



**THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS**  
**INSTITUTE**

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER  
SCHOOL*

**Report Date: February 2, 2018**

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

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

## THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON

A SCHOOL’S  
APPLICATION  
FOR CHARTER  
RENEWAL

INFORMATION  
GATHERED DURING  
THE CHARTER TERM

ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE

FISCAL SOUNDNESS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

RENEWAL  
EVALUATION VISIT



Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the school’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 at: [www.  
newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-  
Renewal-Policies/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Policies/).

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## REPORT FORMAT

This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the ***State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks*** (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),<sup>2</sup> which specify in detail what a successful 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 school has made an adequate case for renewal.



## RENEWAL QUESTIONS

1. IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?
2. IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?
3. IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND?
4. IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

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 at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal).

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, available at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/).

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



# RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

**Full-Term Renewal** The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Bushwick Ascend Charter School and renew Ascend Charter Schools’ authority to operate the school for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten – 11<sup>th</sup> grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 1,170 students.

To earn an **Initial Full-Term Renewal**, a school must either:



have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks,<sup>3</sup> is generally effective; or,



have made progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and have in place at the time of the renewal review an education program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is particularly strong and effective.<sup>4</sup>

## REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees’ specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act:

- 1:** the school, 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 school 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 school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.<sup>5</sup>

3. The Qualitative Education Benchmarks are a subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

4. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 12).

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

Enrollment and retention targets apply to all charter schools approved pursuant to any of the Institute’s Request for Proposal (“RFP”) processes (August 2010-present) and charter schools that applied for renewal after January 1, 2011. Bushwick Ascend Charter School (“Bushwick Ascend”) received its original charter on February 9, 2010 from the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) and was awarded a short-term three-and-a-half- year renewal from the NYCDOE in January 2015. Per the amendments to the Act in 2010, charter schools are required to make good faith efforts to meet enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program.

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school 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 FRPL eligible students. SUNY and the New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”) finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school, where applicable, in July 2013. Since that time, new schools receive targets during their first year of operation and others receive targets at renewal.

Bushwick Ascend makes good-faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. The school employs the following efforts:

- regularly updating the school’s website and social media platforms;
- advertising in English and Spanish on MTA buses;
- partnering with community organizer, Community LinkED, to work in partnership with Ascend Learning, Inc.’s (“Ascend Learning’s” or the “network’s”) recruitment team to conduct extensive outreach at key locations and organizations that serve a large number of economically disadvantaged children, students with disabilities, and ELLs, such as Bushwick United Head Start, Nuestros Niños Child Development Center, and New Life Child Development Center;
- distributing marketing materials in English and Spanish at New York City Housing Authority developments, day cares, community centers, and cultural organizations serving non-English speakers;
- conducting events at schools that serve high populations of ELLs and students with disabilities; and,

- increasing capacity of the network’s recruitment efforts by hiring a chief operating officer that manages the student recruitment team and provides more consistent, strategic guidance and oversight of the recruitment efforts, as well as, a communications manager that supports the development of marketing materials.

For additional information on the school’s enrollment and retention target progress, see Appendix A.

#### CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

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

*As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response to the renewal application. A summary of public comments submitted to the Institute appears in Appendix C.*

# SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### BACKGROUND

Bushwick Ascend received its original charter from the New York City Schools Chancellor (the “NYC Chancellor”) on February 9, 2010, and received a short-term three-and-a-half-year renewal in January 2015. The school merged with the SUNY authorized Canarsie Ascend Charter School (“Canarsie Ascend”) effective July 1, 2016. Bushwick Ascend opened its doors in the fall of 2010 initially serving students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade. The school is authorized to serve 889 students in Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade during the 2017-18 school year. If granted renewal, the SUNY Trustees would approve Bushwick Ascend to expand to serve students in Kindergarten – 11<sup>th</sup> grade (with a delayed expansion into the high school grades, as its graduates attend another Ascend high school until school year 2020-21), with a projected total enrollment of 1,170 students.

The current charter term expires on June 30, 2018. A subsequent charter term would enable the school to operate through June 30, 2023. The elementary grades of Bushwick Ascend are located in private leased space at 751 Knickerbocker Avenue, Brooklyn, NY and the middle school grades are located in private leased space at 2 Aberdeen Street, Brooklyn, NY. Both sites are in New York City Community School District (“CSD”) 32. All schools within the education corporation operate under the management of Ascend Learning, a New York not-for-profit charter management organization based in New York City. By contract, the network provides the schools with academic, operational, facilities, and back-office assistance. Schools utilize the network’s curriculum and assessment materials. The network is also responsible for managing and evaluating the performance of each school and school leader, and reporting out to the Ascend Charter Schools board.

The mission of Bushwick Ascend is:



*The mission of every Ascend school is to equip our students with the knowledge, confidence, and character to succeed in college and beyond. By offering a rich liberal arts education in a supportive environment, we animate children’s natural sense of curiosity and prepare students to think on their own, thrive on their own, and engage the world as informed, responsible citizens.*

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Bushwick Ascend is one of seven schools, two of which are not yet open, that Ascend Charter Schools, a not-for-profit charter school education corporation, has authority to operate. Effective July 1, 2016, three NYC Chancellor authorized schools merged together with two SUNY authorized schools. The SUNY authorized Canarsie Ascend Charter School remained as the surviving education corporation under the name “Ascend Charter Schools.” The SUNY Trustees approved two additional schools in June 2017, to be opened in the fall of 2018. The Act allows authorizers to grant charter school education corporations the authority to operate more than one school under Education Law § 2853(1)(b-1). It can be done through a merger with one or more education corporations, or replication under the current education corporation.



# SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Bushwick Ascend is an academic success, having met or come close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics throughout the charter term and has demonstrated success in the following ways:

- The school met its key Accountability Plan goals in mathematics throughout the charter term. Over the past three years the school increased its absolute proficiency by 18 percentage points, outperforming the district by 29% in the most recent year. Additionally, the school has steadily increased its mean growth percentile, surpassing the state over the past two years. From 2015-16 to 2016-17 the school’s mean growth percentile increased by 10 percentile points.
- For ELA, Bushwick Ascend came close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goal during the charter term. The school outperformed the district for the past three years and demonstrates an upward trend in its absolute proficiency.
- From 2015-16 to 2016-17 the percentage of ELL students and economically disadvantaged students that were proficient in ELA and mathematics both increased. In ELA, the percent of ELLs proficient increased by 5% and economically disadvantaged students’ proficiency increased 3%. In mathematics, the percent of ELL students increased 13% and economically disadvantaged students’ proficiency increased 12%, respectively. Outpacing the districts growth for both sub-groups of students.
- In science, the school has met its Accountability Plan goal over the charter term. During the past three years, the school’s 4th grade students exceeded the absolute target by at least 15 percentage points each year. In 2016-17, 45% of 4th grade students earned a level 4 on the science assessment, the highest level possible.
- Over the past three years, Bushwick Ascend has increased its ELL student population by nearly 5%. In 2016-17 ELLs made up 20.9% of the student population at the school, falling just shy of the district enrollment of 21.1%. In the current academic year the school has surpassed its ELL enrollment target by one percentage point.
- The Bushwick Ascend elementary level has the highest enrollment of ELLs across the Ascend network, and in response to the Institute’s feedback regarding a need to improve ELL services, the school worked with the network during summer 2017 to create an intensive ELL pilot program. The school now employs an English to Speakers of Other Languages (“ESOL”) certified teacher for each grade level, who provides push-in and pull-out supports. This additional support, coupled with the increased ELL proficiency rates already demonstrated by the school, are likely to lead to additional academic gains for ELL students.

In addition to the quantitative gains made over the charter term, the school benefits from an academic program that is qualitatively strong, as observed at the time of the renewal visit. The elementary school level's strong instructional leadership team ensures that the school's priorities and high expectations are evident in each classroom.

Although the school has faced leadership turnover at the middle school level, the network has provided ample support during transition times. Leaders have a clear plan in place to improve the academic program for the middle school grades including dedicated support from network academic team members and additional support from consultants. Leaders recognized that teachers did not implement network-prescribed curricular frameworks or behavior systems in previous years, and, through classroom observations, the Institute team observed these elements in place at the time of the renewal visit.

Based on the Institute's review of the school's performance as posted over the charter term when it was an independent school authorized by the NYC Chancellor and following the merger; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by Ascend Charter Schools; a review of academic, organizational, governance and financial documentation; and a visit to the school, the Institute finds that the school meets the required criteria for charter renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Bushwick Ascend an Initial Full-Term Renewal.

#### NOTEWORTHY

Upon students' requests, Bushwick Ascend leaders established a student government at the middle school. Students are responsible for a multitude of events including running a canned food drive and providing suggestions for community meetings.

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# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



## IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Over the course of its current charter term, Bushwick Ascend has demonstrated it meets or comes close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Leaders' sustained and effective coaching has contributed to an increase in student proficiency.

The Act outlines the requirement that authorizers “change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding [charter] schools . . . accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.”<sup>6</sup> As described in this report, Bushwick Ascend has satisfied the requirements of the Act as well as the SUNY Renewal Policies<sup>7</sup> as it has made strong academic progress and meets or comes close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals and implements a particularly strong and effective educational program. Bushwick Ascend's curriculum, assessment system, instructional design and leadership combine into a demonstrably successful implementation of Ascend Learning's model. The strength of that model, detailed in Appendix E, along with the strong and sustained student performance outcomes at Bushwick Ascend, provide the foundation for the Institute's analysis that: 1) the school posts sufficient evidence to support the conclusion it meets the academic and organizational criteria required by the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks; and, 2) the school merits a five-year renewal recommendation.

6. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

7. SUNY Renewal Policies (pp. 12-15).

8. 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 school in an initial charter term, the Accountability Period covers the first four years the school provides instruction to students. In this renewal report, the Institute uses “charter term” and “Accountability Period” interchangeably.

9. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

10. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,<sup>8</sup> the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics. 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 five required Accountability Plan measures to determine ELA and mathematics goal attainment. Because the Act requires charters be held “accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results”<sup>9</sup> and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents”<sup>10</sup> for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present schools':

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

**COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW DID THE SCHOOL 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 SCHOOL GROW STUDENT PERFORMANCE AS COMPARED TO THE GROWTH OF SIMILARLY SITUATED STUDENTS?**

Every SUNY authorized charter school has the opportunity to propose additional measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. Bushwick Ascend did not propose or include any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

The Institute analyzes every measure included in the school's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success, including the extent to which the school has established and maintained a record of high performance, and established progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the initial charter term. Since 2009, the Institute has examined but consistently de-emphasized the two absolute measures under each goal in elementary and middle schools' Accountability Plans because of changes to the state's assessment system. The analysis of elementary and middle school performance continues to focus primarily on the two comparative measures and the growth measure while also considering the two required absolute measures and any additional evidence the school presents using additional measures identified in its Accountability Plan. The Institute identifies the required measures (absolute proficiency, absolute Annual Measurable Objective attainment, comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, student growth, and high school graduation and college going rates) in the Performance Summaries appearing in Appendix B.

The Institute analyzes all measures under the school's ELA and mathematics goals (and high school graduation and college preparation goals for schools enrolling students in high school grades) while emphasizing the school's comparative performance and growth to determine goal attainment. The Institute calculates a comparative effect size to measure the performance of Bushwick Ascend relative to all public schools statewide that serve the same grade levels and that enroll similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. It is important to note that this measure is a comparison measure and therefore any changes in New York's assessment system do not compromise its validity or reliability. Further, the school's performance on the measure is not relative to the test, but relative to the strength of Bushwick Ascend's demonstrated student learning compared to other schools' demonstrated student learning.

