THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT
ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Report Date: March 7, 2023

Review Date: October 12 – 13, 2022

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
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CB
CHARTER BACKGROUND

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

75 Park Avenue, Albany | **Grades: 6-8** | **Albany City School District**
19 Hackett Boulevard, Albany | **Grades: 9-12** | **Albany City School District**

The State University of New York Board of Trustees (the "SUNY Trustees") approved the original charter for Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls ("Albany Leadership") on January 27, 2009. The charter opened in fall 2010, serving 125 students in 9th and 10th grade.

MISSION

The mission of Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls is to prepare young women to graduate from high school with the academic and leadership skills necessary to succeed in college and the career of their choosing.

CURRENT CHARTER

Serves: 6th – 12th

Chartered Enrollment: 450

Charter Expiration: July 31, 2023

PROPOSED FUTURE CHARTER

Serves: 6th – 12th

Chartered Enrollment: 450

Charter Expiration: July 31, 2028

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Single gender education;	+
Extended school day and year;	+
College preparatory curriculum and College in the High School coursework;	+
Character education through service learning;	+
Supplemental literacy and mathematics instruction for all students;	+
First year academy for students entering high school; and,	+
Social emotional development with the College and Career readiness, Leadership, Empowerment, Accountability, and Resolve and Resiliency ("CLEAR") values framework.	+

CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

NOTEWORTHY

Over the charter term, Albany Leadership implemented and refined a social emotional learning program to support its mission of college and career preparation for every student. By integrating the New York State social emotional learning benchmarks, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning ("CASEL") competencies, and the Advancement Via Individual Determination ("AVID") method for college preparation, Albany Leadership implements a comprehensive, progressive program for students in 6th – 12th grade. The charter reinforces its CLEAR values throughout the educational program, and leaders actively evaluate the relationship between academic achievement and social emotional well being by monitoring student data as they progress through the middle and high school grades. Albany Leadership has participated in Active Ingredients, a project to support schools in developing systems for measuring and reporting the success of the co-academic supports they offer students. In addition to providing students with opportunities to participate in college fairs, college visits, and workshops to complete applications for college and financial aid, the charter has also introduced a career pathway exploration internship program to expand access to diverse post-secondary options. This multifaceted approach to postsecondary planning has contributed to Albany Leadership's outcomes as the charter has exceeded the graduation rate and college preparation metrics of Albany City School District throughout the charter term. In 2021-22, Albany Leadership's college preparation rates exceeded the district's by over 30 percentage points.

RESPONSE TO INTERRUPTED INSTRUCTION CAUSED BY COVID-19

To accelerate learning and address interrupted instruction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Albany Leadership invests in adaptive learning programs, including NWEA MAP ("MAP") and IXL, and trains all staff members to ensure teachers administer the assessments and utilize corresponding tools with fidelity. With the diagnostic MAP data, instructional leaders support teachers in developing and implementing individualized intervention plans for each student. IXL generates customized skill plans based on the standards students have not yet mastered, and intervention blocks allow time for targeted support with those standards while students continue to engage with grade level content during double mathematics and English language arts ("ELA") blocks each day. During classroom instruction, teachers group students based on formative assessment data, and the charter utilizes a standards-based grading process that allows students to revise and resubmit assignments in the pursuit of mastery on each specific skill. Albany Leadership also works to meet the social emotional needs of students. Using Panorama, a platform for monitoring multiple data points to measure student success, teachers can track academic, behavior, attendance, and social emotional data in one place. During weekly student support meetings, teachers review data to identify students in need of additional support, and the charter holds parent teacher conferences every five weeks to engage with families of students who are struggling in any of these areas.

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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 Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in 6th – 12th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 450 students. The Institute makes this recommendation based on Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls 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").*[1]

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 Schools 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.[2]

1. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14) are available on the Institute's website.
2. See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During its five year charter term, Albany 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?

Albany Leadership is an academic success. Over the current charter term, the charter met or came close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

- The charter exceeded the graduation rate of the Albany City School District by at least 20 percentage points in the first three years of the charter term.
- Albany Leadership also posts consistently high numbers of students meeting college preparation metrics due to the charter's robust college pathway course offerings, which allow students to earn college credit in high school at little to no cost.
- With its expansion to middle school, Albany Leadership is addressing learning gaps it previously identified with incoming high school classes. In order to accelerate learning, the charter implements double blocks of ELA and mathematics for 6th grade students, and foundational writing and mathematics courses for 9th grade students through its first year academy program.

Is the charter an effective, viable organization?

Albany Leadership is an effective, viable organization. The charter increased its organizational capacity this charter term by expanding the instructional leadership team and adding operational support positions as it accelerated its articulation of the full middle school program during the 2022-23 school year due to demonstrated interest in an 8th grade cohort. The board provides effective oversight of the charter and expresses interest in continuing to serve Albany Leadership in alignment with the charter's mission and key design elements.

Is the charter fiscally sound?

Albany Leadership is fiscally sound based on the fiscal evidence collected through renewal review. The education corporation has met or come close to meeting its fiscal benchmarks throughout the charter term and presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term. The most recent independent annual financial statements audit identified internal control weaknesses in the accounting record keeping maintenance due to staff member shortages in finance and operations teams.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Albany Leadership's plans for the future are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school plans to implement many of the same elements that led to its success over the current charter term. The board plans to recruit additional members with expertise in Kindergarten – 12th grade education and to pursue training for new members. The charter presents a sound and viable framework for its full 6th – 12th grade academic program. Albany Leadership is the only all female public high school in the Capital Region, and families cite high degrees of satisfaction with the option to pursue a single-gender educational program for their children.

