

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT
BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER
SCHOOLS' AUTHORITY TO OPERATE:*

*BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER
SCHOOL
BRILLA CARITAS CHARTER SCHOOL
BRILLA PAX CHARTER SCHOOL
BRILLA VERITAS CHARTER SCHOOL*

*REPORT DATE: APRIL 2, 2025
VISIT DATE: MAY 14 – 16, 2024*



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

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EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS



MISSION

Brilla Public Charter Schools, K-8 schools in the classical tradition, helps students to grow intellectually, socially, and physically into young men and women of good character and spirit, and to be prepared for excellence in high school, college and beyond.

EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools (“Brilla Schools” or the “education corporation”) began as a single charter school, Brilla College Preparatory Charter School (“Brilla”), originally authorized by the New York State Board of Regents. As the original school found success in its model, it replicated and came under SUNY authorization with Brilla Veritas Charter School (“Brilla Veritas”). The SUNY Trustees approved two additional charters, Brilla Caritas Charter School (“Brilla Caritas”) and Brilla Pax Charter School (“Brilla Pax”), which both opened in fall 2020. While Brilla and Brilla Veritas have gone through previous renewals, this serves as the initial renewal for Brilla Caritas and Brilla Pax.

Brilla Schools contracts with Seton Education Partners (“Seton” or the “network”), a Wyoming not-for-profit charter management organization (“CMO”) that provides all four charters with academic services, management and operations services, human resources support and development, budgeting support, and financial reporting services to the Kindergarten – 8th grade program.

Brilla is part of a combined high school program with Public Prep Charter School Academies’ (“Public Prep Academies”) schools Boys Preparatory Charter School of New York, Girls Preparatory Charter School of the Bronx, and Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York. The joint high school program, Vertex Partnership Academies (“Vertex High”),¹ is overseen jointly by the boards of trustees of Brilla Schools and Public Prep Academies. The education corporations contract with Vertex Partnership Academies, Inc. (“Vertex”), a New York not-for-profit management organization, for academic services, management services, operations, human resources, development, budgeting, and financial reporting for the high school program.

1. Under the revision, the education corporations will apply separately for renewal of the joint high school program after five years. Therefore, during the 2026-27 school year, the Institute will conduct a full review of the joint high school program.

CURRENT EDUCATION CORPORATION SNAPSHOT

First School Opened:
2013

Total Number of Charters:
4

Number of Students Served:
2,469

PROPOSED FUTURE EDUCATION CORPORATION SNAPSHOT

Serves:
Kindergarten – 12th

Total Number of Charters:
4

Number of Students Served:
3,193

Information about each charter is found on the following page.

EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

Brilla College Preparatory Charter School



Opening Year: 2013

Current Enrollment/Grades: 942 | Kindergarten – 11th

Future Enrollment/Grades: 941 | Kindergarten – 12th

Brilla Elementary School | 413 East 144th St, Bronx, New York | CSD* 7 | Grades: K-4 | Mott Haven

Brilla Middle School | 222 Alexander Ave, Bronx, New York | CSD 7 | Grades: 5-8 | Mott Haven

Vertex High School | 1160 Beach Ave, Bronx, New York | CSD 12 | Grades: 9-11 | Soundview

Brilla Caritas Charter School



Opening Year: 2020

Current Enrollment/Grades: 450 | Kindergarten – 4th

Future Enrollment/Grades: 796 | Kindergarten – 8th

Brilla Caritas Elementary School | 2336 Andrews Ave, Bronx, New York | CSD 10 | Grades: K-4 | University Heights

Brilla Pax Charter School



Opening Year: 2020

Current Enrollment/Grades: 366 | Kindergarten – 4th

Future Enrollment/Grades: 660 | Kindergarten – 8th

Brilla Pax Elementary School | 2336 Andrews Ave, Bronx, New York | CSD 10 | Grades: K-4 | University Heights

Brilla Veritas Charter School



Opening Year: 2017

Current Enrollment/Grades: 711 | Kindergarten – 7th

Future Enrollment/Grades: 796 | Kindergarten – 8th

Brilla Veritas Elementary School | 600 East 156th St, Bronx, New York | CSD 7 | Grades: K-4 | Melrose

Brilla Veritas Middle School | 452 College Ave, Bronx, New York | CSD 7 | Grades: 5-6 | Mott Haven

Brilla Veritas Middle School | 500 Courtlandt Ave. Bronx, New York | CSD 7 | Grades: 7 | Mott Haven

* New York City Community School District (“CSD”)

Please note, under the Act, each charter school is permitted to educate students from Kindergarten through 12th grade upon authorizer approval. Each charter school may have multiple facilities or sites to offer their approved grade configuration, as long as, each charter school does not educate students of the same grade level in more than one site.



EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES²

CHAIR

Eric J. Eckholdt

TREASURER

James Jones

SECRETARY

David Ingles

TRUSTEES

Mary O’Grady
 Stephanie Saroki de García
 Br. Brian Carty FSC
 Fr. Anthony D. Andreassi
 Darla Romfo
 Aaron Brenner
 Leoner Francisco

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Brilla Schools champions high expectations for student conduct and academic achievement;	+	Students, parents, and faculty choose to engage with Brilla Schools’ unique programs, committing to the effort and time required for success;	+
Brilla Schools acknowledges every child’s inherent dignity and potential without excuses based on background or socio-economic status;	+	Continuous professional development fosters accelerated learning, content mastery, and the implementation of foundational pedagogical practices; and,	+
The virtues of courage, justice, wisdom, and self-control are fundamental to Brilla Schools’ mission and enrich students’ lives and academic pursuits;	+	Students engage with rigorous and enriching content that prepares them for a competitive global landscape.	+
Teachers and leaders focus on student performance measures to drive accountability;	+		

². Source: The Institute’s board records at the time of report finalization.

“+”: This indicator is generally present.

“-”: This indicator is generally not present.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FULL-TERM RENEWAL

Renewal through 2029-30. *The SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee approve the four Applications for Charter Renewal:*

- *Brilla College Preparatory Charter School;*
- *Brilla Caritas Charter School;*
- *Brilla Pax Charter School; and,*
- *Brilla Veritas Charter School.*

If each school is renewed, Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools will be granted the authority to continue to operate each charter through the 2029-30 school year with the authority to provide instruction to students in such configuration as set forth in each charter’s Application for Renewal. The Institute makes this recommendation based on each charter meeting the criteria for 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 (“SUNY Renewal Policies”).³ The Table below presents more information about the schools.

The Institute further recommends the SUNY Trustees renew for a full term of five years the provisional charter of Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools, the New York not-for-profit charter school education corporation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Character development is essential to Brilla Schools’ educational philosophy, and the schools offer an explicit virtues-centered curriculum based on the concepts of courage, justice, wisdom, and self-control for students, staff members, and families. Under the guidance of a chief schools officer, staff members also participate in regular professional development sessions to help them implement the virtues within their work while students receive a separate character report card alongside the network’s academic report card. In middle school, 8th grade students conduct schoolwide presentations tracing their individual character growth trajectories.

The network invests heavily in developing leaders from within the organization. Teachers have the opportunity to take on increasing levels of responsibility as instructional leaders while receiving close mentorship from building leaders and coaches. In the 2023-24 school year, the network instituted a principal residency program to provide adequate preparation and support to its emerging school leaders.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The network has recently launched a large-scale overhaul of its curriculum in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics as it strives to incorporate increased phonics support for students via the science of reading framework and a stronger focus on inquiry and conceptual understanding within its mathematics programming. To guide teachers and instructional leaders with this transition, Brilla Schools invests in strategic consulting partnerships for coaching and implementation support, along with comprehensive assessment platforms aligned to its new curricula.

Vertex High, the joint high school program, operated in collaboration with Brilla Schools and Public Prep Academies, provides a high quality academic program that establishes high expectations for teachers and students in its third year of operation. The program implements the International Baccalaureate (“IB”) framework and teachers deliver rigorous instruction that promotes higher order thinking across classrooms. Teachers incorporate effective checks for understanding and maintain a focus on academic excellence which results in high levels of student engagement. Students at Vertex High participate in rigorous research projects, complex analytical writing assignments, and discussions that incorporate real world applications of academic content. As Vertex High continues to grow to serve students across 9th -12th grade, instructional leaders are working to codify systems and refine the program’s pedagogical approach in alignment with its mission to prepare students for college and career.

The information below demonstrates the key findings for the SUNY Trustees and highlights the successes of the schools.

FINDINGS & INFORMATION

Is the education corporation an academic success?

Brilla Schools is an academic success. The education corporation met or came close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals by demonstrating consistently high outcomes in ELA, mathematics, and science in every year with credible state assessment results. Over the term, the schools continued to post high achievement that surpassed the performance of the district. The academic program features an effective implementation of its curricular programs with a specific focus on ensuring students learn to read young and early. The school effectively and regularly monitors student performance and implements effective intervention systems.

Brilla Schools demonstrates success in the following ways:

- In ELA, the four schools consistently outperformed their district by at least eight percentage points in every year of the term.
- From 2021-22 through 2023-24, each school posted mathematics proficiency rates that surpassed the district averages by at least 18 percentage points.
- In both ELA and mathematics, Brilla Schools demonstrated aggregate mean growth for the education corporation that surpassed the target in each year with data suitable analysis.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Is the education corporation an effective, viable organization?

Brilla Schools is an effective, viable organization. The board's governance of the education corporation and oversight of the network and schools' leadership allow for clear academic and financial accountability structures. Seton provides the schools with a variety of administrative and operational supports allowing instructional leaders to focus primarily on developing the academic program. The education corporation's board of trustees provides effective oversight that enables the schools to meet academic goals.

Is the education corporation fiscally sound⁴?

Brilla Schools is fiscally sound according to the Institute's review of the renewal documentation. Brilla Schools has posted surpluses and increased its net assets in three of the five years of the current charter term. In 2023-24, Brilla Schools posted a deficit from school operations in the amount of \$3.0 million. The deficits noted in the current charter term can be attributed to increased spending on instructional staff member salaries to bring the salaries to a more competitive level and facilities lease expenses. Enrollment at Brilla Schools has been strong throughout the current charter term, and the Institute expects that strong record to continue as the education corporation continues to grow through the next charter term. The education corporation financial position remains strong. As of June 30, 2024, Brilla Schools has reported \$13 million in net assets and 2.4 months of cash on hand to cover immediate expenses.

