calls, text messages, and other forms of outreach. Parents of ELLs noted that the charter navigates language barriers well in order to ensure that all stakeholders are aware and informed. Families felt that teachers challenge children academically at Academic Leadership and prepare children for rigorous high school outcomes indicating ongoing satisfaction with the program.

#### *Public Comments*

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the district in which the charter school is located regarding the Application for Charter Renewal. The full text of any written comments received from the district appears below, which also includes a summary of any public comments.

The NYCDOE held its required hearing on Academic Leadership’s renewal application on April 4, 2022 by videoconference. One person spoke in support of the application. The charter leader stated the school had been in CSD 7 for 12 years and was hoping to continue its success with a five year renewal and expansion in enrollment. No one spoke in opposition to the application.

## COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

**Persistence in Enrollment** An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2020-21, 79% of Academic Leadership students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in student demographics section of the report.

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*The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or the New York State Education Department ("NYSED") is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.*

# STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

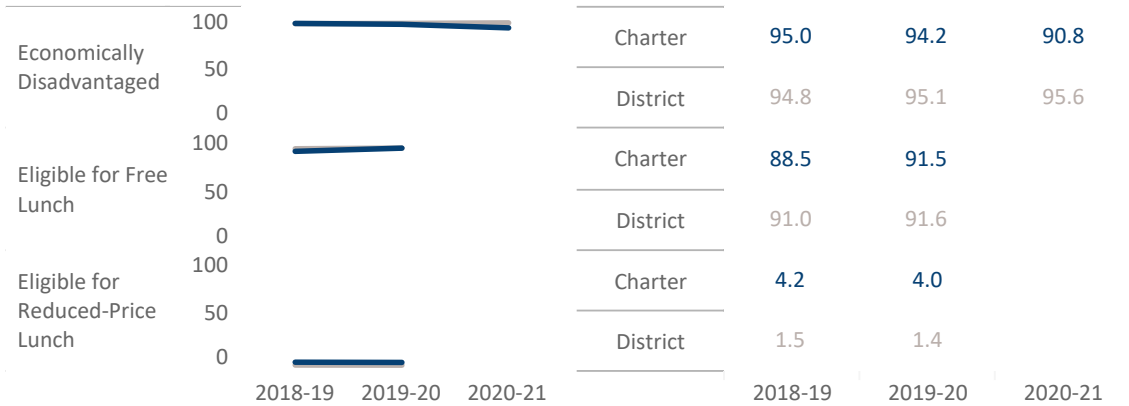
Academic Leadership Charter School

Bronx CSD 7

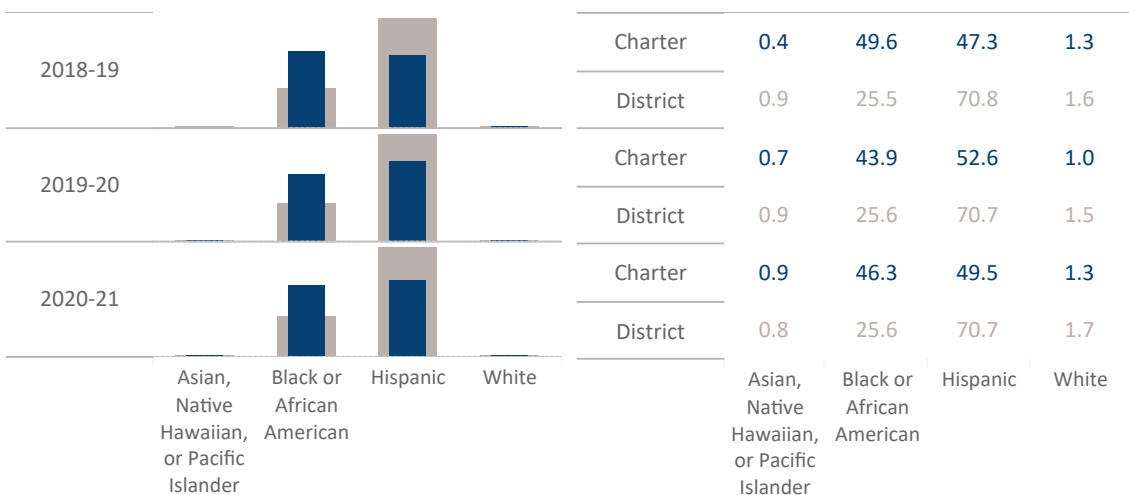
## Student Demographics: Special Populations



## Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



## Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



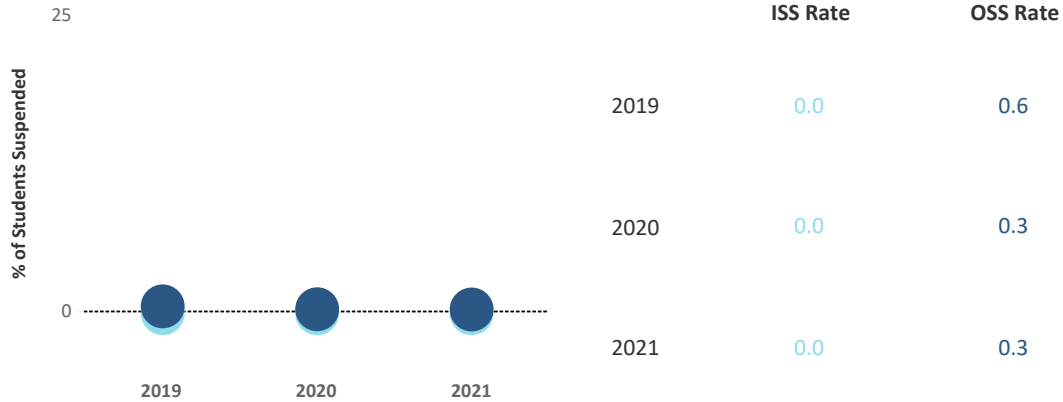
\* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED except for the charter's 2020-21 ELL enrollment which reflects data reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.



# STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

## Academic Leadership Charter School

## Bronx CSD 7



### ISS Rate

### OSS Rate

Year	ISS Rate	OSS Rate
2019	0.0	0.6
2020	0.0	0.3
2021	0.0	0.3

Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

**Persistence in Enrollment:** The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return

**Expulsions:** The number of students expelled from the charter each year

Year	Persistence in Enrollment (%)	Expulsions (2019)	Expulsions (2020)	Expulsions (2021)
2018-19	74.7			
2019-20	74.6	0	0	0
2020-21	79.0			

### Academic Leadership Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2020-21

		Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	95.4	90.8
	English language learners	20.9	13.4
	students with disabilities	22.9	13.4
retention	economically disadvantaged	91.3	79.7
	English language learners	92.1	75.0
	students with disabilities	92.1	71.1

\* Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it will put in place to meet or exceed SUNY’s enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program. The Institute examines each charter’s progress toward meeting or coming close to meeting its targets over the charter term as well as the efforts it has and will put in place to meet or continue to meet those targets.

Academic Leadership makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. Although the charter does not currently meet any target, leaders use the following strategies to meet targets in the next charter term:

- developing a strong relationship with the charter’s CSE and providing it with flyers about the charter;
- forming a partnership with a local housing agency in its district, which houses thousands of families in order to conduct outreach locally;
- implementing an ELL preference for the lottery;
- partnering with local daycare centers and Head Start programs within the local district specifically ones that serve students with disabilities;
- presenting information about the charter to daycare centers that offer bilingual programs and special education programs;
- providing high quality programs for students with disabilities and ELLs that enable the school to retain students; and,
- utilizing families as spokespeople for the school to attract other families.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

*Academic Leadership is fiscally sound based on the Institute’s review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that the education corporation has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.<sup>3</sup>*



The charter currently operates its program in two NYCDOE co-located facilities, but is planning to open a third, private facility during the next charter term, if approved. Academic Leadership purchased land in March 2016 to develop into a new facility that can accommodate approximately 600 students in the charter’s 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This facility will also allow the charter to expand its Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs in its two current facilities. The new building is scheduled to open beginning in the 2023-24 school year.



### DOES THE CHARTER OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN WITH REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

***The education corporation operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate. The following elements are generally present:***

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures.	+
Board members, charter leadership, and staff members contribute to the budget process, as appropriate.	+
The education corporation frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan for the charter to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions.	+
The education corporation routinely analyzes budget variances for the charter; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions.	+
Actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.	+

<sup>3</sup>. The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

“+” : This indicator is generally present.

“-” : This indicator is generally not present.

“P” : The education corporation is progressing toward this indicator being present.

“N/A” : This indicator is not applicable.



## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### DOES THE CHARTER MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

*The education corporation maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures. The following elements are generally present:*

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures, and practices, and maintains appropriate internal controls.	+
The most recent audit report was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	+
The education corporation’s Financial Policies and Procedures manual is reviewed and updated on a regular basis.	<b>JULY 2021</b>

### DOES THE CHARTER COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

*The education corporation complies with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and NYSED with required financial reports that are on time, complete, and follow generally accepted accounting principles. The following reports are generally filed in a timely, accurate, and complete manner:*

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
Annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable.	+
Annual budgets.	+
Un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment.	+
Bi-monthly enrollment reports to the sending districts and, if applicable, to NYSED including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students.	+
Grant expenditure reports.	+

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### DOES THE CHARTER MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

*The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the charter are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations, and fundraising). The following elements are generally present:*

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly.	+
The education corporation maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally 30 days).	+
The education corporation prepares and monitors cash flow projections.	+
If the education corporation includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis.	N/A
If necessary, the education corporation pursues district state aid intercepts with NYSED to ensure adequate per pupil funding.	N/A
The education corporation accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the charter’s operating budget for the upcoming year.	+
The education corporation is in compliance with all loan covenants.	+

Academic Leadership reported operating surpluses in each year of the current charter term. This contributed to the charter building \$40.3 million in net assets and 33 months of cash on hand to pay liabilities due shortly, which have more recently been reduced as the education corporation incurs new facilities costs. The charter also set aside a portion of the cash on hand to develop a new facility to house a portion of the charter’s program. The fiscal dashboard at the end of this section reports continued fiscal strength of the charter. Academic Leadership has funded and maintained the required \$75,000 in a separate escrow account in case of dissolution.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

#### CHARTER INFORMATION

#### BALANCE SHEET

##### Assets

##### Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - **GRAPH 1**  
Grants and Contracts Receivable  
Accounts Receivable  
Prepaid Expenses  
Contributions and Other Receivables

##### Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1

Property, Building and Equipment, net  
Other Assets

##### Total Assets - GRAPH 1

##### Liabilities and Net Assets

##### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses  
Accrued Payroll and Benefits  
Deferred Revenue  
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt  
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable  
Other

##### Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1

Deferred Rent/Lease Liability

All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities

##### Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1

##### Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions  
With Donor Restrictions

##### Total Net Assets

##### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

#### ACTIVITIES

##### Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment  
Students with Disabilities

##### Grants and Contracts

State and local  
Federal - Title and IDEA  
Federal - Other  
Other  
NYC DoE Rental Assistance  
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

##### Total Operating Revenue

##### Expenses

Regular Education  
SPED  
Other  
Management and General  
Fundraising

##### Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4

##### Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

##### Support and Other Revenue

Contributions  
Fundraising  
Miscellaneous Income  
Net assets released from restriction

##### Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue

Total Temporally Restricted Revenue

##### Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3

##### Change in Net Assets

##### Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

##### Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2

Opened 2009-10 (Transfer from NYCDOE to SUNY 2017-18)

	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Cash and Cash Equivalents - <b>GRAPH 1</b>	-	19,559,344	23,964,961	28,080,162	13,110,311
Grants and Contracts Receivable	-	302,401	439,926	632,390	309,016
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	-	-	-	-	18,523
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	-	19,861,745	24,404,887	28,712,552	13,437,850
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	3,845,287	4,094,686	5,846,567	8,575,902
Other Assets	-	76,124	77,183	78,076	38,906,346
<b>Total Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	-	23,783,156	28,576,756	34,637,195	60,920,098

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	-	268,738	395,120	317,087	687,067
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	-	440,220	323,663	389,622	473,754
Deferred Revenue	-	36,695	1,975	-	75,782
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	885,000
Other	-	-	-	-	29,452
<b>Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	-	745,653	720,758	706,709	2,151,055
Deferred Rent/Lease Liability	-	-	-	-	-
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	-	18,434,318
<b>Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	-	745,653	720,758	706,709	20,585,373

Without Donor Restrictions	-	22,961,379	27,778,815	33,930,486	40,334,725
With Donor Restrictions	-	76,124	77,183	-	-
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	-	23,037,503	27,855,998	33,930,486	40,334,725
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	-	23,783,156	28,576,756	34,637,195	60,920,098

Resident Student Enrollment	-	7,545,393	7,616,230	9,102,721	9,775,778
Students with Disabilities	-	372,407	301,950	461,095	631,252
<b>Grants and Contracts</b>	-	-	-	-	-
State and local	-	38,954	277,275	166,104	48,033
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	639,732	589,386	524,912	573,654
Federal - Other	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
NYC DoE Rental Assistance	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	-	8,596,486	8,784,841	10,254,832	11,028,717

