



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

## Summary of Findings

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# **FORTE PREPARATORY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM REVISION**

**REPORT DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2022**

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## **EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW**

The State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) approved the charter for Forte Preparatory Academy Charter School (“Forte Prep”) June 13, 2016. The charter opened in September 2017. Forte Prep received a full-term renewal on March 9, 2022 and currently serves 360 students in 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The most recent renewal report for Forte Prep is available at [www.suny.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/meetings/webcastdocs/III6\\_Forte\\_Renewal\\_Report.pdf](http://www.suny.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/meetings/webcastdocs/III6_Forte_Renewal_Report.pdf).

## **Proposed High School Program**

The proposed high school program builds upon the Forte Prep middle school program’s track record of high academic achievement, strong organizational capacity, and fiscal health. With a focus on community and student voice, the program will offer students in 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade opportunities for high academic attainment that include a variety of Advanced Placement (“AP”) courses; annual capstone projects which build upon the student’s voice and develop them into changemakers in their communities; and, annual city centered learning expeditions where students experience their neighborhoods through immigrant stories and build skills to work with community partners on urban design and revitalization. The high school program will offer the courses necessary for a Regents diploma as well as the Arts and World Languages Pathways. The charter selected these pathways after receiving feedback from current students. Any additions to the program, if granted, will come from its future students - continuing the practice of allowing space for student voice in the program design.

**Community Need.** Forte Prep primarily will serve students living in New York City Community School District (“CSD”) 24 in Queens where schools are chronically overcrowded. While many students enrolling the Forte Prep high school program will matriculate from the existing 5-8 program, charter leaders anticipate a portion of students from other charters and district schools will choose Forte Prep for its truly college and career preparatory high school programming. Accessible, high quality high school program seats in the Forte Prep’s catchment area are rare. The average four year graduation rate among all district and charter high schools available in the area in 2020-21 was 85%, which was 2 percentage points lower than New York State’s average rate that same year. Also that year, 84% of the graduation cohort completed high school with at least a Regents Diploma or higher.

With only one other charter high school program option (opened in 2022-23) available in CSD 24, Forte Prep is uniquely positioned to offer a high quality high school program to families residing there. CSDs 24 and 30 have experienced overcrowding in district buildings. In addition, SUNY authorizes three charters in CSD 24 without a high school option. Forte Prep’s high school would serve as a high quality and needed option with CSD 24. Forte Prep conducted focus groups and interviews with graduates who expressed while they feel prepared for high school and the next steps in their educational journey, many feel like the coursework in 9th grade is not challenging enough, or that their peers in existing high schools do not have the same focus, organizational skills, or academic capabilities as they are accustomed to in Forte Prep’s middle school program. In addition, alumni described a lack of community and feeling alienated or disoriented in their current district high schools after graduating from Forte Prep’s middle school program.

## **Academic Analysis**

Forte Prep is an academic success having met its key Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics since its opening in fall 2017. The charter demonstrates high absolute achievement in ELA and mathematics. From 2018-19 through 2021-22, the charter’s students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates that surpassed the local district in 2018-19 and 2021-22, the years with credible and reliable state exam data. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, Forte Prep performed higher than expected to a large degree in ELA and mathematics from 2017-18 through 2021-22. Notably, the charter posted a record of superlative growth scores over its existence. In 2017-18 and 2018-19, the two years in which mean growth percentiles are available, the charter exceeded the target of 50 by as much as 30 points.

Programmatically, Forte Prep is characterized by high achievement and high expectations for performance. Leaders provide ample support to teachers in the form of coaching, professional development, and precise feedback for improvement. In turn, leaders expect high academic results in each classroom. Teachers provide high quality instruction to students and effectively support students with disabilities and English language learners. The Education Corporation’s organizational structure is clear with routines and procedures to support the charter’s academic achievement. The education corporation board holds itself and the charter’s leaders accountable for delivering on the promises of the charter’s mission.

## **Fiscal Analysis**

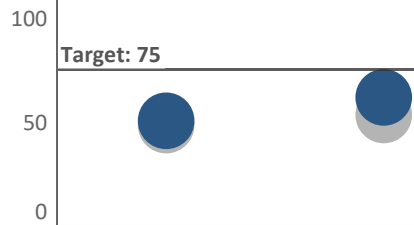
The Institute reviewed the proposed high school program elements (including enrollment projections, curriculum, and staffing), policies, facility cost projections, budgets, as well as contingency plans and found them satisfactory. The Institute reviewed the most recent audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022 and finds the fiscal health of the Education Corporation continues to be fiscally strong. The Education Corporation consistently reports stable net assets and maintains 3.9 months of cash on hand to pay bills coming due shortly. As of June 30, 2021, net assets were \$3.4 million. (See the Institute’s most recent Fiscal Dashboard included with this summary.)