The charter expanded to serve middle school grades over the last charter term with the mission to develop a pipeline of younger students to strengthen the school's presence in the community. Throughout the charter term, Albany Leadership exceeded the district's graduation rate, often by 20 or more percentage points in the years prior to the pandemic. The charter also met or exceeded the 75% college preparation measure each year, and in 2022, the charter matriculated 88% of its cohort into a college or university, outperforming the target by 13 percentage points. The charter enhanced its organizational capacity in preparation for its middle school program growth, and increased resources across the two campuses allows the superintendent to further develop partnerships in the community.

During the October visit, the charter was in transition awaiting the start of the newly created Director of Curriculum and Instruction ("DCI") position. Due to new systems in place and the growth of two new grades at the start of the year, the Institute returned to Albany Leadership for a follow up visit in December to evaluate how the program had progressed and noted several improvements to the instructional leadership and teacher support systems.

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 Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls a Full Term Subsequent Renewal of five years.

DP

DATA PRESENTATION

PAGES: 7-18

AP ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CP COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE

CS COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

SD STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

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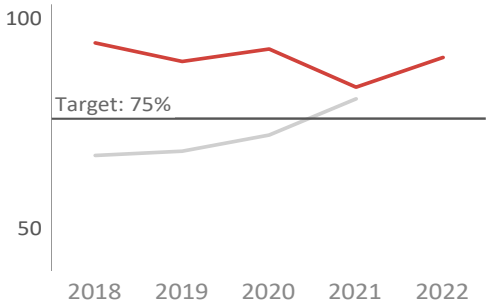
ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

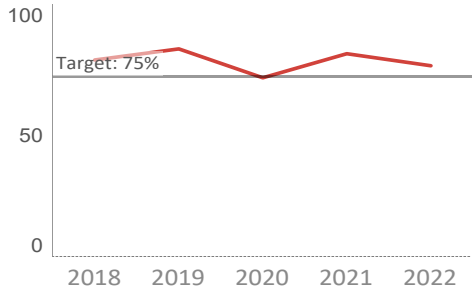
Comparative Measure: Graduation Rate. Each year, the percentage of **the charter school's students graduating** after completion of their fourth year will exceed the District.



	District %	Charter %
2018	66.6	92.4
2019	67.6	88.2
2020	71.3	91.0
2021	79.6	82.3
2022		89.1

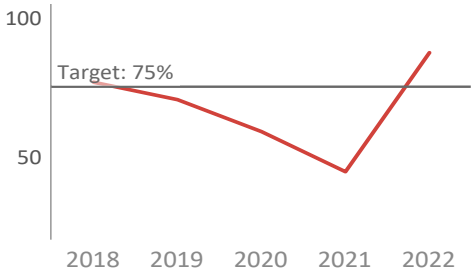
COLLEGE PREPARATION AND ATTAINMENT

College Preparation Measure: Each year, 75 percent of **graduates** will demonstrate college preparation through one or more indicators including passing an AP exam or earning an advanced diploma.



	Graduates	College Prep %
2018	61	82.0
2019	82	86.6
2020	71	74.6
2021	65	84.6
2022	49	79.6

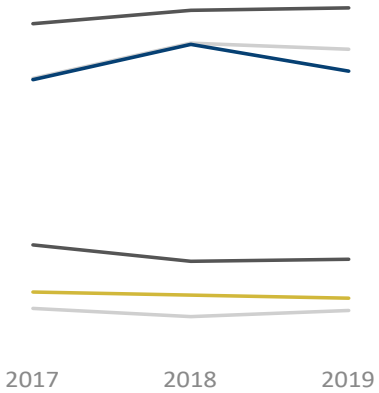
College Attainment Measure: Matriculation into College. Each year, 75 percent of **graduating students** will enroll in a college or university.



	Grad N	Matriculation %
2018	61	77.0
2019	82	70.7
2020	71	59.2
2021	65	44.6
2022	49	87.8

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

Comparative and Absolute Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the charter school's **ELA Accountability Performance Index** and the **math PI** will exceed **the district's PI** and the **state's MIP**.



	MIP	District PI	Charter PI
2017	178	133	132
2018	189	162	161
2019	191	157	139
2017	165	103	119
2018	149	95	116
2019	151	101	113

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

Albany Leadership met or came close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals in high school graduation and college preparation over the charter term. The charter posted its first middle school achievement results in 2021-22, which serve as a baseline for evaluating future state exam results. The charter met its science, social studies, and Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") goals.

Albany Leadership met its graduation goal over the term posting high fourth year graduation rates from 2017-18 through 2021-22. Over those years, the charter's fourth year cohorts graduated at rates that exceeded the absolute target of 75% and the district rate in every year with available comparative data. In 2021-22, 89% of the 2018 Cohort graduated after four years exceeding the most recently available district results by 10 percentage points. Albany Leadership also posts high rates of credit accumulation for its first and second year cohorts demonstrating strong leading indicators of future graduation rates.