Regular Education	-	3,737,656	3,787,518	3,894,601	3,982,148
SPED	-	160,419	133,364	178,981	247,353
Other	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Program Services</b>	-	3,898,075	3,920,882	4,073,582	4,229,501
Management and General	-	433,151	431,404	524,334	539,191
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 &amp; 4</b>	-	4,331,226	4,352,286	4,597,916	4,768,692
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations</b>	-	4,265,260	4,432,555	5,656,916	6,260,025

Contributions	-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	181,411	385,940	417,572	144,214
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Support and Other Revenue</b>	-	181,411	385,940	417,572	144,214

Total Unrestricted Revenue	-	8,777,897	9,170,781	10,672,404	11,172,931
Total Temporally Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 &amp; 3</b>	-	8,777,897	9,170,781	10,672,404	11,172,931

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	-	4,446,671	4,818,495	6,074,488	6,404,239
<b>Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	-	18,590,832	23,037,503	27,855,998	33,930,486
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	-	23,037,503	27,855,998	33,930,486	40,334,725

# FISCAL ANALYSIS

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

### CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Personnel Service	-	143,095	145,196	225,295	665,444
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Instructional Personnel	-	2,775,669	2,558,011	2,722,640	2,523,476
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	-	<b>2,918,764</b>	<b>2,703,207</b>	<b>2,947,935</b>	<b>3,188,920</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	716,889	715,606	672,304	855,466
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	-	-	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing	-	-	-	-	-
Staff Development	-	12,802	6,757	11,344	2,629
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	77,440	83,722	85,435	97,972
Marketing / Recruitment	-	49,757	302,803	123,055	111,997
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	254,784	257,944	431,424	144,987
Depreciation	-	83,777	64,583	82,237	99,376
Other	-	217,013	217,664	244,182	267,345
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	<b>4,331,226</b>	<b>4,352,286</b>	<b>4,597,916</b>	<b>4,768,692</b>

#### CHARTER ANALYSIS

##### ENROLLMENT

	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Original Chartered Enrollment	-	500	600	625	650
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)	-	500	525	575	600
Actual Enrollment - <b>GRAPH 4</b>	-	484	498	565	610
Chartered Grades	-	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)	-	-	-	-	-

##### Primary School District: NYC CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Increase over prior year	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	5.1%	5.2%

##### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Operating	-	17,763	17,656	18,159	18,070
Other Revenue and Support	-	375	776	739	236
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	<b>18,138</b>	<b>18,431</b>	<b>18,898</b>	<b>18,307</b>
Expenses	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Program Services	-	8,055	7,880	7,213	6,930
Management and General, Fundraising	-	895	867	928	883
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	<b>8,950</b>	<b>8,747</b>	<b>8,142</b>	<b>7,813</b>
% of Program Services	0.0%	90.0%	90.1%	88.6%	88.7%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	10.0%	9.9%	11.4%	11.3%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	0.0%	102.7%	110.7%	132.1%	134.3%
<b>% of Revenue Expended on Facilities</b>	#DIV/0!	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

##### Student to Faculty Ratio

	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	-	12.6	13.8	15.5	17.7

##### Faculty to Admin Ratio

	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	-	5.1	5.0	4.9	5.8

##### Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	0.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
	N/A	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong

##### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	0	19,116,092	23,684,129	28,005,843	11,286,795
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	217.8%	258.3%	262.4%	101.0%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	26.6	33.9	40.6	6.2
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

##### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	0.0	26.6	33.9	40.6	6.2
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

##### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

##### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score	2016 17	2017 18	2018 19	2019 20	2020 21
	0.0	54.2	66.1	73.3	33.0
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

## FUTURE PLANS



### IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE CHARTER, ARE THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S PLANS FOR THE CHARTER REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

*Academic Leadership’s plans for the future are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The charter continues to demonstrate strong academic achievement.*

#### ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

**Plans for the Charter’s Structure.** The education corporation has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

**Plans for the Educational Program.** Academic Leadership plans to implement the same core elements of its academic program that has allowed it to meet the charter’s Accountability Plan goals. Leaders shared plans to promote from within to add more instructional leaders across Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. With the new facility slated to open in 2023-24, the charter will add additional seats to serve more students in the expanded space.

**Plans for Board Oversight & Governance.** Current board members express interest in continuing to serve Academic Leadership in the future. The board indicates it plans to recruit more diverse members to its board.