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

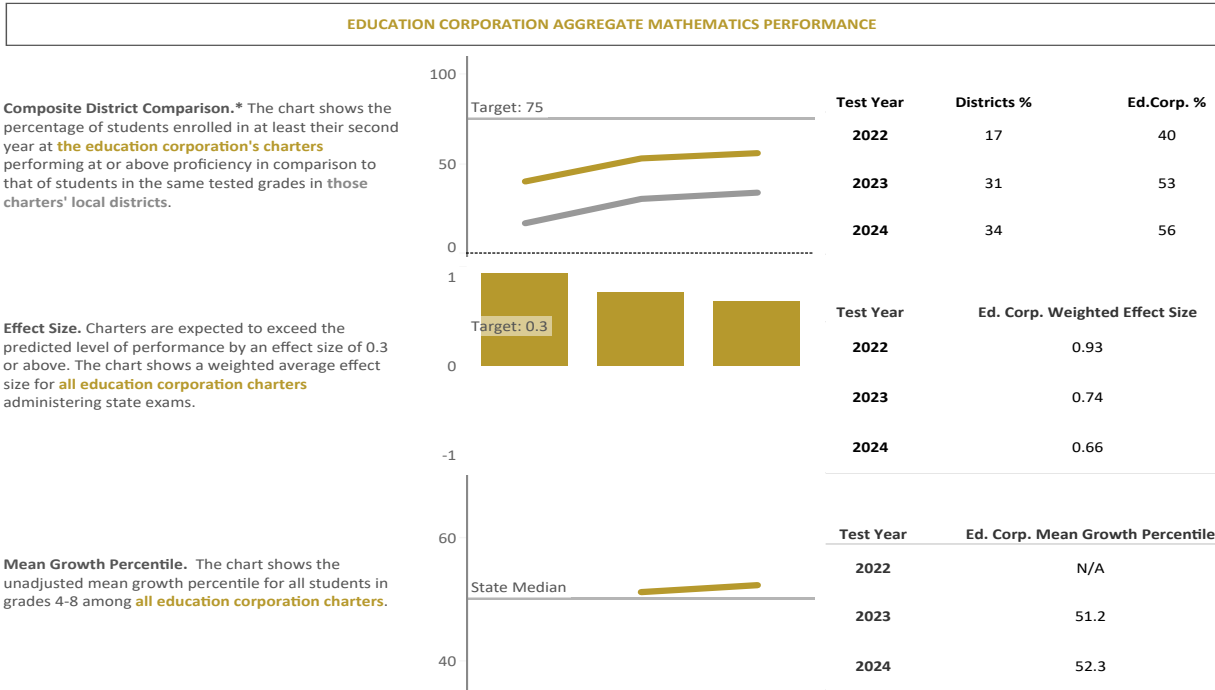
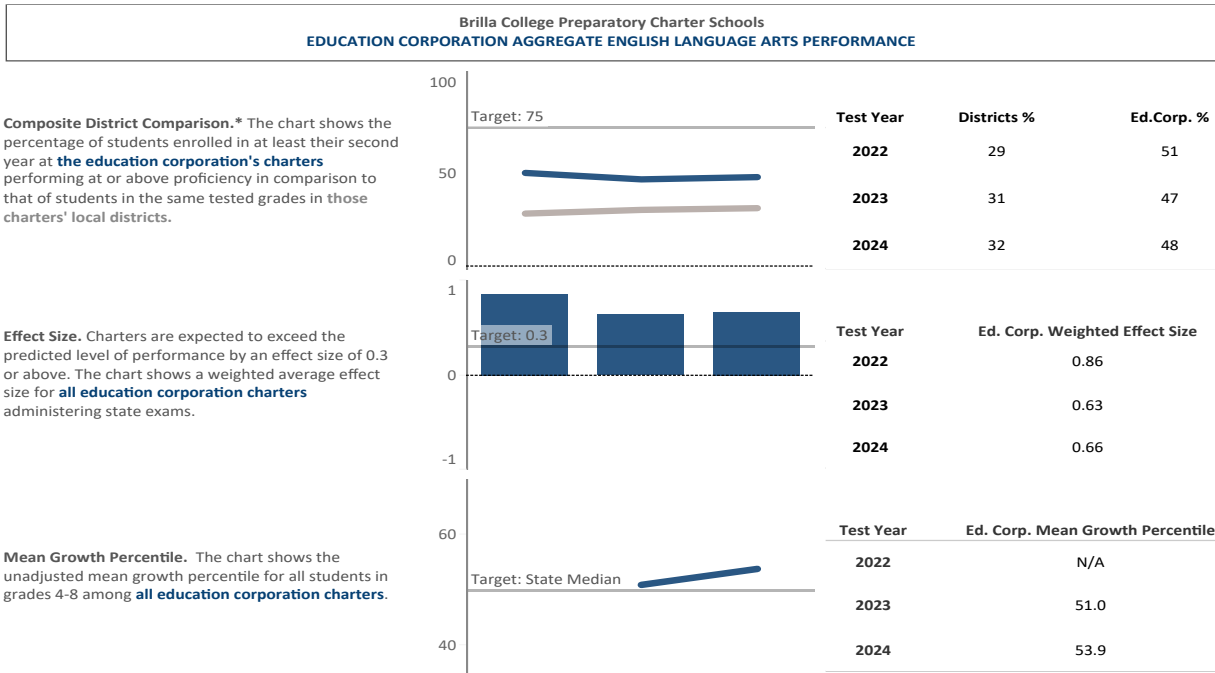
Brilla Schools' plans for the future are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The schools plan to continue the same effective program at the elementary and middle school levels during the next charter term. Each school will continue to grow its middle school programming. Board members express interest in continuing their service into the next term, and the board plans to recruit members with backgrounds in fundraising and real estate. Brilla Schools budgets using a comprehensive six year budget model that the board and leadership update annually. The long term budget allows the education corporation and network to forecast specific needs over the next few years as the education corporation expands to four full middle school programs.

4. 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 blue – gray – orange. 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 schools.



EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS: AGGREGATE ELA AND MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE FOR ALL CHARTERS

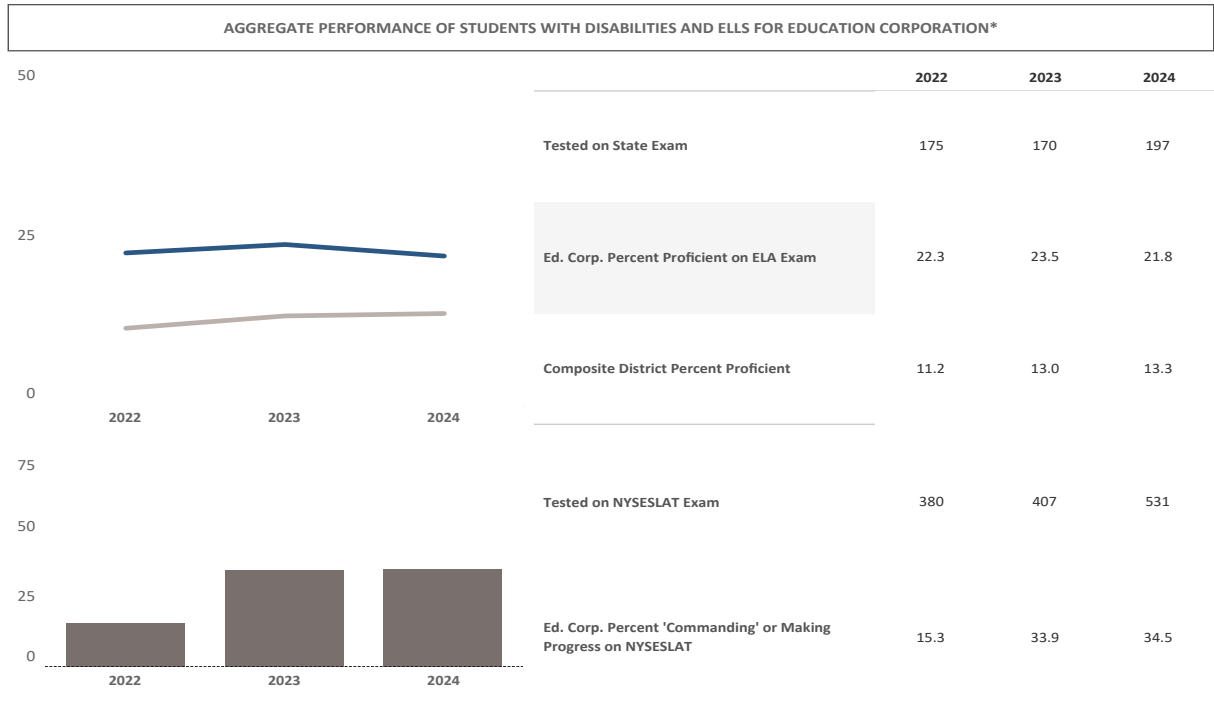
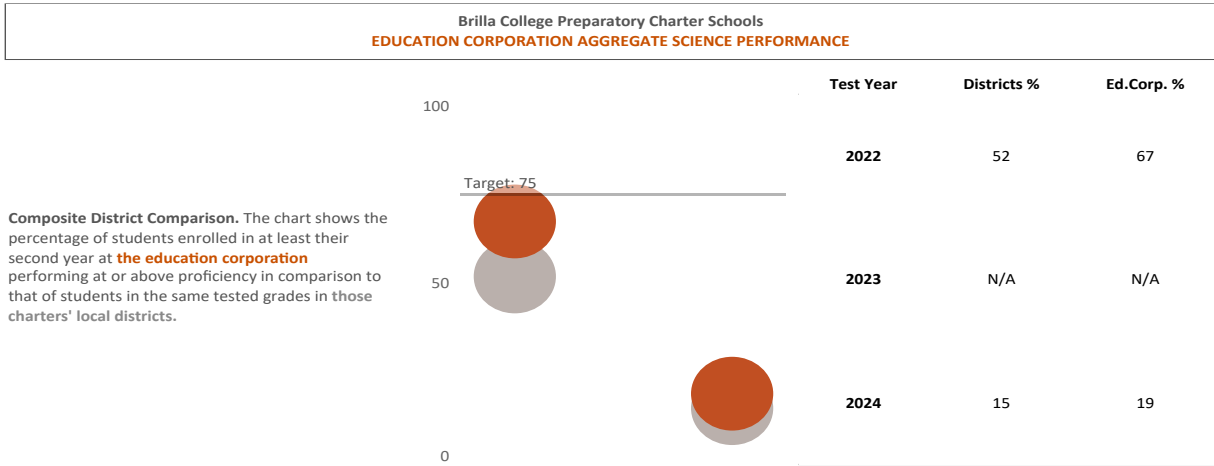


* The composite district comparison is a weighted proficiency rate including all comparison grades from Districts/New York City Community School Districts ("CSDs") in which a charter in the education corporation is located. The data reflect results for all charters in the education corporation that have produced New York State exam results.



EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS: AGGREGATE SCIENCE PERFORMANCE FOR ALL CHARTERS

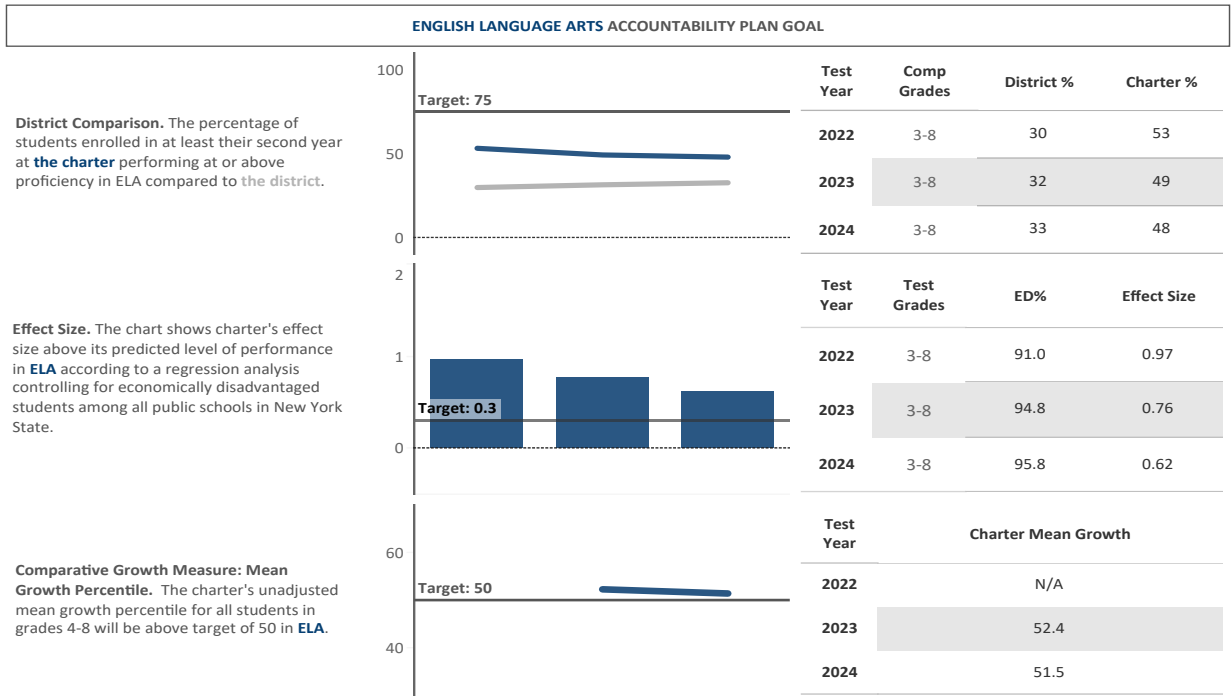


*The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in a charter's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam. "Making 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.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

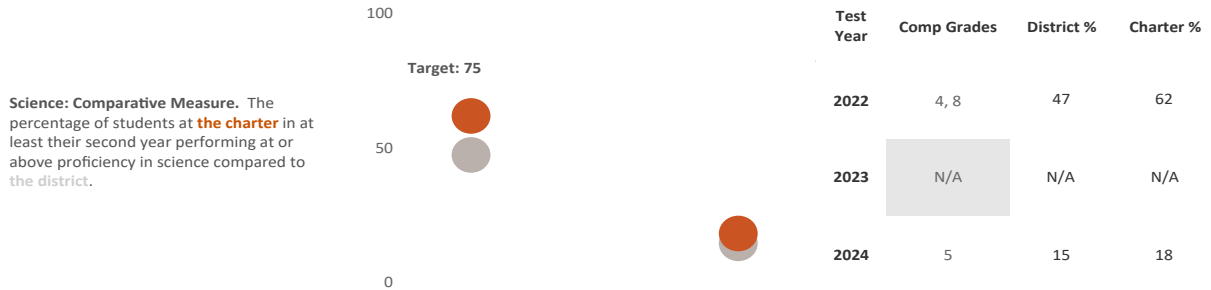




ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2022		2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	497	455	440	473	452	457
School Tested %	97.3%	89.2%	90.9%	97.7%	95.8%	96.8%
District Tested %	88.4%	89.1%	86.5%	88.2%	85.0%	86.5%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	132	119	105
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	21.2	24.4	19.0
District Percent Proficient	12.0	13.6	14.8
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	143	128	178
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	28.0	25.0	24.7

* 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".