Forte Prep plans to utilize incubation space to launch the first 9<sup>th</sup> grade class in 2023 and is working with professionals to identify long term facility space as well as retrofit such space to accommodate the program needs for the long term.

The Institute also reviewed the proposed revision from the legal perspective and finds it suitable under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 and applicable law. The Institute recommends the SUNY Trustees approve the requested revision.

**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**.



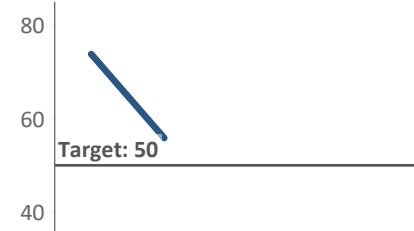
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2018	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019	6	49	51
2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	6-8	53	62

**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
2018	5	1.51
2019	5-6	1.27
2020	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A
2022	5-8	1.24

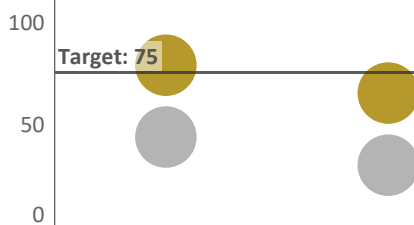
**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2018	74.1
2019	56.0
2020	N/A
2021	N/A
2022	N/A

**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 %
2018	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019	6	44	79
2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	6-8	29	66

**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
2018	5	1.96
2019	5-6	1.89
2020	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A
2022	5-8	2.57

**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
2018	80.0
2019	78.6
2020	N/A
2021	N/A
2022	N/A

**FORTE PREPARATORY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**CHARTER INFORMATION**

**BALANCE SHEET**

Opened 2017-18

**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

**Total Program Services**

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 Temporarily 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**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Cash and Cash Equivalents - <b>GRAPH 1</b>	-	101,078	445,051	1,793,054	2,543,774
Grants and Contracts Receivable	-	113,827	417,864	111,292	170,277
Accounts Receivable	-	-	484,667	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	-	166,856	186,956	173,067	173,676
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	-	<b>381,761</b>	<b>1,534,538</b>	<b>2,077,413</b>	<b>2,887,727</b>
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	116,567	275,994	380,212	343,170
Other Assets	-	289,667	50,003	775,310	882,740
<b>Total Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	-	<b>787,995</b>	<b>1,860,535</b>	<b>3,232,935</b>	<b>4,113,637</b>

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	-	125,904	265,575	342,773	501,839
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Revenue	-	-	-	160,861	11,206
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	-	<b>125,904</b>	<b>265,575</b>	<b>503,634</b>	<b>513,045</b>
Deferred Rent/Lease Liability	-	-	-	-	196,983
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	525,777	-
<b>Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	-	<b>125,904</b>	<b>265,575</b>	<b>1,029,411</b>	<b>710,028</b>

Without Donor Restrictions	-	662,091	1,544,957	2,158,524	3,387,109
With Donor Restrictions	-	-	50,003	45,000	16,500
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	-	<b>662,091</b>	<b>1,594,960</b>	<b>2,203,524</b>	<b>3,403,609</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	-	<b>787,995</b>	<b>1,860,535</b>	<b>3,232,935</b>	<b>4,113,637</b>

Resident Student Enrollment	-	1,265,912	2,650,315	4,319,317	5,765,182
Students with Disabilities	-	252,242	528,532	835,387	1,031,501
<b>Grants and Contracts</b>	-	-	-	-	-
State and local	-	267,664	-	5,732	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	50,830	26,731	63,026	-
Federal - Other	-	341,487	-	20,370	-
Other	-	17,949	573,035	-	547,751
NYC DoE Rental Assistance	-	190,053	770,447	1,154,250	1,568,114
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	-	<b>2,386,137</b>	<b>4,549,060</b>	<b>6,398,082</b>	<b>8,912,548</b>