**Fiscal & Facility Plans.** Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the five year financial plan, Academic Leadership presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including school budgets that are feasible and achievable.

Academic Leadership is building a new facility to house a portion of its program to open in 2023-24. The charter will operate 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade in this new facility. Academic Leadership’s two current facilities are located in NYCDOE co-located space. The charter will continue to operate in these two facilities up until and after the new facility opens. Once the new facility opens, grades Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will be in one of the current facilities with 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the other. The charter is requesting to expand its chartered enrollment to serve more students in its community, if approved.

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
<b>Enrollment</b>	725	931
<b>Grade Span</b>	K-8	K-8
<b>Teaching Staff</b>	40	59
<b>Days of Instruction</b>	190	190

Academic Leadership

# AX

APPENDICES

PAGES AX 1-6

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CHARTER  
OVERVIEW

PAGE Ax 1

<sup>B</sup>  
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REPORT  
INFORMATION

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**ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<b>CHAIR</b>	<b>TRUSTEES</b>
James Sander	Robert Ansbro
<b>VICE CHAIR</b>	Sean Blackwell
Christopher Brignola	
<b>TREASURER</b>	
Lucas Doe	

**CHARTER LEADERS**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
*Norma Hurwitz, Executive Director (February 2009 – Present)*

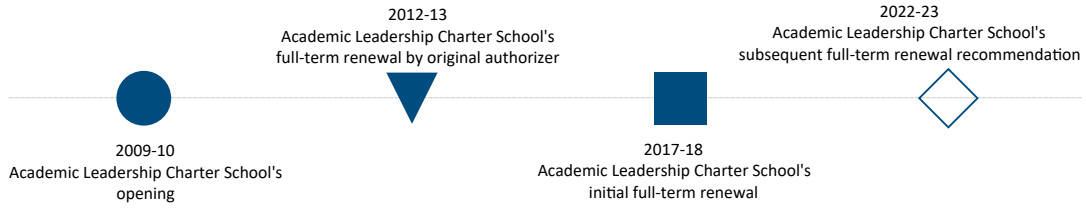
**PRINCIPAL**  
*Leena Thomas, Principal (August 2012 – Present)*  
*Jaime Rosas, Middle School Principal (September 2015 – July 2019)*

**CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS**

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2017-18	500	484	97%	K-8
2018-19	525	498	95%	K-8
2019-20	575	565	98%	K-8
2020-21	600	610	102%	K-8
2021-22	675	565	84%	K-8



**TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL**



**CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY**

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2017-18	Initial Renewal	December 5 - 6, 2017
2021-22	Subsequent Renewal	March 8, 2022

**CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW**

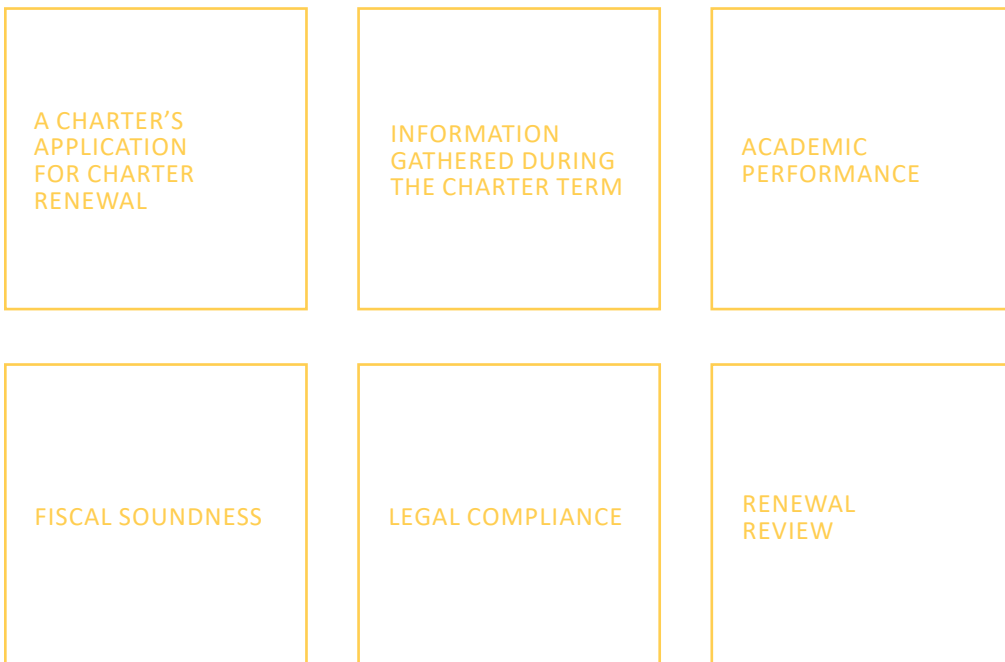
DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
March 8, 2022	Vickie Masséus	School Evaluation Analyst
	Erin Allen	Senior Analyst
	Katy Clayton	School Evaluation Analyst
	Sally Bachofer	External Consultant

The sections below contain general information about the SUNY Trustees’ and Institute’s approach to renewal.