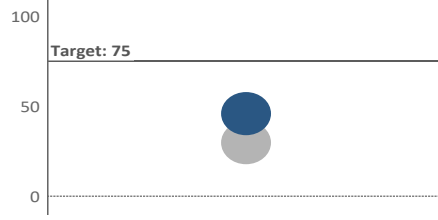


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA CARITAS CHARTER SCHOOL

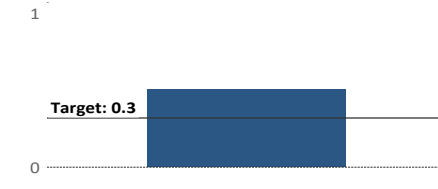
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2024	3	30	46

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	ED%	Effect Size
2024	3	93.8	0.47

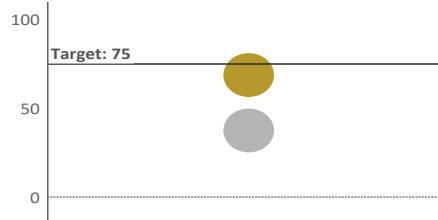
Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2024	N/A

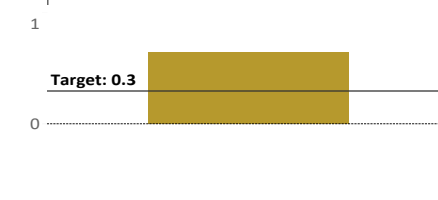
MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



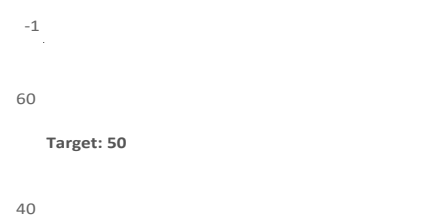
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2024	3	38	69

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	ED%	Effect Size
2024	3	93.8	0.64

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
2024	N/A

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA CARITAS CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Science: Comparative Measure. The percentage of students at the charter in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in science compared to the district.

N/A

TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2024	
	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	78	79
School Tested %	97.5%	98.8%
District Tested %	85.4%	90.1%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	0	0	16
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	N/A	N/A	31.3
District Percent Proficient	N/A	N/A	11.9
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	88	109	148
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	9.1	37.6	44.6

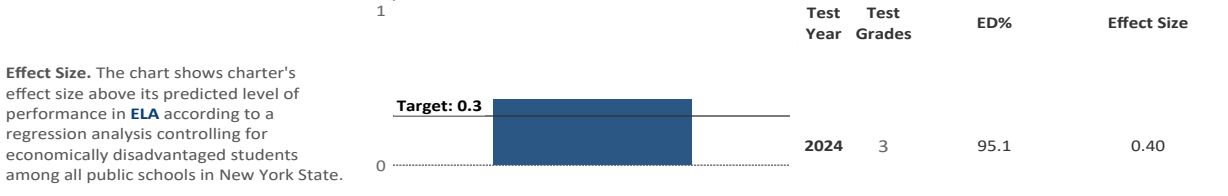
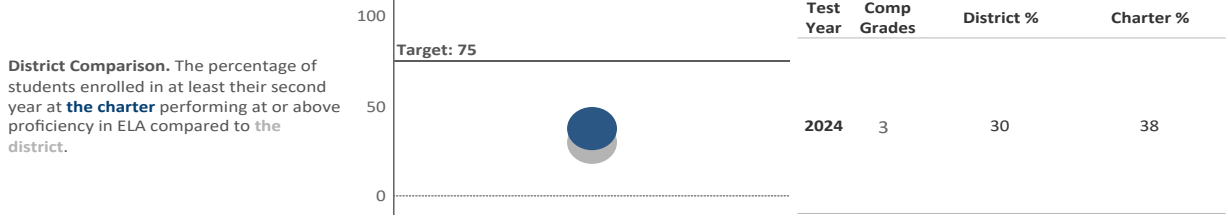
* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and English language learners ("ELLs") above is not tied to separate goals in the charter school's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, 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". "Making Progress" in the 2021-22 academic year is calculated in comparison to the 2018-19 academic year. If data is not available for 2018-19, only the percentage "Commanding" is shown.



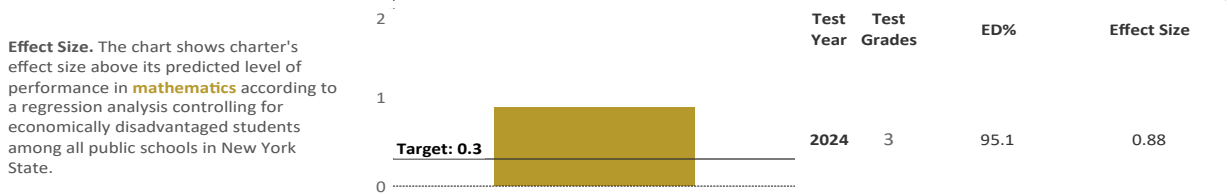
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA PAX CHARTER SCHOOL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL





ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA PAX CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Science: Comparative Measure. The percentage of students at **the charter** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in science compared to the district.

N/A

TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2024	
	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	78	81
School Tested %	96.3%	100.0%
District Tested %	85.4%	90.1%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

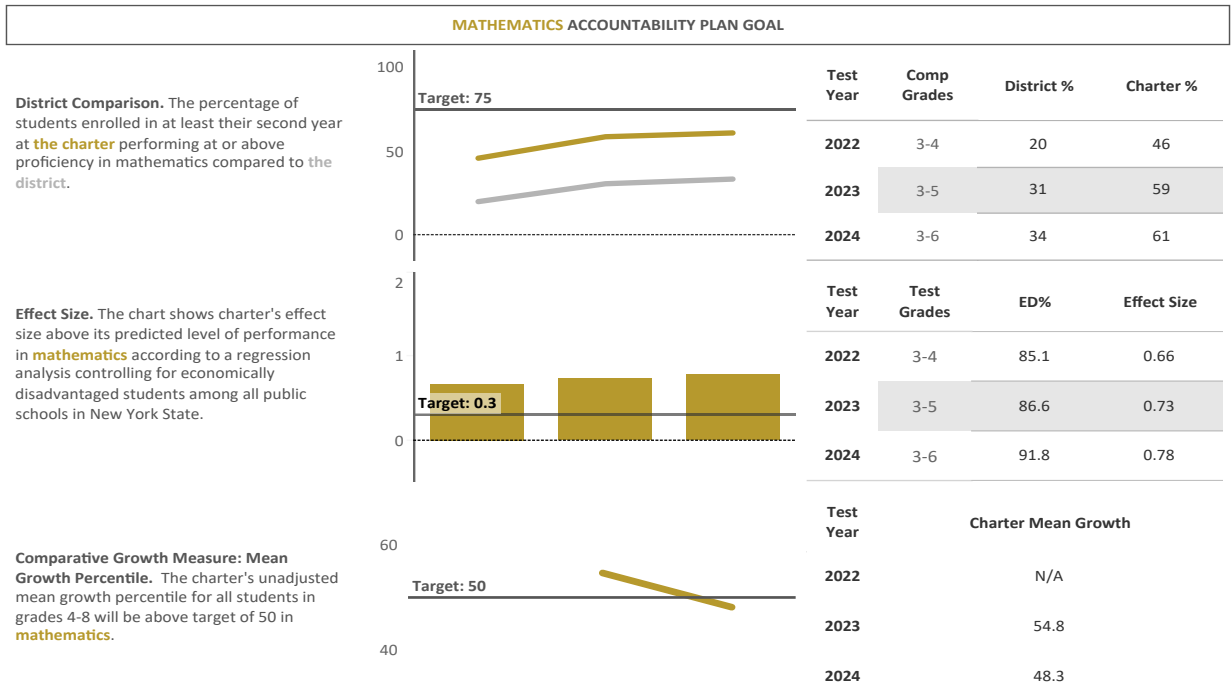
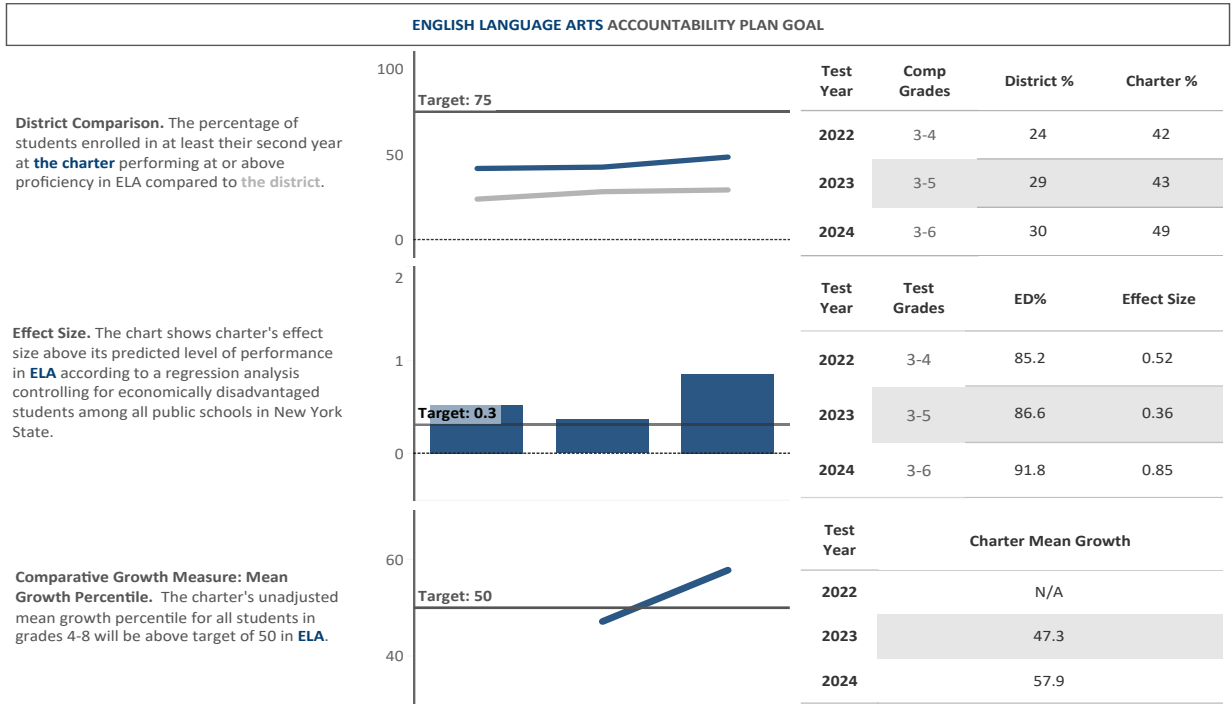
	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	0	0	14
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	N/A	N/A	14.3
District Percent Proficient	N/A	N/A	11.9
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	50	77	91
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	0.0	44.2	19.8

* 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". "Making Progress" in the 2021-22 academic year is calculated in comparison to the 2018-19 academic year. If data is not available for 2018-19, only the percentage "Commanding" is shown.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