The Institute uses the state's growth percentile analysis as a measure of Bushwick Ascend's comparative year-to-year growth in student performance on the state's ELA and mathematics exams. The measure compares a school's growth in assessment scores to the growth in assessment scores of the subset of students throughout the state who performed identically on previous years' assessments. According to this measure, median growth statewide is at the

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50<sup>th</sup> percentile. This means that to signal the school's ability to help students make one year's worth of growth in one year's time the expected percentile performance is 50. To signal a school is increasing students' performance above their peers (students statewide who scored previously at the same level), the school must post a percentile performance that exceeds 50.

The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB") goals. Please note that for schools located in New York City, the Institute uses the CSD as the local school district.

**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
:GOALS****HAS THE SCHOOL MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?**

Bushwick Ascend came close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goal in ELA over its charter term. The school met its mathematics goal, posting an upward trend in performance from 2014-15 through 2016-17. The school also met its science and NCLB goals.

Bushwick Ascend came close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goal in ELA from 2014-15 through 2016-17. During 2014-15, the school outperformed the district by at least 8 percentage points. In comparison to demographically similar schools across New York State, the school performed higher than expected to a small degree. The school did not meet its growth target, posting a mean growth percentile under the target of 50. The following year, Bushwick Ascend continued to outperform CSD 32 (the “district”), growing the gap between the school and the district to 11 percentage points. The school continued to come close to the target under its comparative effect size measure, performing higher than expected to a small degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged. The school exceeded its growth target, posting a mean growth score 4 points above the state median. During 2016-17, the school continued to come close to meeting its ELA goal. With 36% of the school’s students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficient, the school continued to exceed the performance of the district’s students in similar grades by 11 percentage points. In comparison to demographically similar schools, Bushwick Ascend performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree, exceeding its comparative effect size target. The school posted a mean growth score that came close to the target of 50.

Bushwick Ascend met its mathematics goal, demonstrating a strong upward trend in performance from 2014-15 to 2016-17. During 2014-15, 37% of the school’s students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficient, outperforming the district by 13 percentage points. In comparison to schools across New York State with similar demographics, the school performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree. The school also posted a mean growth percentile at the target of the state median of 50. During 2015-16, the school increased its absolute proficiency by five percentage points and grew the gap between the school and the district to 20 points. Bushwick Ascend continued to perform higher than expected to a meaningful degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. The school exceeded the target under its growth measure by three points, posting a mean growth percentile of 53. Bushwick Ascend continued its upward trend in proficiency during 2016-17, improving its performance against all measures under its mathematics goal. With 55% of its students enrolled in at least

their second year scoring at or above proficient, the school improved its performance by 13 percentage points from the prior year. The school also surpassed the district by 29 percentage points. Bushwick Ascend performed higher than expected to a large degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. Concomitant with the school's increase in absolute performance, the school demonstrated commendable growth in 2016-17. The school posted a mean growth percentile of 64, 14 points above the target.

Bushwick Ascend met its science goal over the charter term. During 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17, the school's 4<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates that exceed the absolute target of 75 by at least 15 percentage points each year. The school outperformed the district by 15 percentage points and seven percentage points during 2014-15 and 2015-16, respectively. Comparison data for 2016-17 is not yet available.

The school met its NCLB goal throughout the charter term, having never been identified as a focus or priority school.

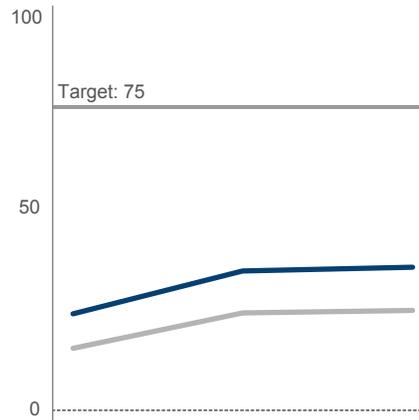
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# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

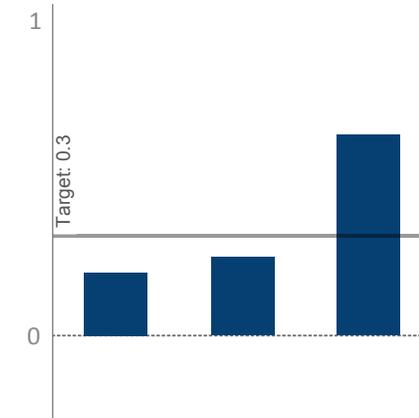
### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**Comparative Measure: District Comparison.** Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in ELA will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



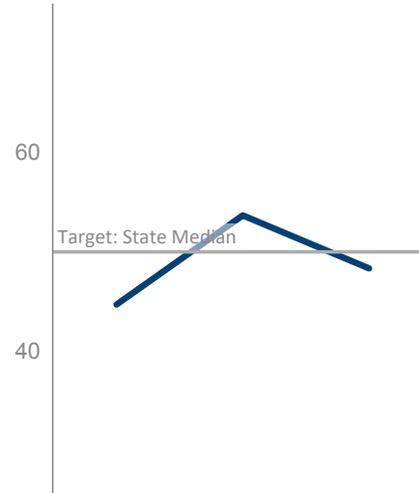
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	School %
2015	3-5	16	24
2016	3-6	24	35
2017	3-7	25	36

**Comparative Measure: Effect Size.** Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2015	3-5	0.19
2016	3-6	0.24
2017	3-7	0.61