Albany Leadership came close to meeting its college preparation goal over the charter term. Over the majority of the term, the charter's graduates matriculated into two and four year colleges at rates that came close to or exceeded the absolute target of 75%. The charter also demonstrates college preparation through a variety of metrics including earning a Regents diploma with advanced designation or passing a college level course. From 2017-18 through 2021-22, the charter's graduates demonstrated college preparation through one of these methods at rates that met or exceeded the target of 75% each year. The charter's College in the High School program allows students to earn college credit before graduation through partnerships with University at Albany, Hudson Valley Community College, and Russell Sage College. During the 2021-22 school year, 80% of students passed a college course or earned the advanced diploma.

The charter first enrolled students in 6th grade during 2021-22 and posted results for a limited set of ELA and mathematics measures that year. In comparison to demographically similar schools across the state, the charter performed lower than expected in both subjects. The charter has the opportunity to demonstrate growth and comparative achievement for students enrolled in at least their second year in future years. Albany Leadership administers the MAP assessment and plans to contextualize future state exam results with these internal assessment results.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ASSESSMENT

Albany Leadership establishes an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The charter administers the MAP assessment for ELA, mathematics, and science three times each year, and teachers receive professional development both on the process for administering the exam with fidelity and on strategies for effectively analyzing and responding to data. Leaders support teachers in using the data to inform instruction and create responsive groupings of students based on individual needs. In conjunction with MAP, Albany Leadership leverages the adaptive technology of the IXL platform to create and monitor individualized skill plans for each student. In the fall, winter, and spring, the charter also administers interval assessments for core classes consisting of released Regents exam items in order to measure student progress toward Regents preparedness. In middle school and non-Regents courses, teachers use mid-module and unit assessments included with the curriculum, as well as formative daily and weekly assessments including exit tickets and brief quizzes. Albany Leadership uses a standards-based grading system that allows students to revise assignments or retake an assessment in order to demonstrate mastery of a standard. In order to develop teachers' abilities to respond to data to meet student needs, the charter utilizes a uniform data dialogue template in which teachers identify key standards students missed on a given assessment, select an instructional strategy to address the misconception, and design groupings of students based on the areas requiring the most support. While assessment results are part of the teacher evaluation system, most teachers could not articulate specific student performance targets, with many identifying that growth alone was a priority. In the next charter term, leaders have an opportunity to strengthen the messaging of student growth goals in order to urgently drive instruction and ensure that teachers are guiding students towards rigorous, college ready outcomes.

CURRICULUM

Albany Leadership effectively implements several aspects of a strong curriculum to support teachers with instructional planning. The charter's curricular framework provides teachers with an underlying academic structure and aligns to state standards. The charter uses the EngageNY curricula for all Regents courses and the Advanced Placement ("AP") curriculum for AP courses. As part of the College in the High School program, teachers also co-develop college level coursework and syllabi with partner professors from University at Albany, Hudson Valley Community College, and Russell Sage College for several classes, including offerings in English, world history, sociology, political science, business communication, personal finance, and others. In addition to EngageNY for mathematics and ELA at the middle school level, teachers also utilize the inquiry-based Savvas curriculum for 6th grade social studies courses, and the Success Academies curriculum for science and 7th and 8th grade social studies courses. At the time of the visit, leaders articulated a process for selecting and reviewing its curricular program, which included the possibility of implementing Success Academy's ELA and mathematics programs as the programs are closely aligned to New York's Next Generation Learning Standards. Teachers articulate success criteria for student work for each subject in order to measure progress towards meeting grade level standards. While teachers know what to teach and when to teach it in

accordance with the available curricular resources, including lesson objectives, module outlines, and scope and sequence documents, it is not yet evident that all teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to adapt, internalize, and execute on these materials in the classroom. Leaders recognize the need to build out pacing guides to support teachers in the lesson planning process, provide feedback on classroom materials, and create designated time for intellectual preparation and collaborative planning. With additional professional development and ongoing support for lesson and unit planning, teachers would be better positioned to effectively deliver the selected high quality curriculum for each subject.

PEDAGOGY

There are some elements of high quality instruction at Albany Leadership. Teachers across grade and content levels post clear objectives and lesson agendas, and lesson plans often include questions designed to elicit higher order thinking. In many lessons observed, teachers circulated among students to offer immediate feedback and check for understanding. Small class sizes allow for frequent interaction between teachers and each student. However, teacher questioning did not consistently challenge students to develop a deeper understanding of the content, and teachers missed opportunities to elevate discourse by requiring students to expand upon or defend answers. In many of the lessons observed, slow pacing contributed to a lack of student engagement and teachers did not communicate expectations for how a given task should be completed to students. Teachers create high quality classroom materials and align lesson activities, but do not consistently hold students accountable for engaging with the rigorous academic content. An exception to the low level of rigor is evident in college credit courses in the high school, wherein teachers work closely with professors at universities to provide rigorous college level content and students are tasked with engaging assignments that require greater cognitive lift. However, these practices are not yet consistent throughout the academic program. Leaders recognize that instruction is not as strong as it needs to be, and are working to provide teachers with enhanced coaching and instructional support with the addition of the DCI position and two instructional coaches. During the December return visit, the Institute observed evidence of stronger coaching systems and clearer lines of accountability for teacher development. With a relatively inexperienced staff of teachers, many of whom are new to the charter, leaders have an opportunity to further develop teachers' skills in adapting strategic lesson plans from the available curriculum; implementing routines to maximize learning time and on task behavior; and, establishing high expectations for student engagement and discussion across the middle and high school programs.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