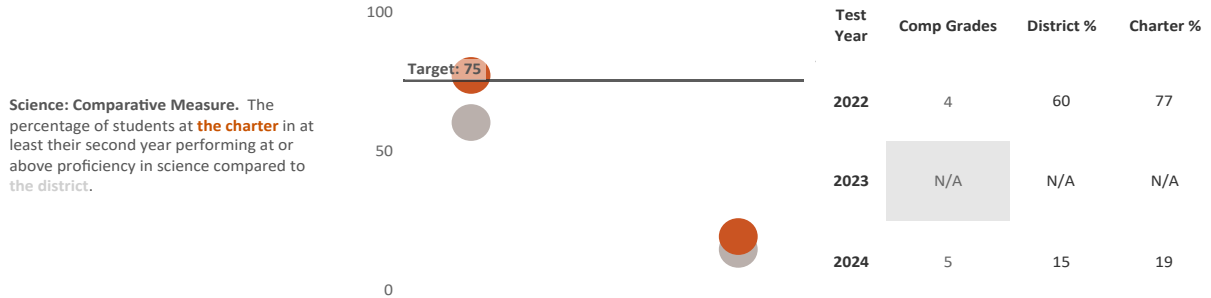
BRILLA VERITAS CHARTER SCHOOL



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BRILLA VERITAS CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2022		2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	168	168	213	218	285	291
School Tested %	94.4%	94.9%	93.4%	95.6%	94.1%	96.0%
District Tested %	87.1%	89.0%	86.0%	88.5%	84.6%	87.1%

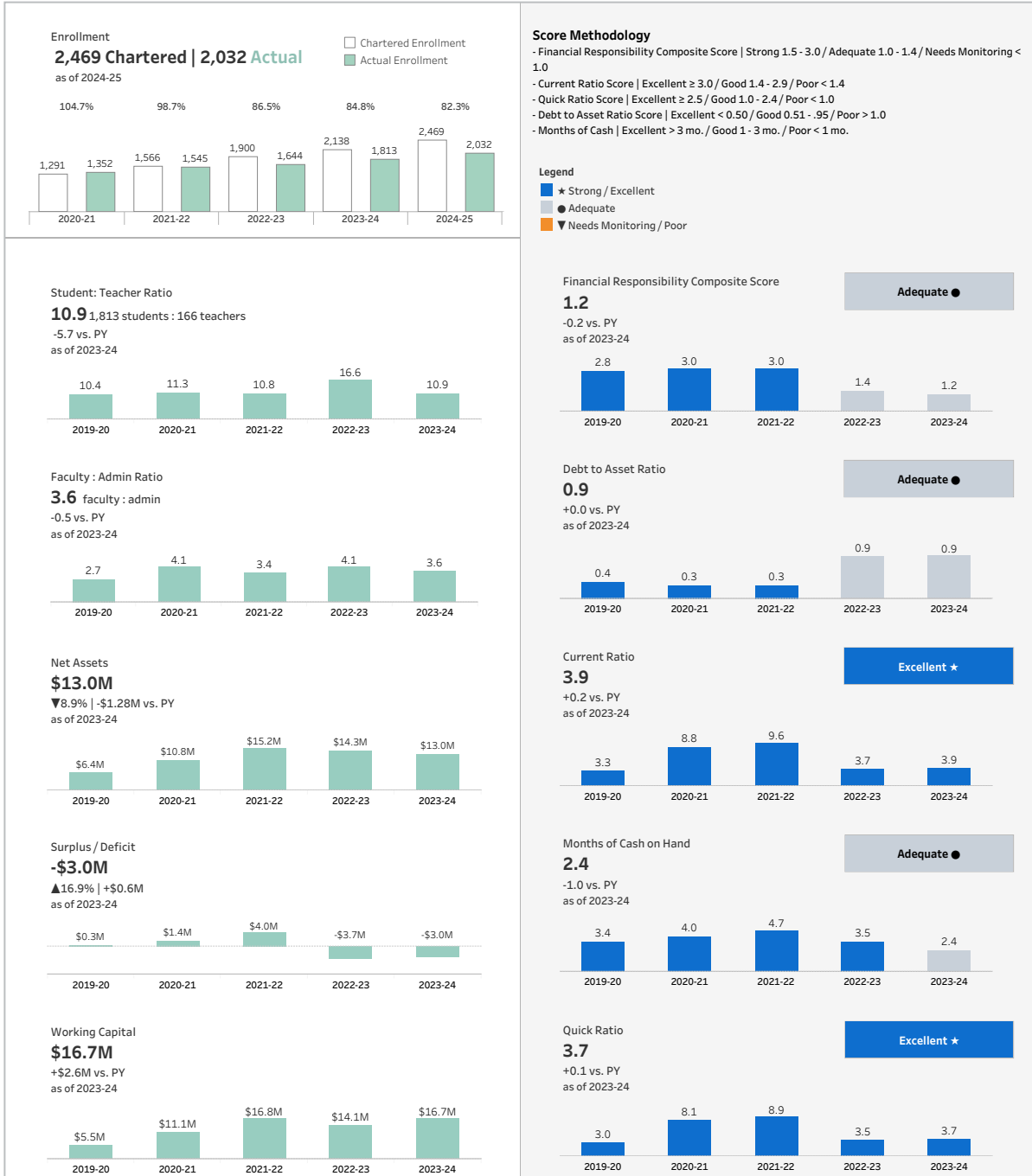
SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	43	51	62
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	25.6	21.6	25.8
District Percent Proficient	8.5	11.7	13.2
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	99	93	114
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	10.1	33.3	48.2

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FISCAL DASHBOARD

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS



FISCAL DASHBOARD

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL



FISCAL DASHBOARD

BRILLA CARITAS CHARTER SCHOOL



FISCAL DASHBOARD

BRILLA PAX CHARTER SCHOOL



FISCAL DASHBOARD

BRILLA VERITAS CHARTER SCHOOL



COMPLIANCE REPORTING



HAS EACH CHARTER DUE FOR RENEWAL 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 clear record of compliance with the terms of its charter including the timely submission of required reporting to the Institute.

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOLS

Teacher Certification

The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (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 or career and technical education courses.

Brilla Schools offers several supports to teachers seeking certification. Specifically, it offers review of required certification documentation, one-on-one consultation regarding certification pathways, preparation, and verification of work experience on behalf of employees. Brilla Schools also offers a tuition reimbursement program. Under the reimbursement program, full-time employees who wish to pursue education and training in areas related to their current or desired positions within Brilla Schools may enroll at one of the partner colleges or submit other accredited degree programs for consideration. The current partner colleges are Teachers College at Columbia University, New York University Steinhardt School of Education, Relay Graduate School of Education, Fordham University Graduate School of Education, as well as the Relay Advanced Certificate in Special Education program.

At Brilla, 39 out of the 45 teachers are uncertified, which is 19 teachers over the allowable limit under the Act. Out of the 39 uncertified teachers, 29 meet the additional qualifications under the Act.

At Brilla Caritas, five out of the 12 teachers are uncertified, which is within the allowable limit under the Act. All five uncertified teachers meet the additional qualifications under the Act.

At Brilla Pax, four out of the 11 teachers are uncertified, which is within the allowable limit under the Act. Out of the four uncertified teachers, three meet the additional qualifications under the Act.

COMPLIANCE REPORTING

At Brilla Veritas, 23 out of the 35 teachers are uncertified, which is eight teachers over the allowable limit under the Act. Out of the 23 uncertified teachers, 15 meet the additional qualifications under the Act.

BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

FERPA

At the time of the renewal visit, Brilla's middle school only maintained one Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") access log on the outside of the locked cabinet containing student records. Each individual student record file is required to have an access log. The Institute will ensure compliance prior to the start of the next charter term.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

To report on parent satisfaction with the school’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 Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from the New York City Department of Education’s (“NYCDOE’s”) annual family survey from the 2023-24 school year for each school due for renewal. Each school had the following response and satisfaction rates:

Brilla had 69% of families respond to the survey with 95% demonstrating satisfaction with the school’s programs.

Brilla Caritas had 93% of families respond to the survey with 93% demonstrating satisfaction with the school’s programs.

Brilla Pax had 95% of families respond to the survey with 97% demonstrating satisfaction with the school’s programs.

Brilla Veritas had 54% of families respond to the survey with 94% demonstrating satisfaction with the school’s programs.

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 ten parents and caretakers in attendance at the focus group indicated high levels of satisfaction with Brilla Schools. Families report that the network keeps them well informed of student progress and needs, and that teachers across the network are highly accessible and provide ample academic supports for parents. Families also highlight the network’s character education program for both parents and students as a particular strength of the network, citing that the curriculum has produced strong, positive impacts on student behavior at school and at home. Participants also expressed strong appreciation for the diverse activities and field trips that Brilla Schools offers via its El Camino afterschool program.

Public Comments

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the districts in which each 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.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

The NYCDOE held its required hearing for Brilla Schools' renewal application for Brilla, Brilla Caritas, Brilla Pax, and Brilla Veritas on June 3, 2024, by videoconference. A network leader spoke about the background of Brilla Schools and its vision of an innovative, blended learning model and a scholarly school culture focused on character development. He discussed the partnership with the CMO to achieve the goal of consistency and quality for all schools within the network. The network also recently initiated the Brilla Appreciation Campaign, a response to parents' feedback requesting more opportunities to express their gratitude for the outstanding work that the staff is doing. Four parents of students currently enrolled at Brilla Schools spoke in support of the renewal application and shared the accomplishments scholars have made since attending the schools and the great work of the staff and school leadership. They feel the schools allow students to develop in character and the parents feel supported and part of community. The parents appreciate how much time is dedicated to reading and learning. The teachers take the time to get to know and understand the scholars, and parents appreciate that all staff members, even the custodians, know the students. No one spoke in opposition of the application.

Enrollment and Retention

Brilla Schools' efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets are effective. At the time of the renewal review, Brilla Schools' enrollment among students with disabilities, ELLs, and economically disadvantaged students met or came close to meeting its enrollment targets.

Persistence in Enrollment

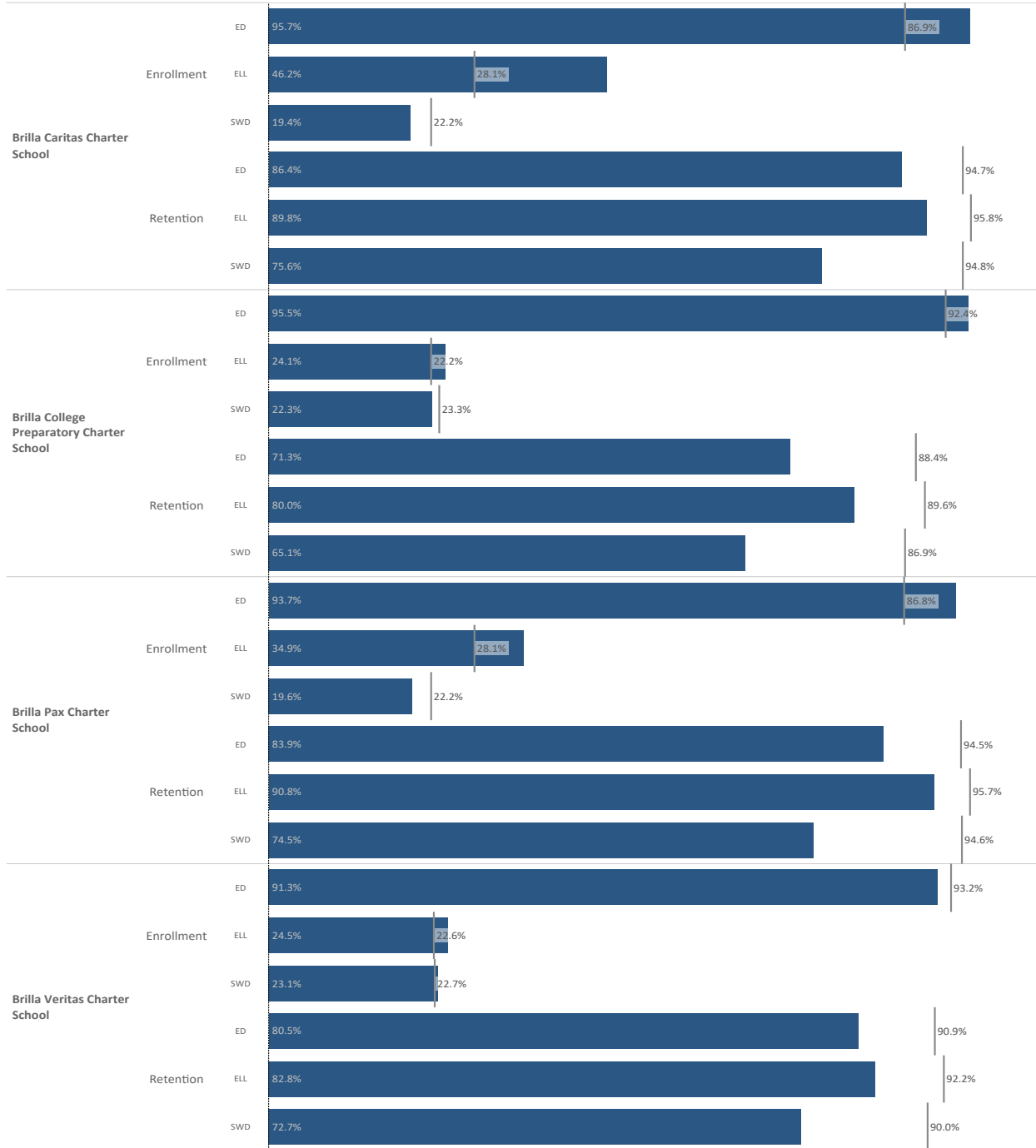
An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2023-24, 77% of Brilla Schools students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in student demographics section of the report.