**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **ELA**.



Test Year	School Mean Growth
2015	44.8
2016	53.8
2017	48.4

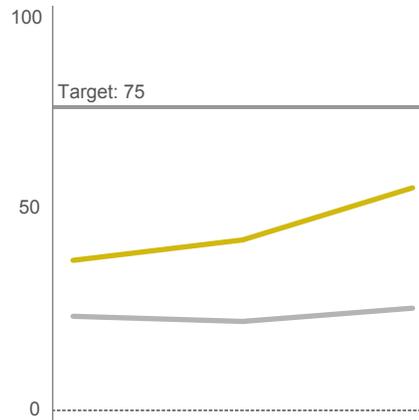
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# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

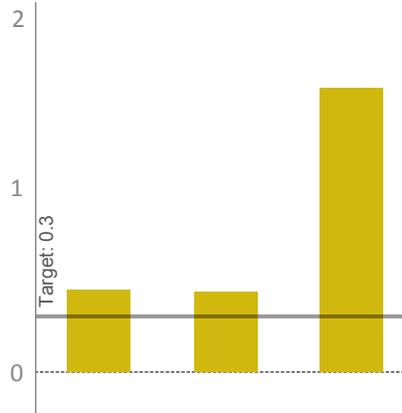
### MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**Comparative Measure: District Comparison.** Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



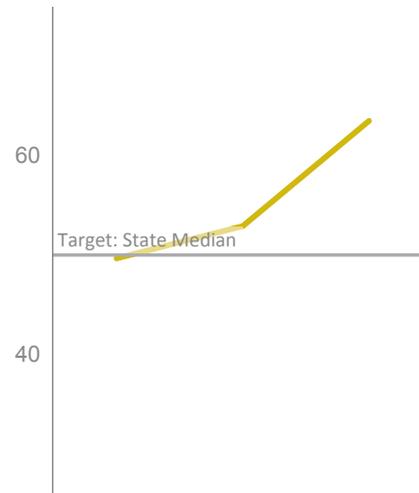
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	School %
2015	3-5	24	37
2016	3-6	22	42
2017	3-7	26	55

**Comparative Measure: Effect Size.** Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2015	3-5	0.44
2016	3-6	0.43
2017	3-7	1.54

**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **mathematics**.



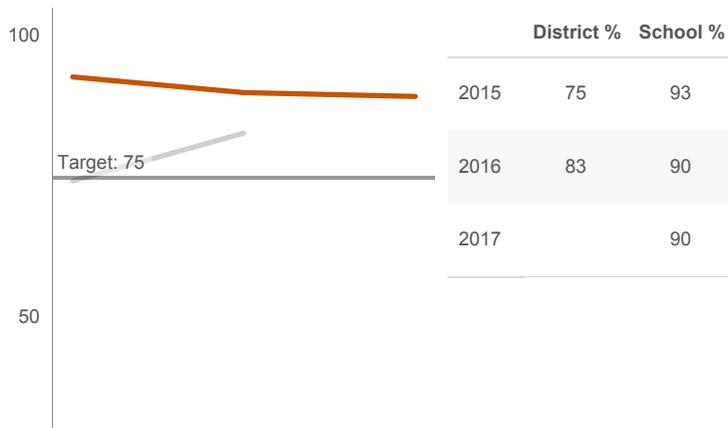
Test Year	School Mean Growth
2015	49.7
2016	53.0
2017	63.6

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**Science: Comparative Measure.** Each year, the percentage of students at the school in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in **science** will exceed that of students in the same tested grades in the district.



### SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

	2015	2016	2017
Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	99	116	124
Tested on State Exam	36	60	81
School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	5.6	11.7	3.7
District Percent Proficient	4.6	5.5	5.1

	2015	2016	2017
ELL Enrollment	107	134	165
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	101	127	162
School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	19.8	16.5	19.8

The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in the 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.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUMMARY

Bushwick Ascend implements an effective academic program. School leaders establish high expectations for teachers. Leaders set quantitative achievement targets for specific assessments. The network and school support teachers in reaching assessment goals. Deans of instruction and coaches provide weekly observation and feedback, with the feedback this year aligned to improving data analysis per the continuous monitoring initiative. Teachers often engage in two to three teacher planning and development (“TPD”) sessions per week to review weekly assessment data or to prepare to launch a unit. Leaders conduct a formal evaluation in the spring and rate teachers based on observation data collected throughout the year. Teachers complete a self-reflection, then compare it to the dean of instruction’s evaluations and discuss next steps with the dean of instruction and principal.

Instruction at Bushwick Ascend is high quality. Most objectives include a clear target for learning and success criteria. Co-teachers know specific roles and responsibilities in the classroom and utilize one another to hold students to high expectations. Teachers regularly ask questions to check for student understanding and use strategies to engage the entire class, such as hand signals to show agreement or disagreement. Teachers provide immediate, written feedback to students during independent work time and then adjust their instruction based on students’ responses, either asking students to explain their thinking or giving students additional prompts and more work time. Students engage in higher-level thinking, often discussing a question with a peer and building upon one another’s responses, then clearly justify their thinking aloud to the class. The school successfully creates a culture that allows students to help one another when they struggle to understand a skill or concept.

The school directors determine the staffing model for the school, based on the school’s needs, with oversight from the network. Both the lower and upper grades at Bushwick Ascend have a school director, director of operations, a dean of student services, and two deans of students, each assigned to specific grade bands. The lower grades have a dean of instruction for each of the five grades, and the middle grades have three deans of instruction that oversee teachers in specific content areas. The administrative structure in the lower grades allows the school to carry out its academic program, and staffs’ roles and responsibilities are clear. The school and network have acted with urgency to ensure the staffing structure in the middle grades supports the academic program, after the resignation of multiple teachers and the school director. Network staff are onboarding a new school director, helping to oversee special education services, and providing differentiated coaching support to new teachers. The school provides consistent coaching to all teachers despite the changing of staff. The network also recognizes the need to improve culture at the middle school and hired more staff to provide support during key times in the schedule.