With a new but experienced instructional leadership team in place, Albany Leadership is in the process of establishing strong instructional practices and systems to support its largely novice teaching staff. Over the last two years, the charter experienced higher than usual rates of teacher attrition while also adding three grade levels and subsequently expended significant capacity in the ongoing recruitment, vetting, hiring, and onboarding of new staff members. Principals and vice principals conduct lesson observations to provide teachers at both campuses with actionable pieces of feedback. At the time of the renewal visit, these practices were not yet implemented with consistency to benefit all staff members, in part because the charter was still in the process of hiring a DCI to spearhead the teacher development program. However, the Institute returned

in December 2022 to evaluate the charter's coaching and support systems for teachers and found evidence of notable improvements. The charter conducted a teacher needs assessment with the support of the DCI and two new instructional coaches, and in response, leaders implemented a tiered coaching and professional development program to strengthen the skills of the teaching staff. Instructional leaders provide inexperienced teachers with foundational support and coach veteran teachers in developing the ability to provide informal mentoring and hands-on support to peers. Coaches conduct walkthroughs, real time coaching, lesson plan feedback, debrief meetings, and differentiated professional development to support teachers. School leaders conduct formal evaluations twice annually. Leaders provide professional development sessions several times per month and support teachers in curricular and lesson planning during weekly content or grade level meetings.

The charter partners with the Capital Area School Development Association ("CASDA") as well as additional outside consultants to provide targeted coaching for its leadership team based on the demands of the new roles created to service the full middle school growth. The charter also maintains partnerships with professors at Russell Sage College, Hudson Valley Community College, and the University at Albany to support teachers in delivering college pathway courses that offer students opportunities to earn college credit for low or no cost while enrolled at Albany Leadership. While Albany Leadership implemented several elements of a robust instructional leadership structure over the charter term, the charter has the opportunity to evaluate and refine these systems in order to ensure that the charter equips all teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver an effective educational program.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

Albany Leadership meets the educational needs of students in need of intervention, students with disabilities, and ELLs. The charter administers MAP assessments three times a year to gauge both mathematics and reading proficiency and utilizes a multi-tiered system of support ("MTSS") to identify and provide remediation to individual students based on relative need. The charter regularly provides Tier 1 supports within its general education classrooms, including small group instruction and differentiated materials. Students who perform far below the grade level benchmark in either subject receive Tier 2 support through designated ELA or mathematics proficiency development classes to aid in developing foundational, transferrable skills in each content area. Teachers monitor ongoing assessment data to identify students who improve or who need more intensive Tier 3 services, such as direct one-to-one instruction to focus on foundational skills to address significant gaps. If a student still does not demonstrate adequate progress, the charter conducts additional testing, considers the student's eligibility for a 504 plan, and makes a referral to the district Committee on Special Education ("CSE") for an evaluation. The charter provides integrated co-teaching ("ICT") core classes, special education teacher support services ("SETSS"), and counseling. During the new student enrollment process, the charter administers a home language questionnaire and follows up as needed with a family and student interview. When necessary, the charter administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL") to determine a student's ELL status and level. Albany Leadership supports ELLs by pairing ELL and general education teachers to co-teach core content area classes and providing leveled, standalone ELL classes to strengthen students' fluency, literacy, and vocabulary skills. During the return visit, Institute staff observed effective instruction for ELLs designed to support academic vocabulary acquisition.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

In its first year with a full middle school program, Albany Leadership continues to reflect on its organizational structure to more thoroughly support the 6th – 12th grade educational program. While the charter designed many policies and procedures to strengthen its systems throughout this expansion, at the time of the initial visit, school leaders could not fully implement some of these policies due to a high level of attrition in the teaching staff and unanticipated challenges with preparing the new facility to welcome the middle school program. The charter reorganized and expanded its operations teams by hiring additional support positions for both the school business administrator and the director of information systems administrator. However, at the time of the October 2022 visit, academic leaders expressed a need for more operational support as leaders were frequently required to support activities like lunch duty.

When the Institute conducted its initial visit in October 2022, Albany Leadership was in the final stages of hiring a DCI to support the charter's instructional leadership capacity. The Institute returned to Albany Leadership in December 2022 to observe additional lessons and review the charter's coaching processes. Although these systems are in the nascent stages, leaders observe and support teachers with more consistency given the DCI position and the addition of instructional coaches. The charter also has a dean of students at the high school level and a school culture coordinator at the middle school level to coordinate staff members and ensure a positive school culture across the organization. The charter still had a few vacant teaching positions at both the initial and follow up visits. To address the issue, leaders assigned resident teachers to open positions or rotated substitutes to support student learning. Leaders are strategizing new methods to recruit and develop teachers as well as review benefits packages in order to retain quality teachers.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

Albany Leadership's board works effectively to achieve the charter's Accountability Plan goals. Current members possess skills in higher education, finance, development, and community engagement. Over the charter term, the board added new members and plans to recruit at least one more member with a background in Kindergarten – 12th grade education. With the charter at full grade level articulation this school year, the board sets priorities for school leaders that focus on building out an effective middle school program and supporting student learning to mitigate interrupted instruction. To monitor student achievement, the board regularly reviews achievement dashboards with data from MAP assessments, Regents results, credit accumulation, and GPA attainment. To support instructional leaders, the board approved additional operational positions to remove facilities and other operational aspects from the principals' list of responsibilities. The board evaluates the superintendent and director of facilities annually. For the superintendent, the board set goals to engage in more community development to reach targets related to enrollment, opportunities for students, and visibility of the charter. The board recognizes a need to codify these goals in a way that makes them clear and measurable. The board also identifies the need to consider ways to better retain teachers. In analyzing reasons for leaving, the board and charter report that surrounding districts are recruiting teachers away from Albany Leadership. To mitigate this attrition in the future, the board plans to review its benefit packages and consider ways in which it can appeal to teachers to help retain staff members after investing in their initial development. With the higher than usual attrition over the past two years, the board should consider more ways to support leaders in building the capacity and skills of new teachers.