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.



COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



The chart illustrates the **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets** for each operating charter in the education corporation. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the most recent enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the education corporation.

Brilla Schools

Ax

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BRILLA COLLEGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ¹	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	751	791	105%	K – 8
2021-22	756	780	103%	K – 8
2022-23	822	751	91%	K – 9
2023-24	874	749	86%	K – 10
2024-25	942	736	78%	K – 11

BRILLA CARITAS CHARTER SCHOOL – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	90	97	107%	K
2021-22	180	174	97%	K – 1
2022-23	270	243	90%	K – 2
2023-24	360	324	90%	K – 3
2024-25	450	412	92%	K – 4

BRILLA PAX CHARTER SCHOOL – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	90	95	105%	K
2021-22	180	156	87%	K – 1
2022-23	270	197	73%	K – 2
2023-24	279	248	89%	K – 3
2024-25	366	321	88%	K – 4

1. Source: Institute’s Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)



BRILLA VERITAS CHARTER SCHOOL – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	360	369	103%	K – 3
2021-22	450	436	97%	K – 4
2022-23	538	453	84%	K – 5
2023-24	625	492	79%	K – 6
2024-25	711	563	79%	K – 7

CHARTER VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2017-18	Initial Renewal – Brilla First Year Visit – Brilla Veritas	October 13, 2017 February 13, 2018
2020-21	First Year Visit – Brilla Caritas First Year Visit – Brilla Pax	June 10, 2021 June 10, 2021
2021-22	Initial Renewal – Brilla Veritas	September 15, 2021
2022-23	Renewal Review – Brilla	September 15, 2022
2023-24	Renewal Visit – Brilla Renewal Visit – Brilla Caritas Renewal Visit – Brilla Pax Renewal Visit – Brilla Veritas	May 14 – 16, 2024

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
May 14 – 16, 2024	Ciani Jones	Senior Analyst
	Sinnjinn Bucknell	Director of Performance and Systems
	Desree Cabrall-Njenga	School Evaluator

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Brilla Schools demonstrated strong achievement over the charter term. The schools in the education corporation met their key academic Accountability Plan goals in every year from 2021-22 through 2023-24. Notably, all four schools exceeded the targets for all comparative measures in each year of the charter term. The schools also met the science and Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”) goals.

In ELA, each school in the education corporation met their goal and posted high proficiency rates. From 2021-22 through 2023-24, the schools’ students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency at rates that exceeded their local districts by at least eight percentage points each year. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, the schools consistently performed higher than expected to at least a meaningful degree. In every year with data available, Brilla Schools posted mean growth percentiles in ELA that met or came close to the target of 50.

In mathematics, the schools met the goal in every year from 2021-22 through 2023-24. The schools outperformed their local districts and posted effect sizes that far surpassed the target in each year with data suitable for analysis. Notably in 2023-24, Brilla posted scores that surpassed all comparison and growth targets. Over the term, the schools’ students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency at rates that exceeded their local districts by at least 18 percentage points each year. In comparison to demographically similar schools, each school performed higher than expected according to the Institute’s comparative performance analysis. Both schools also posted mean growth percentiles that came close to or exceeded the target of 50.

ASSESSMENT

Brilla Schools has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The network has well-developed systems for analyzing assessment results, disseminating information to stakeholders, and developing action plans to address needs. Each school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the schools’ curricula and the rigor of New York State standards. Three times annually, the schools administer the NWEA MAP assessment to measure student progress and achievement in ELA and mathematics across all grade levels. In Kindergarten – 6th grade, the schools administer DIBELS mClass three times a year to measure foundational literacy skills. The network also develops bespoke interim assessments for ELA, mathematics, and science that each school administers across all grade levels quarterly with the final interim assessment serving as a mock state examination. At all campuses, teachers capture additional performance data via exit tickets and unit assessments embedded within network curricula. Subsequent to the administration of major assessments, school leadership guides teachers in the implementation of the network’s normed assessment grading process, which includes having multiple reviewers for written responses.

Brilla Schools upholds a strong culture of data driven instruction and decision making, and the network data team drives this effort by sharing actionable information with the board, the charter management organization (“CMO”), and school-based staff members at regular intervals. As a result, stakeholders at every level of the organization can speak with clarity about the ways in which data has informed short and long term adjustments to programming and instruction. For example, classroom teachers can describe the relative performance of

general education students and specific subpopulations, as well as the overall progress students have made on multiple types of assessments while also outlining how data helps them identify skills for reteaching at the class, small group, or individual student level. Similarly, school leaders can readily articulate the ways in which data informs teacher evaluation, coaching plans, professional development priorities, and needs assessment. As the network continues to create efficiencies within its data driven practices, leaders acknowledge the opportunity to raise the level of data literacy among staff members as a means of promoting independence for data driven planning.

CURRICULUM

Brilla Schools' curricular programs support teachers with instructional planning. Brilla Schools applies a research-based accelerated learning framework across its network, and it regularly evaluates its curricular programs to inform programmatic shifts to meet student needs. The network also provides abundant support to teachers for curriculum implementation and intellectual preparation for lessons. However, as the network continues to refine its curricular systems, it recognizes the opportunity to strengthen hiring and professional development practices that contribute to higher levels of content knowledge across instructional staff members.

At the time of the Institute's visit, Brilla Schools had recently introduced significant curricular shifts in ELA and mathematics in an effort to increase students' conceptual understanding and foundational skills across content areas. In ELA, Brilla Schools works closely with consultants from MyEducationist to offer a targeted literacy block that integrates phonics, close reading practices, novel studies, and writing exercises across grades. The schools have also begun to incorporate the science of reading framework in conjunction with its Core Knowledge Language Arts ("CKLA") curriculum in the elementary grades while adopting the Dibels mClass assessment platform. In mathematics, Brilla Schools offers core content based on network-authored curriculum along with a biweekly targeted mathematics block that features small group, differentiated instruction as well individualized support from adaptive software. To support students with mathematical inquiry, Brilla Schools offers cognitively guided instruction ("CGI") to build students' conceptual understanding of mathematics. In all content areas, teachers rely on scripted lesson plans for instruction and meet frequently with grade team leaders and instructional coaches to differentiate instruction in response to assessment outcomes and to plan for student misconceptions. To support ELLs, the network integrates language acquisition supports directly into its classroom instruction and core curriculum revisions.

Although Brilla Schools offers teachers co-planning structures under the guidance of coaches and teacher leaders, instructional leaders recognize the opportunity to increase the consistency of content knowledge and high quality intellectual preparation across campuses. Leaders report a clear plan and strategies to address these priorities this school year and into the next charter term.

PEDAGOGY

High quality teaching and learning is evident across Brilla Schools. Teachers maximize learning time using efficient transitions and clear directions while students demonstrate the internalization of behavioral expectations and classroom routines. The Institute consistently observed teachers delivering purposeful instruction based on curriculum-aligned objectives and thoughtful activities to promote students' conceptual understanding, and in most lessons, teachers demonstrate effective strategies for addressing student

misconceptions in the moment. For example, the Institute observed a teacher using a think aloud to identify a misconception related to character motivation, followed by a partner share opportunity that allowed students to practice identifying character motivation independently. When checking for student understanding, teachers successfully employ strategies including small group instruction, hand signals, purposeful circulation, and individual conferencing, and teachers routinely adapt network-authored lesson plans to incorporate differentiation strategies based on student performance data.

Across the education corporation, teachers challenge students with rigorous content while embedding opportunities for higher order thinking, and the Institute observed meaningful student voice and ample opportunities for problem solving in most lessons. However, despite network-wide efforts to shift the balance of classroom talk from teachers to students, in some 6th – 8th grade classrooms, the schools have the opportunity to develop teachers' ability to facilitate student-to-student discourse and rigorous activities. In a number of classrooms, the Institute observed an over reliance on the one-teach, one-assist co-teaching model, with teachers not maximizing use of other co-teaching models.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Brilla Schools has effective instructional leadership. Brilla Schools presents clear instructional priorities and a cohesive vision for excellent instruction across all levels of the organization, and it provides teachers with responsive coaching and professional development to help meet performance expectations. At Brilla Schools, instructional leaders use transparent protocols to ensure consistent coaching practices across campuses while providing differentiated support to teachers. At the beginning of the school year, academic leaders conduct classroom walkthroughs using a common observation tool rooted in the establishment of classroom routines and culture. Leaders then use the resulting observation data to assign coaching caseloads based on teacher need and coach expertise. Upon establishing caseloads, instructional coaches observe teachers biweekly and conduct formal follow up meetings to determine areas of growth and action steps.

As the school year progresses, coaches employ a variety of teacher support methods such as modeling activities or providing in-the-moment feedback. To hold teachers accountable to implementing coaching feedback, leaders use student performance outcomes to measure effectiveness, and escalate the frequency and intensity of coaching cycles as needed for teachers in need of additional support. Brilla Schools teachers also receive ample common planning time to support the improvement of instructional practice. Each day, teachers have independent periods for lesson internalization and co-planning time with grade team members. Leaders monitor the quality of teacher co-planning by using protocols to review lesson plans for evidence of effective intellectual preparation and differentiation. Leaders across Brilla Schools recognize areas within these practices to strengthen to develop even stronger pedagogical practices.

AT RISK PROGRAM

Brilla Schools implements academic programming that meets the needs of students with disabilities, ELLs, and students at risk of academic failure. The organization has clear and compliant identification procedures that include a battery of assessments early in the school year to identify students falling below grade level expectations. Each school follows guidelines for monitoring students who may require evaluation for special education services and all schools work closely with families and district committees on special education ("CSEs") to ensure the timely administration of evaluation.

Upon identification, Brilla Schools implements effective programming to meet the learning needs of at-risk students. The education corporation makes disaggregated assessment and co-academic data readily accessible to all instructional staff members, and it offers dedicated collaboration time for general education and special populations teachers. As a result, both special education and general education teachers can speak in detail about the progress of students receiving intervention. Brilla Schools has also established protocols, procedures, and systems of information sharing to ensure staff members fully understand compliance procedures. Across campuses, each grade level has at least one integrated co-teaching (“ICT”) classroom where a certified special education teacher provides support to students with disabilities and students struggling academically. The schools’ special education learning specialists push into classrooms to provide skills remediation and other forms of targeted intervention, and ELL specialists provide language acquisition supports in classrooms and via small groups pull-out sessions.

As part of its accelerated learning focus, Brilla Schools implements a daily targeted literacy and targeted mathematics block during which general education teachers and learning specialists run strategic small group sessions, implement tiered interventions, and oversee student independent work on adaptive learning software. In classrooms, the Institute observed special education and general education students accessing the same grade level content in accordance with data suggesting high academic achievement across student groups. Most notably, in 2023-24, ELLs and students with disabilities posted proficiency rates in ELA and mathematics that exceeded those of district and statewide peers.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Brilla Schools’ organization works effectively to deliver the educational program. Brilla Schools’ charter management organization, Seton Partners (“Seton”), provides the education corporation with effective operational procedures and comprehensive support for academic programming, financial management, teacher recruitment, data analysis, and facilities maintenance for its Kindergarten – 8th grade. Seton’s well developed organizational systems also provide a strong foundation as the education corporation responds to challenges related to enrollment, staffing, and space procurement. Seton provides consistent oversight across its six campuses, and CMO leaders engage in frequent data analysis and feedback gathering cycles to assess needs at the building level. In response to identified needs, senior leaders develop short- and long-term strategic plans to address problem areas and to drive continuous improvement efforts for professional development, evaluation systems, hiring practices, and curriculum implementation.