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Bushwick Ascend’s intervention programs meet the needs of at-risk students. In 2017, students with disabilities outperformed their district counterparts on the mathematics state assessment, and ELLs outperformed their district counterparts in ELA, as well as by a notable 40% in mathematics. For the 2017-18 school year, Ascend Learning is piloting a new ELL program in the Bushwick Ascend lower grades, as the ELL population at Bushwick Ascend is the highest across the network. In addition to push-in and pull-out support, the ELL teachers serve as a co-teacher during ELA and mathematics. Teachers also provide explicit vocabulary and reading instruction, and ELL teachers now use Lexia,<sup>11</sup> a literacy instruction software. Additionally, ELL teachers provide general education teachers with professional development on strategies to support ELLs throughout the school day. The network intends to implement this new program across the network in future years.

Please refer to Appendix E for additional information on the Bushwick Ascend program model and how it meets the demands of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

11. For more information,  
please visit [www.  
lexialearning.com/](http://www.lexialearning.com/).

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# ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE



## IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Bushwick Ascend is an effective and viable organization that promotes high levels of student achievement. The school implements the network’s educational program, and school and network staff continually monitor student achievement.

SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
:MISSION

## IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION AND DOES IT IMPLEMENT THE KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN ITS CHARTER?

Bushwick Ascend is faithful to its mission and key design elements. These can be found in the School Background section at the beginning of the report and Appendix A, respectively. Bushwick is an effective and viable organization that promotes high levels of student achievement. The school implements the network’s educational program, and school and network staff continually monitor student achievement.

SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
:SATISFACTION

## ARE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL?

To report on parent satisfaction with the school’s program, the Institute used 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 NYCDOE’s 2016-17 NYC School Survey. NYCDOE distributes the survey every year to compile data about school culture, instruction, and systems for improvement. In 2016-17, 71% of families who received the survey responded. The vast majority of survey responses (94%) indicate satisfaction with the school. The survey response rate is sufficiently high to be useful in framing the results as representative of the school community.

**Parent Focus Group.** The Institute asks all schools 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 school for multiple years, parents of students new to the school, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. The 13 parents in attendance at the focus group indicated satisfaction with the school. Families appreciate the school’s rigorous curriculum and the fact that teachers quickly communicate concerns about their students. Parents noted culture and support from teachers at the middle school level as an area for improvement.

**Persistence in Enrollment.** An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2016-17, 86% of Bushwick Ascend students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in Appendix A.

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

## DOES THE BOARD IMPLEMENT, MAINTAIN, AND ABIDE BY APPROPRIATE POLICIES, SYSTEMS, AND PROCESSES?

The Ascend Charter Schools board materially and substantially implements, maintains, and abides by adequate and appropriate policies, systems, and processes to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a clear understanding of its role in holding the school leadership and partner organization accountable for both academic results and fiscal soundness.

- During the current charter term, the board successfully merged its schools in order to streamline governance and operations of the schools.
- The board held its partnership organization accountable and worked together to overhaul the curriculum used in the schools, leading to better academic results.
- Recently the board requested and received an updated dashboard format from the network evidencing the board’s reflection of information it was receiving.
- In addition to the dashboard, the board receives reports from network staff, school level staff, and board committees regarding academics, recruitment, facilities, development, and finances.
- The board works in a committee structure creating ad hoc committees for special projects. Most recently an ad hoc committee was looking into board self-evaluation.
- Regularly at board meetings, the director of one of the school sites presents regarding how that school is doing to allow the board to spend time with each school leader.

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- On the heels of its academic success, the board applied for and the SUNY Trustees awarded two additional schools in June 2017, expanding Ascend Charter Schools' portfolio based on its record and capacity to expand the program.
- The board is thoughtful as to school expansion and held its partner organization to stabilizing the current portfolio before seeking expansion.
- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and code of ethics.

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK : COMPLIANCE

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

The education corporation substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter with one minor exception.

- **Complaints.** The Institute received no formal complaints regarding the school.
- **Compliance.** The Institute issued no violation letters regarding the school during the charter term.

# FISCAL PERFORMANCE



## IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on a review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review, Ascend Charter Schools is fiscally sound as is its school, Bushwick Ascend. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that Bushwick Ascend and the education corporation have demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.<sup>12</sup> (The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard for Bushwick Ascend is included in Appendix D and the Fiscal Dashboard for the merged education corporation is included in Appendix F). The discussion that follows relates mainly to the education corporation because the school is no longer a legally distinct fiscal entity.

Bushwick Ascend had limited financial resources to ensure stable operations, but the school has made noticeable progress over the past year. Effective July 1, 2016, five schools merged together with Canarsie Ascend Charter School as the surviving entity. Bushwick Ascend and two other Ascend schools originally authorized by NYCDOE merged into SUNY as the authorizer. In addition to analyzing the soundness of the individual charter schools, the Institute analyzed the soundness of the not-for-profit education corporation granted the authority to operate the schools and finds it too has limited financial resources to ensure stable operations, and that recent improvements have been made to further strengthen the financial condition. The fiscal dashboards reflect the independent entity as “fiscally needs monitoring” prior to the merger and “fiscally adequate” as a merged entity.

The Institute continues to closely monitor the financial condition of Ascend Charter Schools. Improvements have been made in the accounting systems technology and reporting alignment features. Fiscal benchmarks show improvement at the end of the charter term as reflected in Appendix F where two of the fiscal benchmarks show notable improvement.

The merger allows the schools to realize efficiencies associated with operations and capacity to share programs and resources in the areas of academic program, fiscal management and operational support, human resources, technology, and public relations. The financial model is intended to ensure that all fully enrolled schools are financially sustainable, operating the school’s program solely through public funding.

12. 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.