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

The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter. During the current charter term, the education corporation demonstrates a record of compliance with the terms of its charter including the timely submission of required reporting to the Institute.

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Annual Report	The charter submitted its annual reports to the Institute and the New York State Education Department ("NYSED") on time and posted the reports to its website except the annual report for the most recent school year. The Institute will ensure the charter posts its most recent annual report prior to the start of the next charter term.
FOIL	The charter has an appropriate Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL") policy and subject matter list clearly posted to its website. The subject matter list needs to be updated to include a link to the New York State Committee on Open Government.
Teacher Certification	The Act allows charters to hire up to 15 uncertified lead teachers 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 20 uncertified lead teachers including five over the allowable limit. Among its 20 uncertified teachers, 17 met the appropriate qualification under the Act at the time of the renewal visit.

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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
86%	94%	94%	94%	93%

Parent Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from Albany Leadership's annual family survey from the 2021-22 school year. In 2021-22, 86% of families who received the survey responded. Of the families who responded, 94% expressed satisfaction with the charter.

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. During the renewal visit, the Institute met with four families from Albany Leadership. Caregivers expressed high degrees of satisfaction with Albany Leadership as a smaller, single sex alternative to the large district high school and feel that the charter community is supportive and accommodating particularly for diverse learners. Leaders and teachers are communicative and accessible, and parents have multiple points of contact with different leaders and staff members. Parents note that they feel respected by the charter's process for dealing with issues and by the transparency of leaders in coordinating solutions for all students. Families also appreciate the charter's global perspective: it provides prayer space for Muslim students and celebrates different viewpoints in terms of race, gender, and class in its curricular materials.

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 Albany City School District held its required hearing for Albany Leadership's renewal application on September 22, 2022 at a district school building. No one spoke in support or opposition to the application.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

Persistence in Enrollment An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2021-22, 78% of Albany Leadership students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data is available in student demographics section of this report.

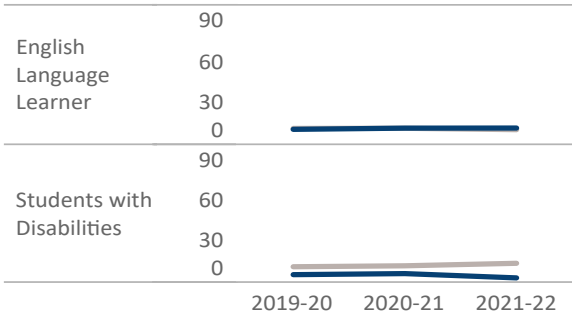
The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or the NYSED is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls

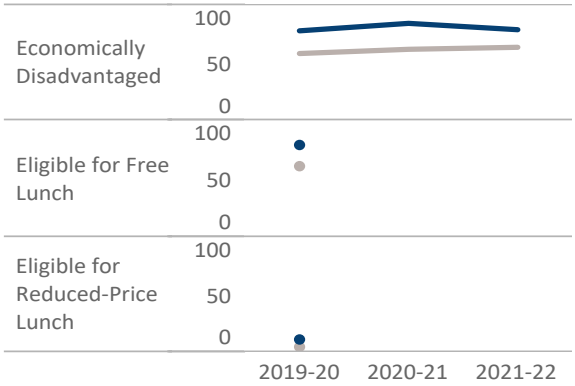
Albany City School District

Student Demographics: Special Populations



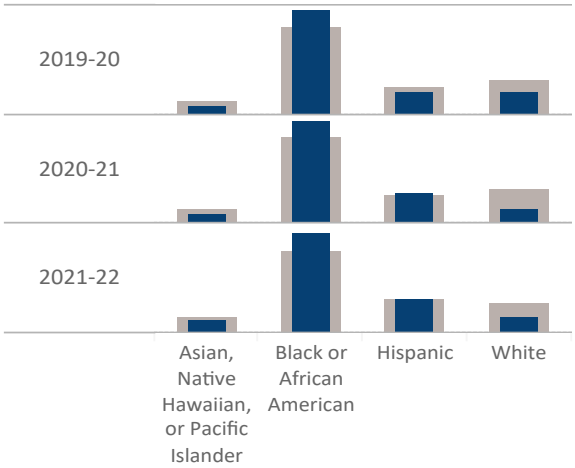
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
District	11.4	11.5	10.4
Charter	10.7	11.6	11.7
District	11.1	11.8	13.7
Charter	5.2	6.0	2.8

Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Charter	84.5	91.9	85.6
District	61.8	66.0	68.0
Charter	85.8		
District	64.9		
Charter	7.8		
District	0.4		

Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



	Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	Black or African American	Hispanic	White
Charter	5.2	61.5	13.6	13.6
District	8.2	51.1	16.2	20.6
Charter	5.6	60.0	17.9	8.8
District	7.9	51.4	17.0	20.1
Charter	7.4	58.6	19.6	9.2
District	9.0	48.3	19.5	17.8