The CMO also works actively to optimize the network’s staffing structure. Most recently, Seton added a chief schools officer and floating principal position to provide closer oversight of its campuses, and it increased the instructional leadership capacity of principals by expanding the responsibilities of operations directors to balance the operational workload of the principal role. As part of its efforts to attract and retain high quality staff members, Brilla Schools provides strong teacher development programming. Those with an interest in teaching have the opportunity to receive mentorship via the Seton Fellows program, which places recent college graduates in teaching assistant roles within partner schools, and the network encourages in-service teachers to take on increasing levels of responsibility as content liaisons and grade team leads in preparation for coaching roles. To develop its internal pool of building leaders, the CMO has instituted a principal-in-residence program with plans to encompass the assistant principal role in the near term.

Brilla Schools maintains sufficient enrollment across most of its schools, but it has experienced recent declines due to shifting neighborhood demographics. In response to enrollment fluctuations, the education corporation adheres to a tiered budgeting system that allows it to maintain essential positions when enrollment falls below desired targets. However, as Brilla Schools seeks to fund additional positions within its social emotional learning team, it has expanded its CMO marketing team to amplify its student recruitment efforts.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

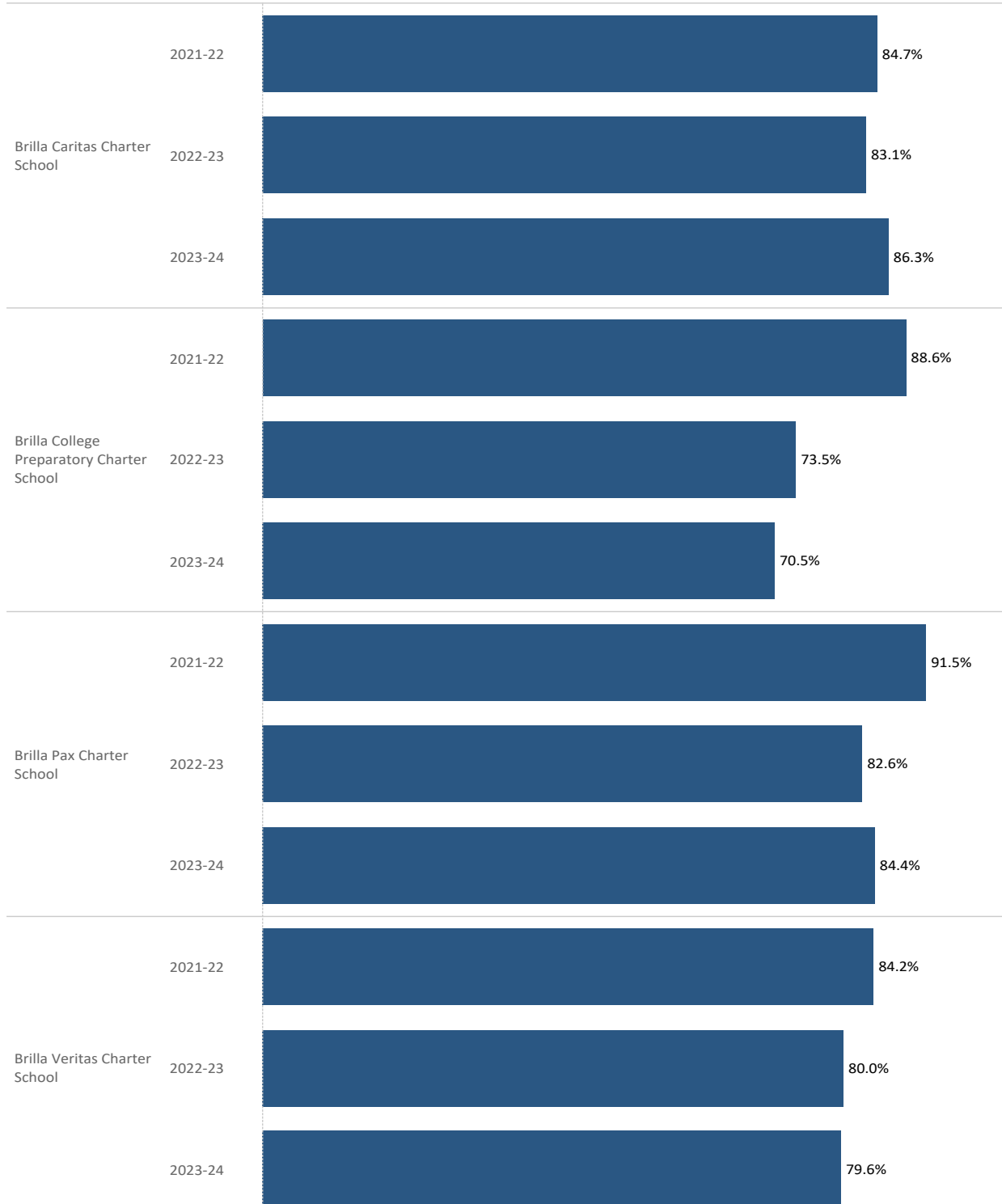
Brilla Schools' board works effectively to meet each school's Accountability Plan goals. The board has a clear committee structure, and board members possess expertise in the areas of law, finance, educational leadership. As a collective, the board provides careful oversight and stewardship of the schools while holding Seton accountable to achieving strategic planning goals.

The board receives quarterly assessment data dashboards from the CMO broken down by school and student subgroup, and the board finance committee receives monthly reports from the Seton finance team. Currently, given variable student enrollment trends, the board endorses a conservative budget model to ensure the delivery of high quality academic programming. In addition, the board has approved two additional fundraising positions within the CMO while moving to expand the Seton marketing team to drive student enrollment above its current level. With increased enrollment, the board plans to finance additional co-teaching and counseling positions across the schools.

The Brilla Schools board conducts an annual CMO evaluation, and it evaluates the network's executive director using a combined self-evaluation and 360 process. The board does not currently evaluate its performance, but members actively solicit constructive performance feedback from the board chair. In response to challenges pertaining to space procurement for Brilla Pax, the board intends to recruit additional members with backgrounds in real estate.

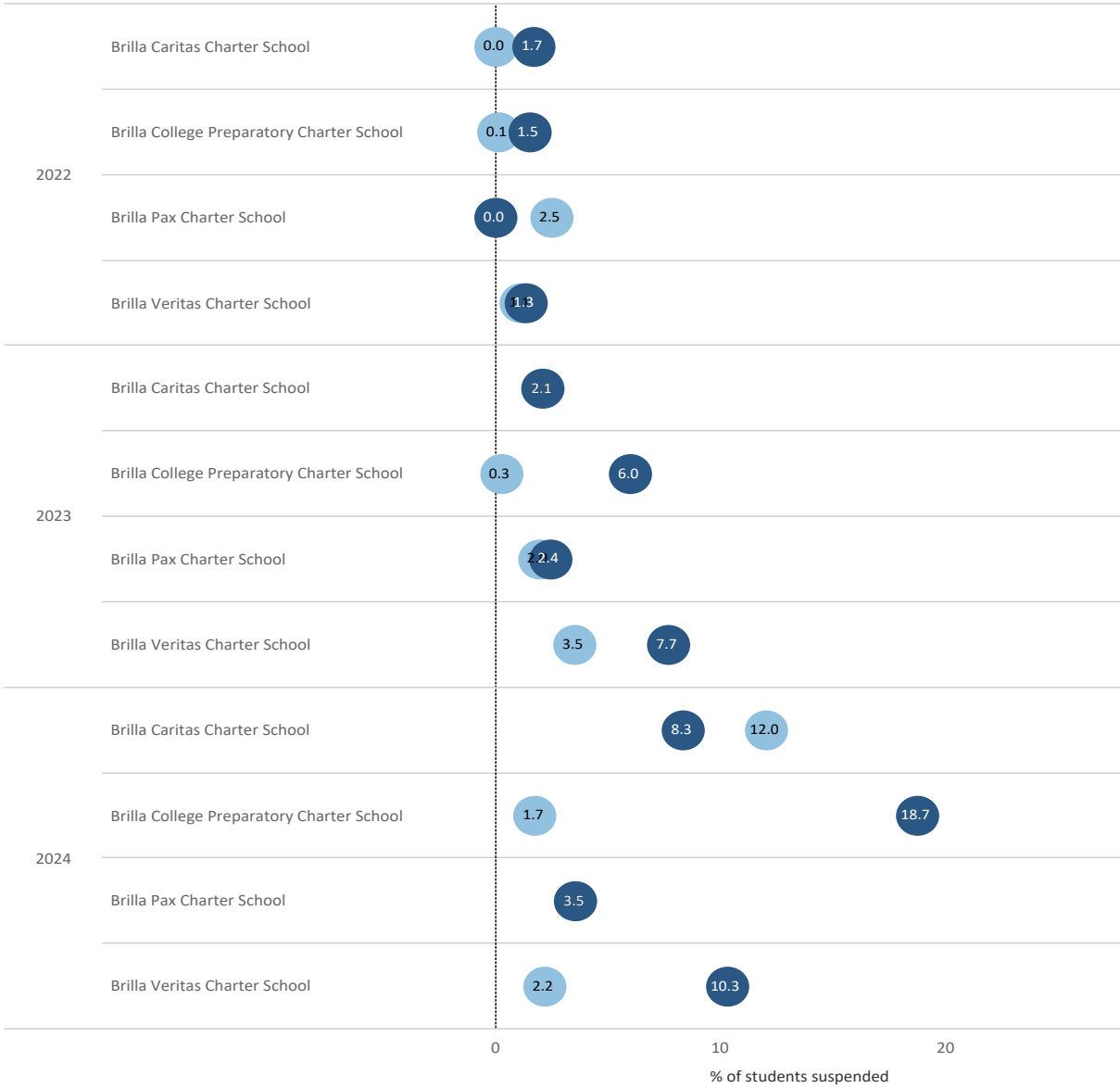


EDUCATION CORPORATION PERSISTENCE IN ENROLLMENT





Suspensions: The education corporation's out of school suspension rate and in school suspension rate.



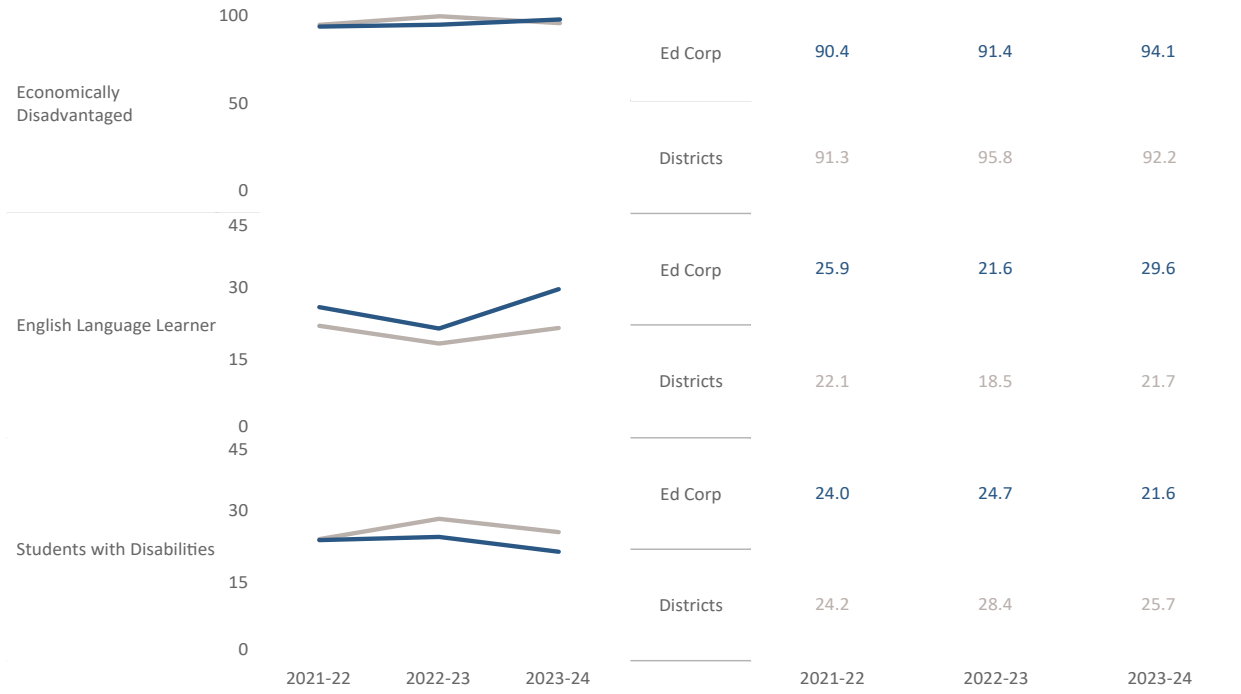
Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the NYCDOE: the total the number of students receiving an out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

During the most recent school year, the education corporation expelled 0 students.