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The schools management organization, Ascend Learning, supports Bushwick Ascend in the areas of academic program, fiscal management and operational support, human resources, technology, and public relations under the terms of a management agreement. The education corporation pays a service fee of 13% for services provided to Bushwick Ascend under the agreement. The network management fee for each school within the merged education corporation varies from 11.5% to 15%, depending on the age of the school and the number of sites.

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK : BUDGETS

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

Bushwick Ascend has in the past minimally employed budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures but has recently taken steps to improve.

- On an annual basis, the school leadership and network staff coordinate the development of the annual and long-term budget preparation and present to the Ascend Charter Schools board finance committee.
- The projected five-year renewal budget reflects steady revenues and expenses associated with increasing enrollment as the school grows capacity with Kindergarten – 11<sup>th</sup> grade by the fifth year of the renewal charter term.
- Bushwick Ascend lower and middle grades are both located in renovated leased space under 30-year leases and responsible for rent, repairs, utilities, insurance, and janitorial costs. This is a factor in each Ascend school's financial dashboard and Ascend Charter Schools overall. Charter schools in free, co-located NYCDOE space, in contrast, would have a stronger financial position. In 2020-21, the second Ascend Charter Schools high school plans to open under Bushwick Ascend within close proximity of the Ascend middle schools.
- Effective July 1, 2016, the merger allows for operating efficiencies and purchasing power, shared expenses with four other charters related by common management.

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK : INTERNAL CONTROLS

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

Bushwick Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have maintained fiscal policies, procedures and practices, and appropriate internal controls, and have recently taken steps to update their policies and procedures.

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- The education corporation's Financial Policies and Procedures Manual is a guide for all internal controls and procedures. Recently updated, written policies address key issues including financial reporting, cash disbursements and receipts, payroll, bank reconciliations, fixed assets, grants/contributions, capitalization and accounting, procurement, and investments.
- The Bushwick Ascend audit report for June 30, 2017 had no findings of material deficiencies, and prior year, non-material findings have been rectified regarding the general ledger maintenance and account analysis. To directly address the issues, Ascend Learning filled the controller and other vacant finance positions. The increased staffing has provided more timely and accurate financial reporting.

## DOES THE SCHOOL COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

Bushwick Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have minimally complied with financial reporting requirements but have recently taken steps to improve charter compliance.

- The Institute has noted recent receipt of required quarterly financial reports that had previously tended to be late, incomplete, and required revisions.
- Independent audits of annual financial statements have received unqualified opinions with no material weaknesses or instances of non-compliance observed. In previous years, the external auditor noted the unnecessary delays in audit work due to Ascend Charter Schools not being ready for annual audits. This has been corrected and is no longer a finding in the most recent audit report of June 30, 2017.
- The Bushwick Ascend individual education corporation and merged entity have continually filed key reports late including budgets, unaudited quarterly reports of revenue, expenses, and enrollment. Recently the school and merged education corporation required submissions have been timely, complete, and accurate.
- The Institute received the audited financial statements for June 30, 2017 by the due date of November 1, 2017, and the report shows stronger financial health of the education corporation.

**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK**  
: FINANCIAL  
REPORTING

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK : OPERATIONS

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

Bushwick Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have maintained limited financial resources to ensure stable operations but recently have made solid improvements to the financial health.

- Bushwick Ascend opened in 2010 under NYCDOE as charter authorizer and generated operating surpluses and deficits from school operations since opening. The school had accumulated net assets of \$1.2 million and one month of cash on hand as of June 30, 2016, the time of the merger.
- The merged education corporation benefits from a combined balance sheet, which is a combination of individual schools' assets and liabilities. In order to track the operations of any individual school within the merged education corporation, the Institute tracks each individual school's revenues and expenses in order to report operating surpluses or deficits.
- As of the most recent audited financial statements for June 30, 2017, the merged Ascend Charter Schools had total net assets of approximately (\$427,913) and 28 days of cash on hand to pay bills coming due shortly. The benchmark is 30 days of cash on hand. The current financial condition is an improvement from the previous year when the merged total net assets were (\$1.1 million) with only 23 days of cash on hand.
- The reason for the negative net assets is that all five of the Ascend schools' balance sheets contain deferred rent as a long term liability. All rental payments are recognized on a straight-line basis as an offset to rent expense with the difference being recorded as a deferred rent liability. As of June 30, 2017, the deferred rent liability for Ascend Charter Schools was approximately \$13 million.
- As a merged entity, the dissolution fund reserve is \$75,000 per school for the first two schools plus \$25,000 for additional schools up to a maximum of \$350,000. Ascend Charter Schools has established dissolution reserve funds and have complied with the minimum required balance of \$225,000 for the number of operating schools in the merged education corporation.

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# FUTURE PLANS



## IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

Bushwick Ascend is an academic and operational success. The merged education corporation is fiscally sound, and the network provides ample support for the school's educational program. As such, the plans for a future charter term are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

**Plans for the School'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.** Bushwick Ascend plans to continue to implement the same core elements of its educational program that enabled the school to meet or exceed its key Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term. These elements are likely to enable the school to meet or exceed its academic goals in the next charter term. The network is thoughtful about its school pathways, carefully considering its existing high school grades at Brooklyn Ascend, and will decide during the next charter term if Bushwick Ascend will grow to serve 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade starting in 2020-21. The renewal review confirms Bushwick Ascend's capacity to implement the high school program during the renewal term, and the board's capacity to oversee its expansion. Bushwick Ascend would implement a high school program similar to the one currently being used in the network.

**Plans for Board Oversight & Governance.** Current board members express interest in continuing to serve Ascend Charter Schools in the future. The board may add new trustees in the next charter term.