### REPORT FORMAT

This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a charter school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a charter’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the ***Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York*** (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).<sup>1</sup>

### THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON



***Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the charter’s record of academic performance and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.***

1. Revised September 4, 2013 and available on the [Institute’s website](#).

## REPORT FORMAT

This renewal recommendation report compiles evidence using the *State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks* (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),<sup>2</sup> which specify in detail what a successful charter school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the four interconnected renewal questions below for framing benchmark statements to determine if a charter has made an adequate case for renewal.

## RENEWAL QUESTIONS



**IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

**IS THE CHARTER AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?**

**IS THE CHARTER FISCALLY SOUND?**

**IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE CHARTER, ARE THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S PLANS FOR THE CHARTER REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?**

This report contains appendices that provide additional statistical and organizationally related information including a statistical charter overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, and the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the charter. If applicable, the appendices also include additional information about the education corporation, its charters and student achievement of those charters.



*Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).*

*2. Version 5.0, May 2012, are available on the [Institute’s website](#).*



## IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS? THE INFORMATION BELOW HIGHLIGHTS THE INSTITUTE'S AND SUNY TRUSTEES' APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY PLANS FOR EACH SUNY AUTHORIZED CHARTER.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,<sup>3</sup> the charter developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals for performance in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics, as well as science and the federal Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"). High school Accountability Plans also include goals for High School Graduation, College Preparation, and Social Studies. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. The Institute examines results for all required Accountability Plan measures to determine goal attainment. The Act requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"<sup>4</sup> and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"<sup>5</sup> for other public schools. SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present schools':

ABSOLUTE PERFORMANCE, I.E., WHAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORE AT A CERTAIN PROFICIENCY ON STATE EXAMS?

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW DID THE CHARTER DO AS COMPARED TO SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS THAT SERVE SIMILAR POPULATIONS OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

GROWTH PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW MUCH DID THE CHARTER GROW STUDENT PERFORMANCE AS COMPARED TO THE GROWTH OF SIMILARLY SITUATED STUDENTS?

Absolute, comparative, and growth achievement provide a basis for triangulating charter performance within each academic goal area. Furthermore, every SUNY authorized charter school may propose additional, mission aligned goals and measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. The final Accountability Plan adopted by the education corporation's board and approved by the Institute is included in the charter and frames the analysis of the charter's student achievement results.

The Institute consistently emphasizes comparative and growth performance over absolute measures in its analysis of goal attainment. Nevertheless, the Institute analyzes every measure included in a charter's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success, including the extent to which each charter has established and maintained a record of high performance and demonstrated progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the charter term. Whether or not a charter includes additional measures in its Accountability Plan, the Institute considers all available evidence of charter performance at the time of renewal.

3. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a charter in a subsequent charter term, the Accountability Period covers the final year of the previous charter term and ends with the school year prior to the final year of the current charter term. In this renewal report, the Institute uses "charter term" and "Accountability Period" interchangeably.

4. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

5. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

State assessment data in ELA, mathematics, and science in 3<sup>rd</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade form the basis of data required to analyze the required accountability measures for elementary and middle schools. These data were not available in 2019-20 following the state’s cancellation of all state exams during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although schools participated in state assessments in ELA and mathematics in 2020-21, the participation rates that year were inconsistent. The resulting data is not sufficiently reliable or credible for cogent analyses of charter academic performance. In response, the Institute provided all SUNY authorized charter schools a framework for the analysis of norm-referenced and internally developed exam data. To every extent possible, the Institute attempted to maintain a consistent framework of examining absolute, comparative, and growth performance. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, charters reported data on a variety of norm-referenced and internally developed assessments to demonstrate student academic success. This renewal report contemplates charter performance during the pandemic through the lenses of absolute and growth performance on norm-referenced and internally developed ELA, mathematics, and science assessments along with high school completion and college readiness data.



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