** 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.*

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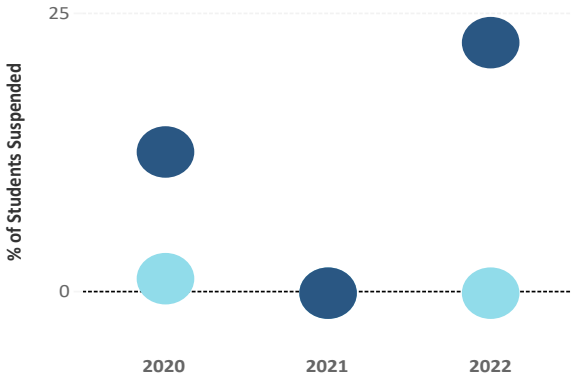
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls



Albany City School District

	ISS Rate	OSS Rate
2020	1.3	12.6
2021	0.0	0.0
2022	0.0	22.4

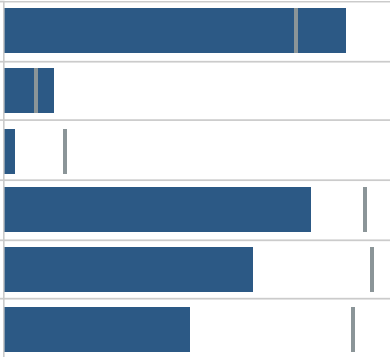
Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

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

2020	2021	2022
0	0	0

Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2021-22



		Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	72.8	85.9
	English language learners	7.9	12.6
	students with disabilities	15.2	2.8
retention	economically disadvantaged	90.5	77.1
	English language learners	92.4	63.0
	students with disabilities	87.6	46.7

** 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.

Albany Leadership makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. At the time of the visit, the Institute reminded the charter about the need to focus on its enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, as this area of enrollment was well below the target. The charter plans to conduct the following recruitment efforts to meet its targets:

- Continuing to target community organizations that serve a high population of ELLs, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged populations;
- Continuing to foster relationships with feeder schools that serve at-risk student populations;
- Providing specialized programs that serve at-risk students, ELLs, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities;
- Providing translated outreach material into languages other than English;
- Providing translation services at outreach events and on the school's social media outlets and website;
- Advertising the school on radio, television, and social media platforms;
- Continuing to provide strong and effective at-risk programs while fostering a supportive school climate, which in turn allows families to encourage other families to apply to the school;
- Collecting and analyzing student exit surveys and conduct exit interviews with families leaving the school and using the information to improve its program and increase retention rates;
- Connecting families with outside resources and services to support a variety of needs;
- Providing services at Albany Leadership to connect families with outside resources;
- Providing free breakfast and lunch for all students;
- Providing a food pantry for all students and families;
- Providing a uniform closet to help support families who are limited in funds to purchase uniforms;
- Interviewing families to provide time for families to connect with the ELL team to ensure Albany Leadership meets their language needs; and,
- Offering ELL parent nights to provide families with the opportunity to share cultures and connect with each other.

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IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Albany Leadership is fiscally sound based on the Institute's analysis of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that the education corporation demonstrate fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.[3]

During the current charter term, Albany Leadership purchased the high school facility through tax exempt bond financing and executed a five year lease on a middle school site with the option to purchase the building. The education corporation is exploring bond financing options to purchase the middle school site during the next charter term. During 2022-23, the charter experienced low enrollment while growing out grades. The charter developed new marketing and recruitment strategies to improve the actual enrollment into the next charter term.

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION 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 management, 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.	+

3. 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.

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DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION 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 appropriate internal controls.	+
The most recent audit report was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	-
The education corporation reviews and updates its Financial Policies and Procedures Manual ("FPPM"), which covers the charter, on a regular basis. The most recent review of the FPPM is found in the next column. The Institute recommends, as a best practice, that the education corporation review and update its FPPM on an annual basis.	JUNE 2021
Although most recent independent financial statements audit was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses, the New York State Comptroller's recent audit findings for the same time period identified internal control weaknesses and cited the board and school personnel working outside stated policies for accounting record keeping maintenance due to staff member shortages in the finance and operations positions.	

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

The education corporation has not consistently complied 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 evident column indicates whether 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.	+

Over the charter term, the education corporation missed some compliance reporting deadlines. The Institute notes that this is primarily due to the strain on leadership workloads across the organization. The annual audit is due to the Institute by November 1 each year. The education corporation submitted its annual audit reporting through June 30, 2022 on February 17, 2023. Providing accurate and timely financial statements will form a stronger basis for the education corporation's board to make well informed decisions.

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION 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.	+
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.	+

FISCAL ANALYSIS

During the current charter term the education corporation purchased the high school facility through tax-exempt bonds and is exploring the same for the purchase of the middle school site in the next charter term.

The charter reported operating surpluses and two losses during the charter term with the losses being offset by the education corporation's accumulated surpluses. The fiscal dashboard for June 30, 2022 demonstrates fiscal strength with approximately $2.6 million in net assets and two months of cash on hand to pay liabilities due shortly. Albany Leadership has funded and maintained the required $75,000 in a separate dissolution account as per the charter agreement. The Institute received the final independent audit report for June 30, 2022 on February 17, 2023. It reported an operating deficit of approximately ($399,568) for the fiscal year resulting in net assets dropping to approximately $2.6 million. The auditor identified a weakness in internal controls regarding the maintenance of the account records and staff shortages in finance and operations positions. The charter has taken steps to strengthen its internal systems and fill vacant positions to ensure continued fiscal strength. The Institute will monitor the charter's progress throughout the subsequent charter term, if granted.