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
<b>Enrollment</b>	889	1,170
<b>Grade Span</b>	K-8	K-11
<b>Teaching Staff</b>	82	100
<b>Days of Instruction</b>	182	182

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**Fiscal & Facility Plans.** Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the five-year financial plan, Ascend Charter Schools presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including education corporation and school budgets that are feasible and achievable. The education corporation intends to maintain its contractual relationship with the network. The Institute has reviewed the proposed terms of such contract and will review and approve the final contract, and any other network contracts, when executed.

Bushwick Ascend plans to provide instruction for the lower and middle grades in the existing two renovated leased school spaces under long-term lease agreements for the next charter term. The high school grades will start in 2020-21 and the school plans to locate the facility in close proximity to the feeder Ascend middle schools.

The school's Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals.



Bushwick  
Ascend

# Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-37

<b>SO<sup>A</sup></b> SCHOOL OVERVIEW	<b>PS<sup>B</sup></b> PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES	<b>DC<sup>C</sup></b> DISTRICT COMMENTS	<b>FD<sup>D</sup></b> FISCAL DASHBOARD	<b>EO<sup>E</sup></b> ED CORP OVERVIEW	<b>EF<sup>F</sup></b> ED CORP FISCAL
PAGE Ax 1	PAGE Ax 6	PAGE Ax 8	PAGE Ax 9	PAGE Ax 13	PAGE Ax 34

# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS THAT HOLD THE AUTHORITY TO OPERATE BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### CHAIR

Stephanie Mauterstock

### VICE CHAIR

Kathleen Quirk

### TREASURER

Katya Levitan-Reiner

### SECRETARY

Amanda Craft

### TRUSTEES

Shelly Cleary

Oral Walcott

Kwaku Andoh

Christine Schlendorf

## SCHOOL LEADERS

### LOWER SCHOOL DIRECTOR

*Zelda Washington (2014-15 to Present)*

*Michelle Flowers, Interim (April 2014 to June 2014)*

*Chester Asher (September 2013 to April 2014)*

*Dellianna Burrows (2010-11 to 2012-13)*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

*Emily McGraw, Interim (November 2017 to Present)*

*Sarah Adams, Interim (September 2017 to October 2017)*

*Mia Dunlap (July 2017 to September 2017)*

*Ariella Diamond (2015-16 to 2016-17)*

## SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

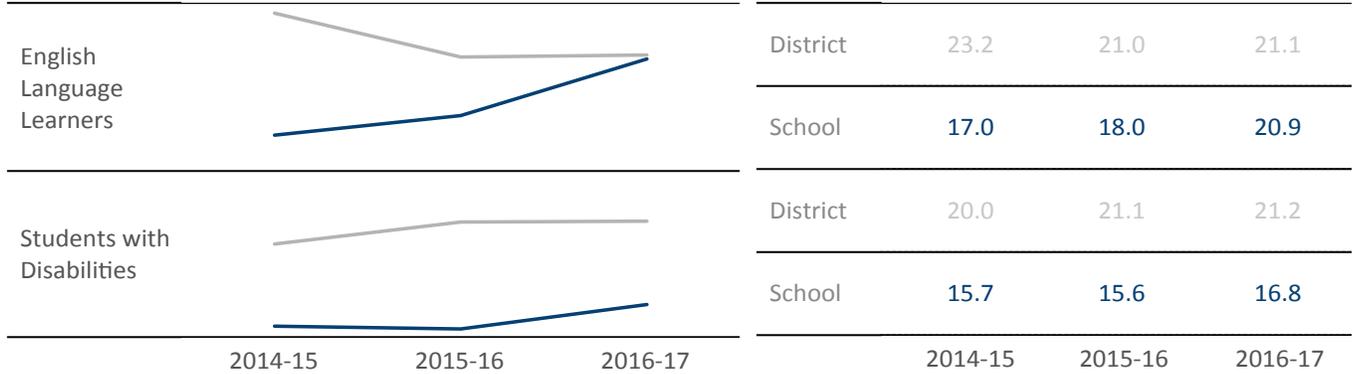
SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	PROPOSED GRADES	ACTUAL GRADES
2013-14	543	541	100%	K-4	K-4
2014-15	642	630	98%	K-5	K-5
2015-16	738	745	101%	K-6	K-6
2016-17	821	808	98%	K-7	K-7
2017-18	889	885	99%	K-8	K-8