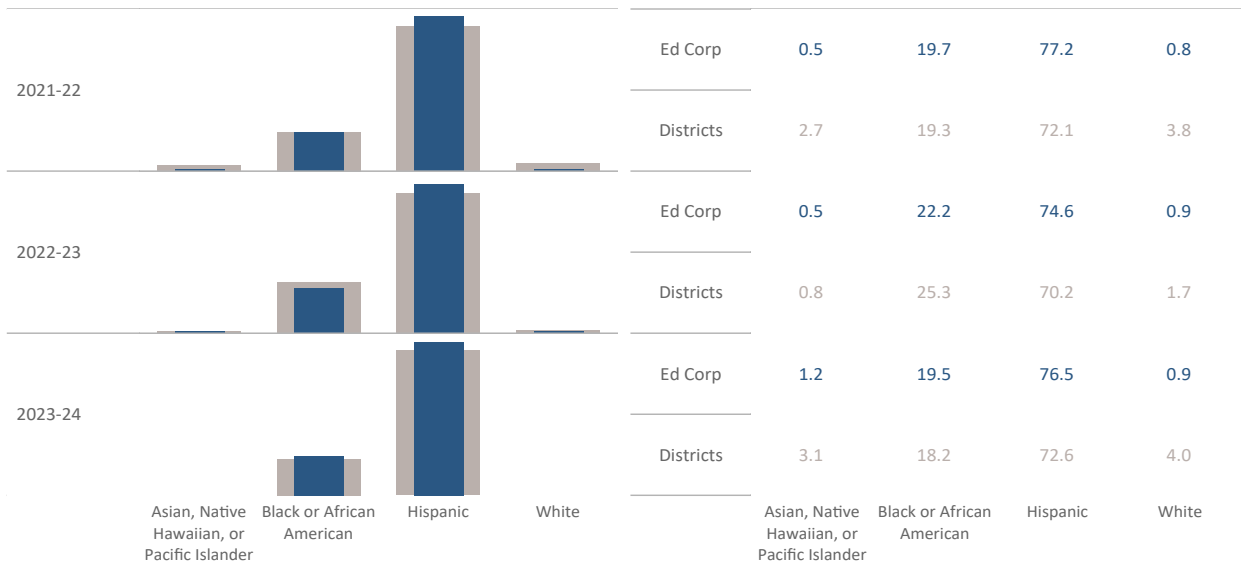


Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools Aggregate Education Corporation Enrollment

Aggregate Education Corporation Demographics: Sub-populations



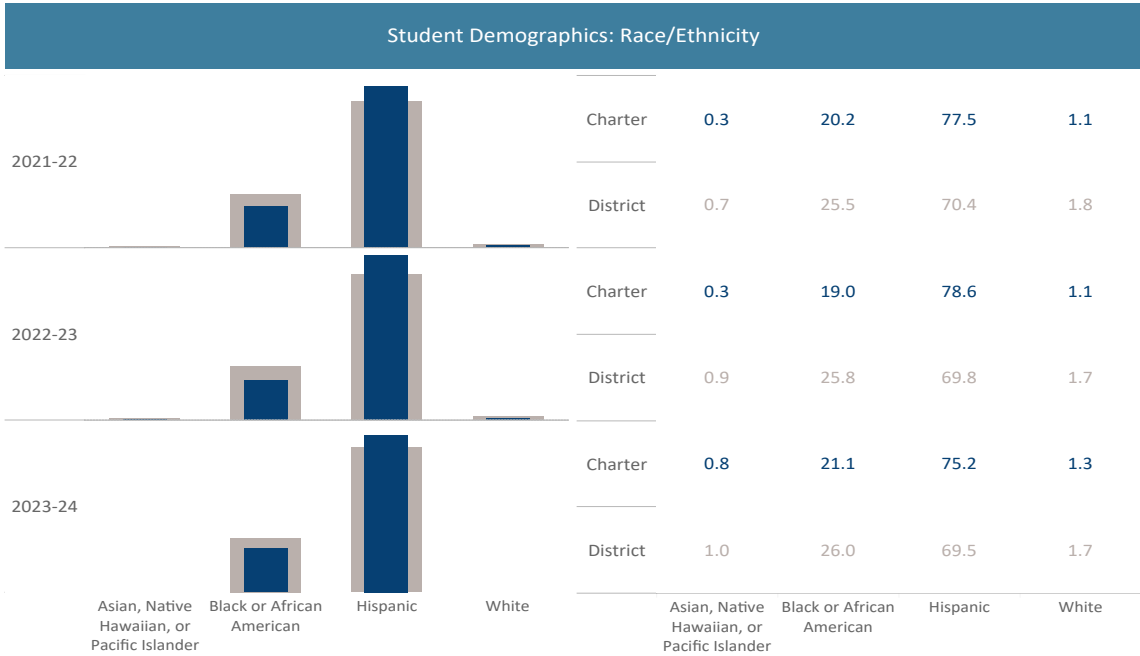
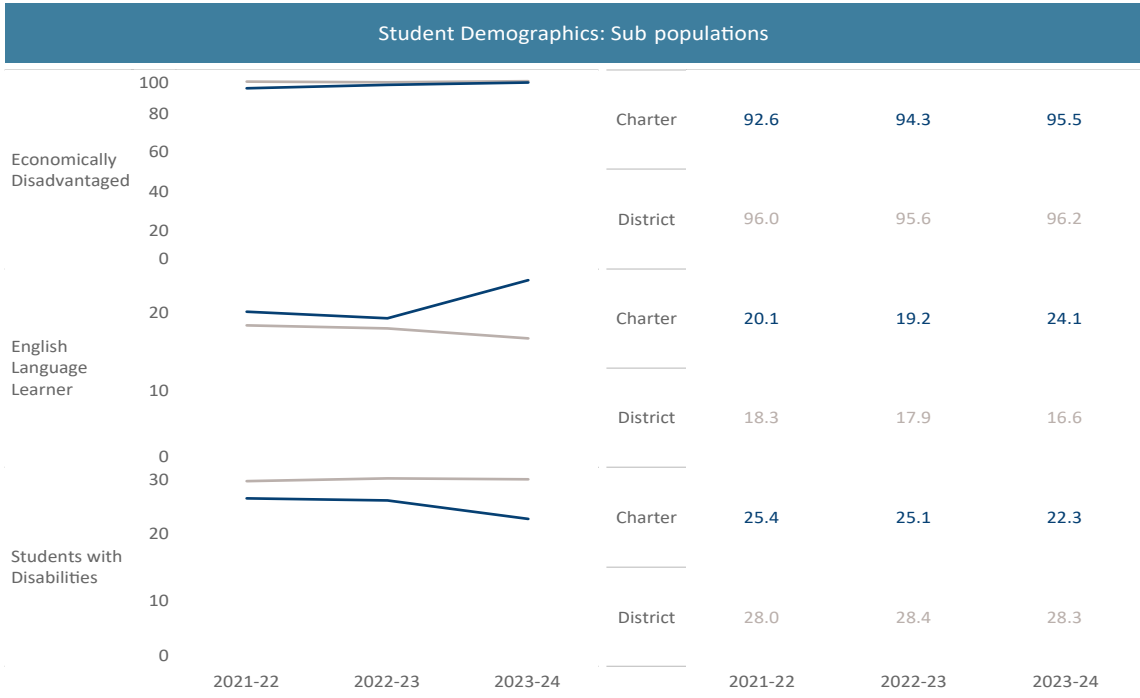
Aggregate Education Corporation Demographics: Race/Ethnicity





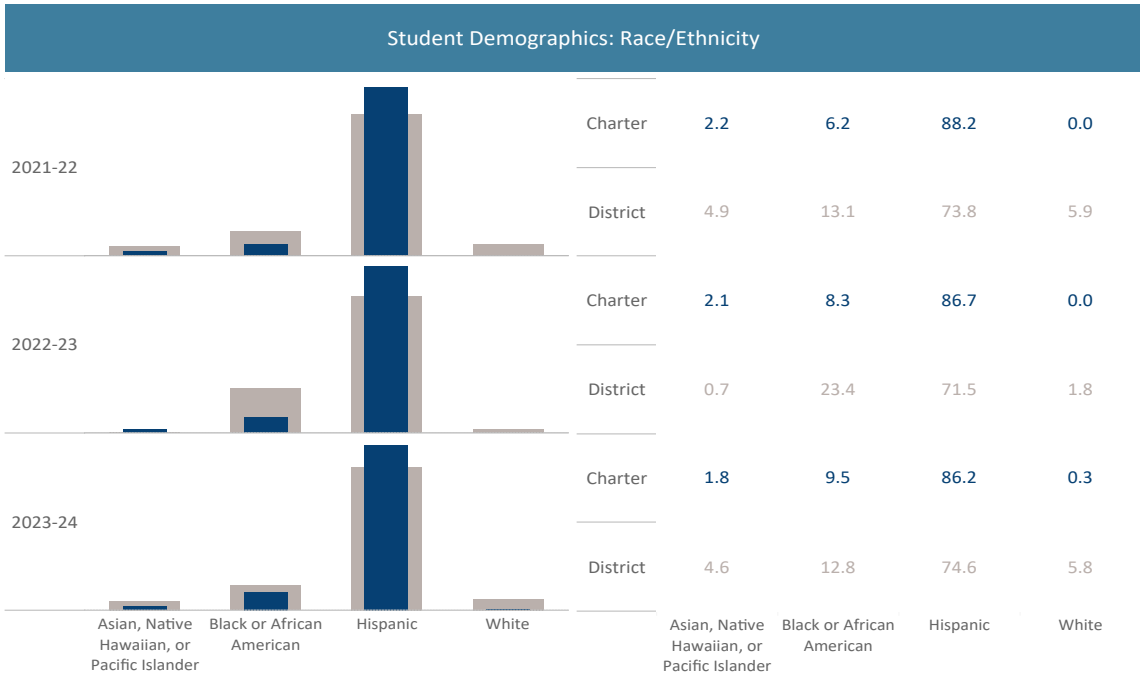
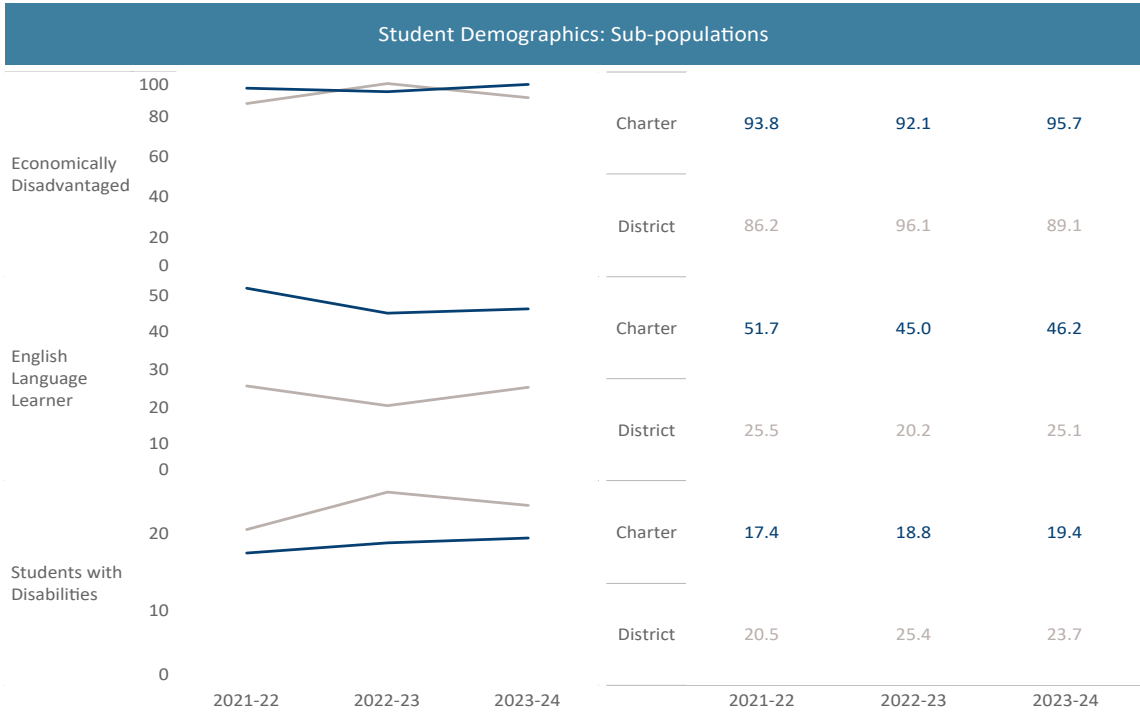
Brilla College Preparatory Charter School