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

CHARTER INFORMATION

Opened 2010-11

BALANCE SHEET	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Assets					
Current Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents - **GRAPH 1**	1,789,818	2,856,963	2,676,584	2,221,627	1,061,805
Grants and Contracts Receivable	466,623	98,430	359,320	573,044	1,926,943
Accounts Receivable	330	2,036	4,005	1,854	-
Prepaid Expenses	259,186	68,851	69,447	44,399	48,239
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1	2,515,957	3,026,280	3,109,356	2,840,924	3,036,987
Property, Building and Equipment, net	180,354	130,271	9,886,402	9,525,964	9,224,504
Other Assets	75,255	75,316	1,111,849	1,109,607	893,219
Total Assets - GRAPH 1	2,771,566	3,231,867	14,107,607	13,476,495	13,154,710
Liabilities and Net Assets					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	81,391	107,160	194,413	177,524	338,201
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	412,577	444,600	470,111	329,636	393,568
Deferred Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	180,000	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	175,000	-	185,000
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1	493,968	551,760	839,524	687,160	916,769
Deferred Rent/Lease Liability	-	-	-	-	-
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities	-	-	10,698,874	9,856,085	9,662,296
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1	493,968	551,760	11,538,398	10,543,245	10,579,065
Net Assets					
Without Donor Restrictions	2,277,598	2,680,107	2,569,209	2,933,250	2,575,645
With Donor Restrictions	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	2,277,598	2,680,107	2,569,209	2,933,250	2,575,645
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,771,566	3,231,867	14,107,607	13,476,495	13,154,710
ACTIVITIES					
Operating Revenue					
Resident Student Enrollment	5,273,567	5,289,148	4,716,502	4,425,696	4,940,226
Students with Disabilities	79,278	124,095	113,155	110,650	67,999
Grants and Contracts					
State and local	54,741	24,779	224,030	37,897	41,376
Federal - Title and IDEA	226,563	287,359	159,261	201,302	164,665
Federal - Other	-	-	-	772,549	593,377
Other	-	-	-	-	-
NYC DoE Rental Assistance	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	181,573	188,045	129,479	35,874	193,338
Total Operating Revenue	5,815,722	5,913,426	5,342,427	5,583,968	6,000,981
Expenses					
Regular Education	3,859,764	3,866,331	3,805,338	3,666,920	4,536,802
SPED	533,951	529,778	609,569	601,478	510,963
Other	237,504	231,660	163,119	99,594	225,365
Total Program Services	4,631,219	4,627,769	4,578,026	4,367,992	5,273,130
Management and General	1,017,724	927,428	909,367	874,857	1,127,419
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4	5,648,943	5,555,197	5,487,393	5,242,849	6,400,549
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	166,779	358,229	(144,966)	341,119	(399,568)
Support and Other Revenue					
Contributions	9,406	9,642	5,001	14,915	20,504
Fundraising	6,795	9,451	4,073	6,372	11,759
Miscellaneous Income	48,360	25,187	24,994	1,635	9,700
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	64,561	44,280	34,068	22,922	41,963
Total Unrestricted Revenue	5,880,283	5,957,706	5,376,495	5,606,890	6,042,944
Total Temporally Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3	5,880,283	5,957,706	5,376,495	5,606,890	6,042,944
Change in Net Assets	231,340	402,509	(110,898)	364,041	(357,605)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2	2,046,258	2,277,598	2,680,107	2,569,209	2,933,250
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2	2,277,598	2,680,107	2,569,209	2,933,250	2,575,645

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	913,523	881,410	923,380	846,827	868,596
Instructional Personnel	1,971,880	1,981,199	2,010,584	1,768,945	1,974,330
Non-Instructional Personnel	128,356	96,795	78,438	58,166	103,543
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	3,013,759	2,959,404	3,012,402	2,673,938	2,946,469
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	598,758	645,514	605,776	578,876	613,047
Retirement	81,434	64,076	68,650	60,453	55,795
Management Company Fees	-	-	-	-	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing	694,200	701,100	45,227	3,197	293,403
Staff Development	17,043	47,065	10,096	5,382	14,080
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	281,772	255,109	192,257	223,153	301,450
Marketing / Recruitment	38,933	51,407	42,700	38,687	44,772
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	221,090	186,127	142,982	120,486	157,369
Depreciation	99,595	51,719	367,751	372,363	373,440
Other	602,359	593,676	999,552	1,166,314	1,600,724
Total Expenses	5,648,943	5,555,197	5,487,393	5,242,849	6,400,549