Regular Education	-	1,237,109	2,362,016	3,771,822	5,049,766
SPED	-	312,686	675,045	1,236,348	1,728,082
Other	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Program Services</b>	-	<b>1,549,795</b>	<b>3,037,061</b>	<b>5,008,170</b>	<b>6,777,848</b>
Management and General	-	513,617	644,196	807,370	1,041,705
Fundraising	-	30,506	20,222	18,978	29,407
<b>Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 &amp; 4</b>	-	<b>2,093,918</b>	<b>3,701,479</b>	<b>5,834,518</b>	<b>7,848,960</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations</b>	-	<b>292,219</b>	<b>847,581</b>	<b>563,564</b>	<b>1,063,588</b>

Contributions	-	363,531	77,567	45,000	136,497
Fundraising	-	6,341	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	7,721	-	-
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Support and Other Revenue</b>	-	<b>369,872</b>	<b>85,288</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>136,497</b>

<b>Total Unrestricted Revenue</b>	-	<b>2,756,009</b>	<b>4,634,348</b>	<b>6,398,082</b>	<b>9,077,545</b>
<b>Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue</b>	-	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>(28,500)</b>
<b>Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 &amp; 3</b>	-	<b>2,756,009</b>	<b>4,634,348</b>	<b>6,443,082</b>	<b>9,049,045</b>

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	-	<b>662,091</b>	<b>932,869</b>	<b>608,564</b>	<b>1,200,085</b>
<b>Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	-	<b>-</b>	<b>662,091</b>	<b>1,594,960</b>	<b>2,203,524</b>
<b>Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	-	<b>662,091</b>	<b>1,594,960</b>	<b>2,203,524</b>	<b>3,403,609</b>

**FORTE PREPARATORY ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)**

**Functional Expense Breakdown**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	508,175	580,956	285,178	419,722
Instructional Personnel	-	570,513	1,211,199	2,752,136	3,677,963
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	-	<b>1,078,688</b>	<b>1,792,155</b>	<b>3,037,314</b>	<b>4,097,685</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	216,367	341,611	604,083	900,195
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	-	-	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing	-	194,327	784,500	1,089,336	1,618,010
Staff Development	-	10,611	15,447	15,718	39,671
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	256,497	311,379	392,196	475,271
Marketing / Recruitment	-	35,670	36,610	25,697	34,293
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	94,403	166,906	133,504	104,753
Depreciation	-	31,274	62,359	128,262	157,125
Other	-	176,081	190,512	408,408	421,957
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	<b>2,093,918</b>	<b>3,701,479</b>	<b>5,834,518</b>	<b>7,848,960</b>

**CHARTER ANALYSIS**

**ENROLLMENT**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Original Chartered Enrollment	-	90	180	270	360
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)	-	90	180	270	360
Actual Enrollment - <b>GRAPH 4</b>	-	87	174	267	357
Chartered Grades	-	5	5-6	5-7	5-7
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)	-	-	-	-	-

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

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Per Pupil Funding</b> (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	-	-	14,527	15,307	16,150
Increase over prior year	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	5.1%	5.2%

**PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Revenue</b>					
Operating	-	27,427	26,144	23,963	24,965
Other Revenue and Support	-	4,251	490	169	382
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	<b>31,678</b>	<b>26,634</b>	<b>24,131</b>	<b>25,347</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Program Services	-	17,814	17,454	18,757	18,986
Management and General, Fundraising	-	6,254	3,818	3,095	3,000
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	<b>24,068</b>	<b>21,273</b>	<b>21,852</b>	<b>21,986</b>
% of Program Services	0.0%	74.0%	82.0%	85.8%	86.4%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	26.0%	18.0%	14.2%	13.6%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	0.0%	<b>31.6%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>15.3%</b>
<b>% of Revenue Expended on Facilities</b>	#DIV/0!	8.1%	17.2%	17.0%	18.2%

**Student to Faculty Ratio**

-	11.6	9.4	8.3	7.9
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**Faculty to Admin Ratio**

-	1.5	3.1	3.1	4.1
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**Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6**

Score	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
0.0	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	N/A	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong

**Working Capital - GRAPH 7**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Net Working Capital	0	255,857	1,268,963	1,573,779	2,374,682
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	9.3%	27.4%	24.6%	26.2%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	3.0	5.8	4.1	5.6
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	1.7	5.1	3.8	5.3	
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

**Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7**

Score	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
0.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	
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	0.6	1.4	3.7	3.9	
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	N/A	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	Poor	Good	Excellent	Excellent