Bronx CSD 7



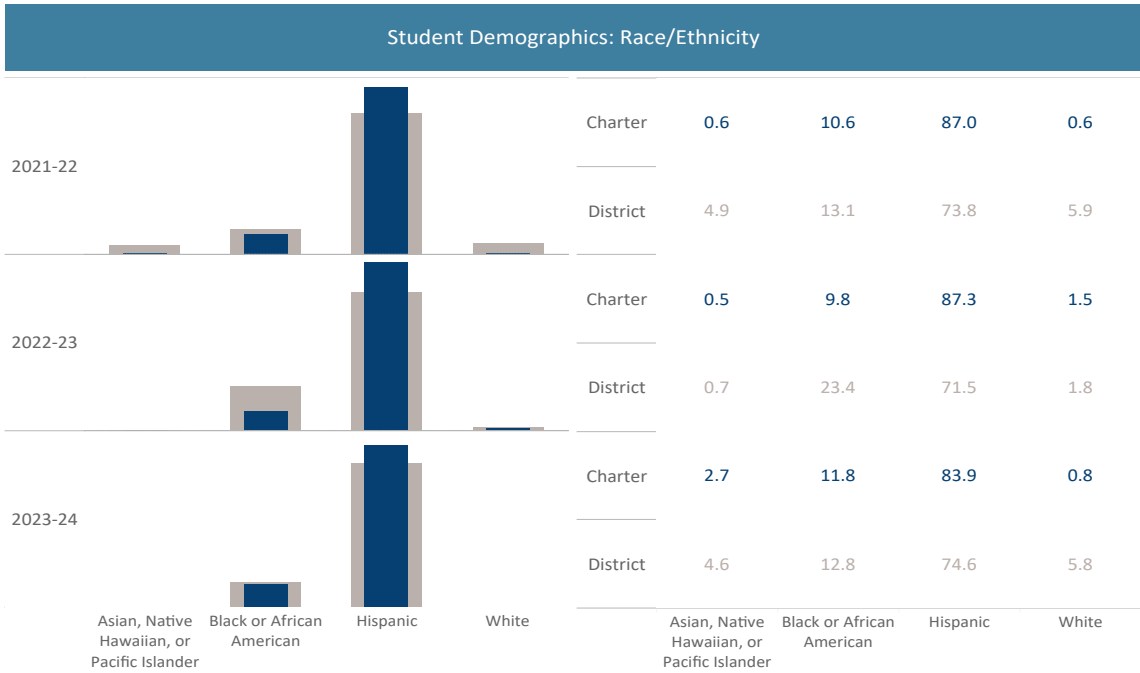
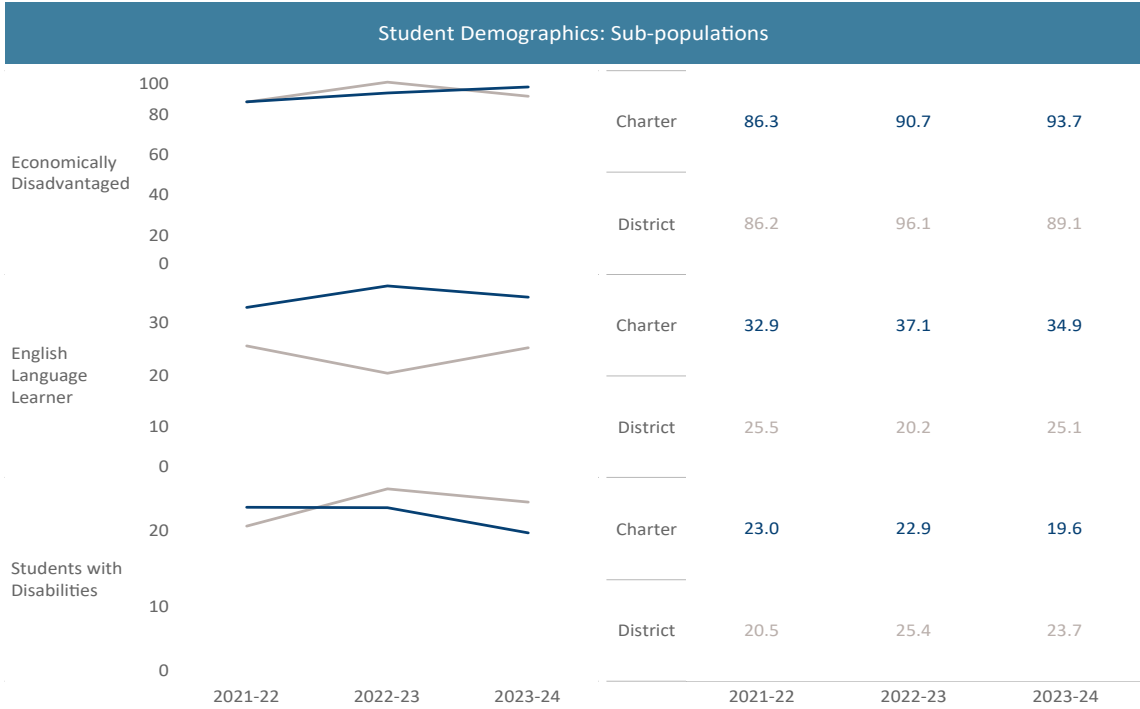
* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the New York State Education Department ("NYSED").

Brilla Caritas Charter School

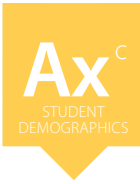


* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED. District comparison data reflect CSD 7 during 2021-22 through 2022-23 and CSD 10 during 2023-24.

Brilla Pax Charter School

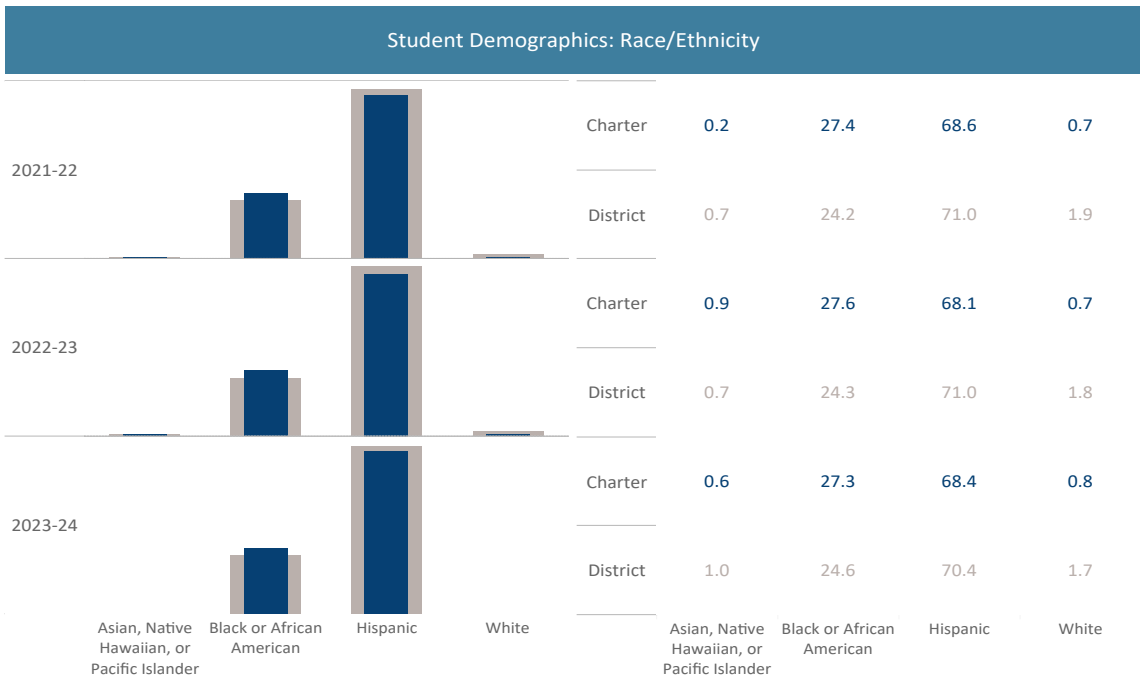
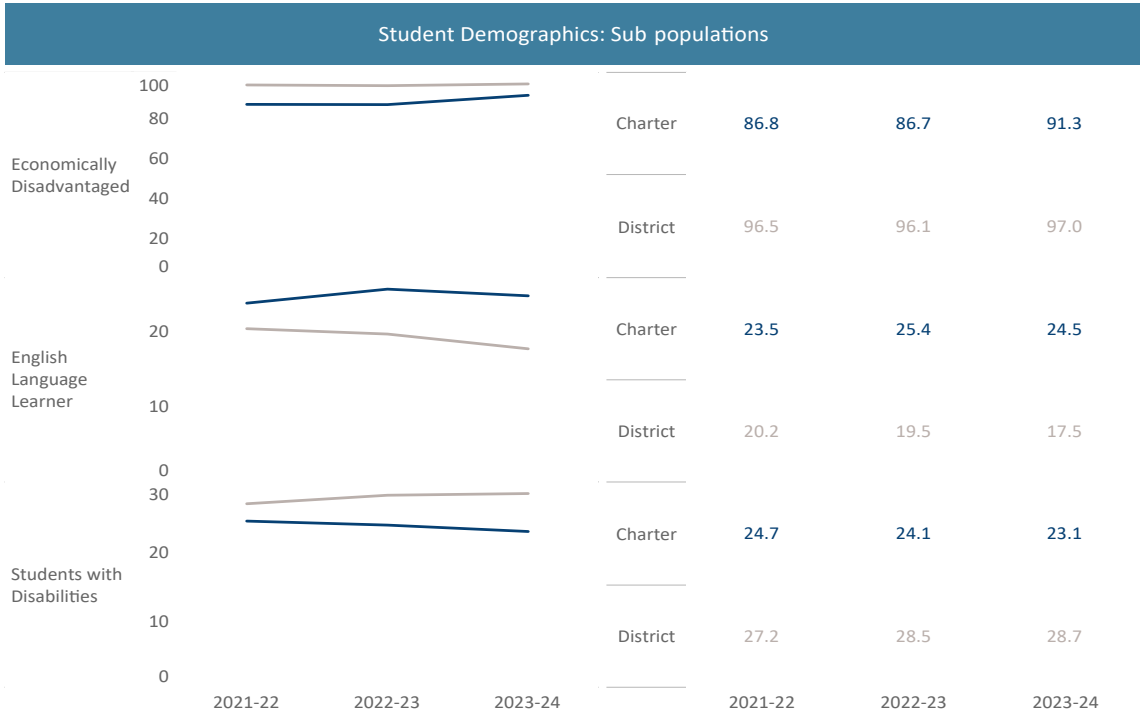


* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED. District comparison data reflect CSD 7 during 2021-22 through 2022-23 and CSD 10 during 2023-24.



Brilla Veritas Charter School

Bronx CSD 7



* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED.



FISCAL BENCHMARKS SUMMARY



DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN IN WHICH IT CREATES REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

The education corporation operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which the education corporation 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 for each charter.	+
Education corporation board members, charter management, and staff members contribute to the budget process for each charter, as appropriate.	+
The education corporation frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan for each charter to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions.	+
The education corporation routinely analyzes budget variances for each charter; the education corporation board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions.	+
Actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.	+

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

The education corporation maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures, which are implemented by the charter. 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 at each charter.	+
The most recent education corporation audit report, which covers fiscal operations for each charter, was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	+

"+" : 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.



INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
<p>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 FPPM be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.</p>	<p>OCTOBER 2023</p>

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION 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, which include information about the charter, have been filed in a timely, accurate, and complete manner:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
<p>Annual financial statement audit reports, including federal Single Audit report, if applicable.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Annual budgets.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>+</p>
<p>Grant expenditure reports.</p>	<p>+</p>

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources for the charter 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 of each charter and those that are due shortly.	+
The education corporation maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses, including those of each charter, in the event of income loss (generally 30 days).	+
The education corporation prepares and monitors cash flow projections for each charter.	+
If the education corporation includes philanthropy in its budget for each charter, 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 for each charter.	N/A
The education corporation accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of each charter’s operating budget for the upcoming year.	+
The education corporation is in compliance with all loan covenants related to each charter.	+



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