CHARTER ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Original Chartered Enrollment	365	350	350	350	350
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)	365	350	350	350	350
Actual Enrollment - **GRAPH 4**	355	348	309	287	305
Chartered Grades	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)	-	-	-	-	6,9-12
Primary School District: ALBANY CITY SD					
Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	14,743	15,141	15,272	15,175	15,559
Increase over prior year	4.2%	2.6%	0.9%	-0.6%	2.5%
PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN					
Revenue					
Operating	16,376	17,001	17,282	19,439	19,688
Other Revenue and Support	182	127	110	80	138
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	16,558	17,128	17,393	19,519	19,826
Expenses					
Program Services	13,041	13,305	14,810	15,206	17,300
Management and General, Fundraising	2,866	2,666	2,942	3,046	3,699
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	15,906	15,971	17,751	18,252	20,999
% of Program Services	82.0%	83.3%	83.4%	83.3%	82.4%
% of Management and Other	18.0%	16.7%	16.6%	16.7%	17.6%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	4.1%	7.2%	-2.0%	6.9%	-5.6%
% of Revenue Expended on Facilities	11.9%	11.9%	0.8%	0.1%	4.9%
Student to Faculty Ratio	8.7	8.5	28.1	9.3	8.0
Faculty to Admin Ratio	2.4	2.2	0.3	4.4	3.2
Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6					
Score	3.0	3.0	1.7	2.3	1.6
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong
Working Capital - GRAPH 7					
Net Working Capital	2,021,989	2,474,520	2,269,832	2,153,764	2,120,218
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	34.4%	41.5%	42.2%	38.4%	35.1%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	5.1	5.5	3.7	4.1	3.3
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Quick (Acid Test) Ratio					
Score	4.6	5.4	3.6	4.1	3.3
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7					
Score	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.8	0.8
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Good	Good
Months of Cash - GRAPH 8					
Score	3.8	6.2	5.9	5.1	2.0
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Good

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

Albany Leadership is an academic success and an effective, viable organization. The charter is fiscally sound and presents sound financial plans. As such, the plans for Albany Leadership for the next charter term are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

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. Albany Leadership plans to implement the same core elements of its educational program that enabled to charter to meet or exceed its key Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term. The charter will continue to deliver its educational program to 6th – 12th grade in its privately leased spaces in Albany. Albany Leadership plans to continue developing its middle school program to better prepare all students for a rigorous, college preparation high school experience and post-secondary success.

Plans for Board Oversight & Governance. Albany Leadership's board maintained strong membership over the current charter term. Current board members, including parents of current and former students, express interest in continuing to serve Albany Leadership in the next charter term, if renewed. The charter is currently recruiting to add a new member with Kindergarten – 12th grade experience who can strengthen the board's capacity to provide effective governance and oversight of the charter.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the five year financial plan, Albany Leadership presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including school budgets that are feasible and achievable, as long as actual enrollment shows improvement as the grades fill out and the finance and operations teams are fully staffed.

During 2019, Albany Leadership purchased through tax exempt bond financing the high school facility that it leased since 2009. In 2022, the education corporation executed a five year lease on the middle school facility with the option to purchase. The education corporation is exploring bond financing to possibly purchase the building during the next charter term. Both facilities will continue to provide ample space and amenities for the academic program over the next charter term.

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
Enrollment	450	450
Grade Span	6-12	6-12
Teaching Staff	47	47
Days of Instruction	184	184

Albany Leadership

Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES AX 1-6

A CO CHARTER OVERVIEW PAGE Ax 1

B RI REPORT INFORMATION PAGE Ax 3

ALBANY LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL FOR GIRLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CHAIR

Elizabeth M. Robertson

TREASURER AND SECRETARY

Margaret M. Moree

TRUSTEES

James J. Celestine Jr.
Eldon S. Harris
Ruth Sojourner Brice
Arricka Harrison
Etwin L. Bowman

CHARTER LEADERS

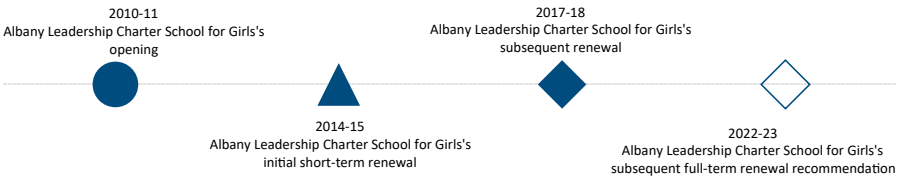
PRINCIPAL

Carina Cook, Superintendent/CEO (2018-19 to Present)
William Rivers, Principal (2017-18)
Christina Roberts, Principal (April 2014 to 2016-17)
Nadeen Herring, Principal (2013-14 to April 2014)
Melissa Jarvis-Cendeno, Principal (2010-11 to 2012-13)

CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2018-19	350	348	99%	9-12
2019-20	350	309	88%	9-12
2020-21	350	287	82%	9-12
2021-22	350	326	93%	6,9-12
2022-23	450	437	97%	6-12

TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2010-11	First Year Visit	February 17, 2011
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	November 9-10, 2011
2013-14	Evaluation Visit	January 8-9, 2014
2014-15	Initial Renewal	November 5-6, 2014
2016-17	Evaluation Visit	May 9, 2017
2017-18	Subsequent Renewal	October 25-26, 2017
2022-23	Subsequent Renewal Review	October 12-13, 2022 and December 13, 2022

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
October 12-13, 2022 and December 13, 2022	Katy Clayton	School Evaluation Analyst
	Andrew Kile	Managing Director of School Evaluation
	Jeff Wasbes	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Heather Wendling	External Consultant

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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").[1]

THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON

- A CHARTER'S APPLICATION FOR CHARTER RENEWAL
- INFORMATION GATHERED DURING THE CHARTER TERM
- ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
- FISCAL SOUNDNESS
- LEGAL COMPLIANCE
- RENEWAL REVIEW

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.

This renewal recommendation report compiles evidence using the ***State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks*** (the "SUNY Renewal Benchmarks"),[2] 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,[3] 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"[4] and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"[5] 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 3rd- 8th 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.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York