# APPENDIX A: School Overview

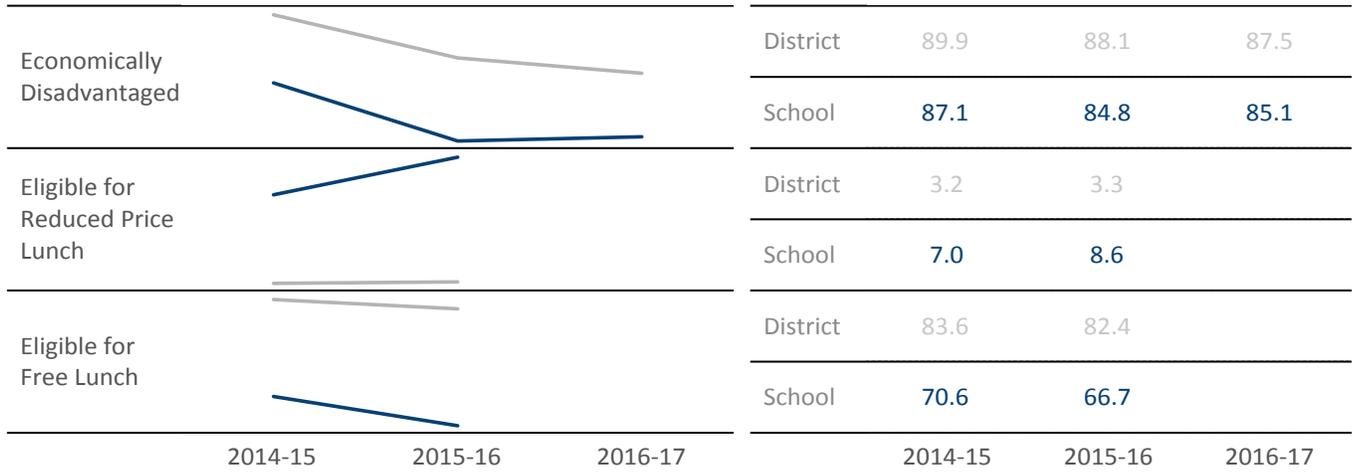
Bushwick Ascend Charter School

Brooklyn CSD 32

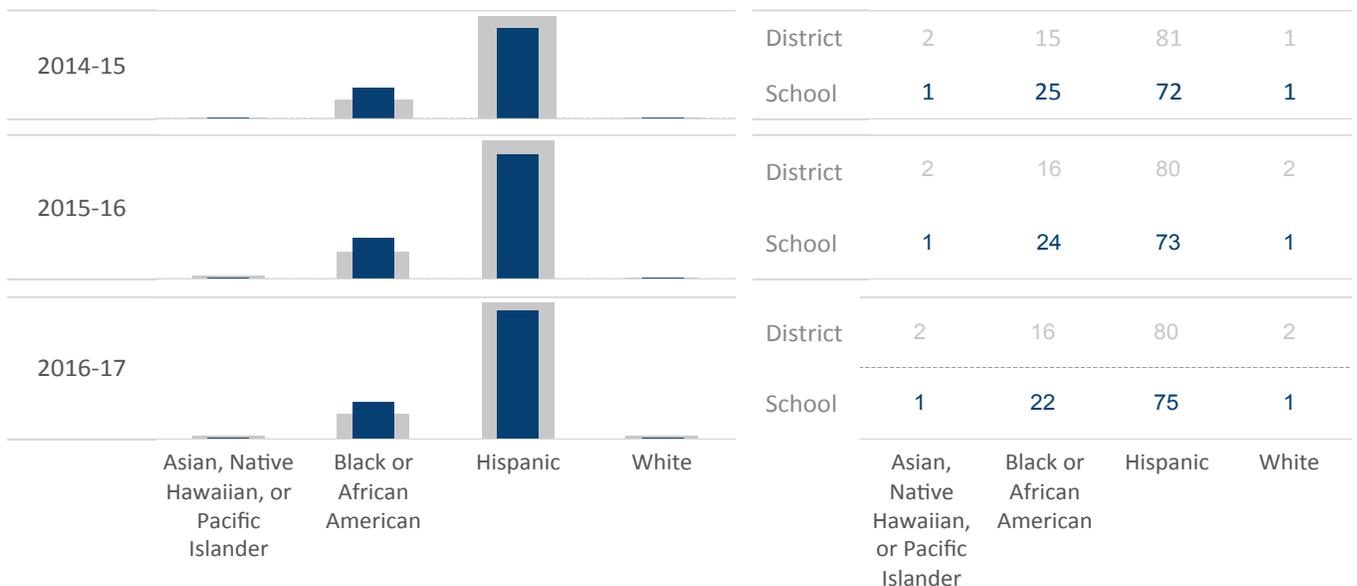
## Student Demographics: Special Populations



## Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



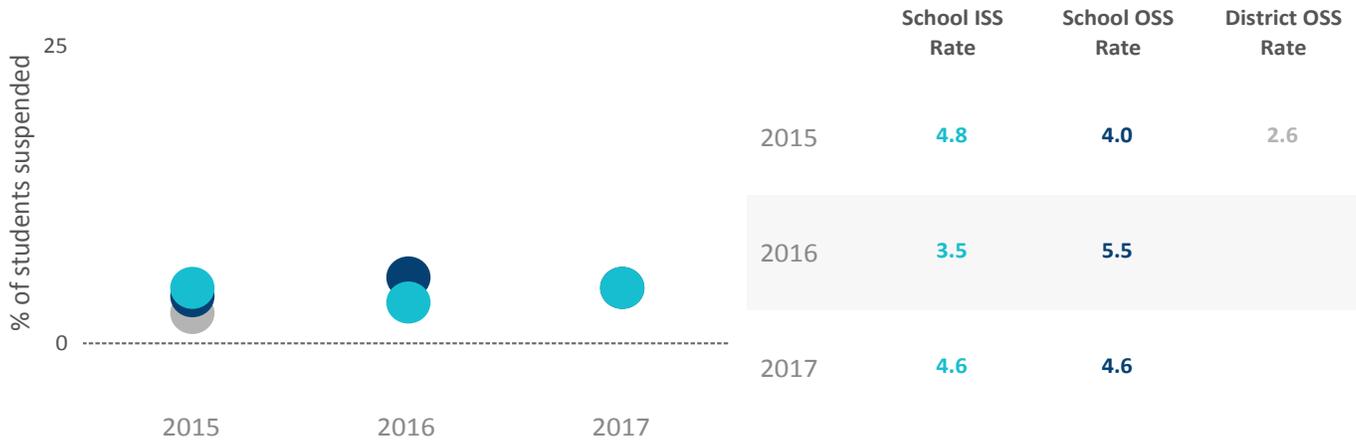
## Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## Bushwick Ascend Charter School

## Brooklyn CSD 32



Although Community School District ("CSD") and school suspension rates are presented on the same graph, a direct comparison between the rates is not possible for three primary reasons. Available CSD data includes Kindergarten through high school grades and school data includes only the grades served by the school. CSD data are not available that show multiple instances of suspension of a single student, the overall number of suspensions, the duration of suspensions, or the time of year when the school administered the suspension. CSD data showing the difference between in-school and out-of-school suspensions are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE"): the total the 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 school each year.

Year	2015	2016	2017
Expulsions	0	0	0

### Bushwick Ascend Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2016-17

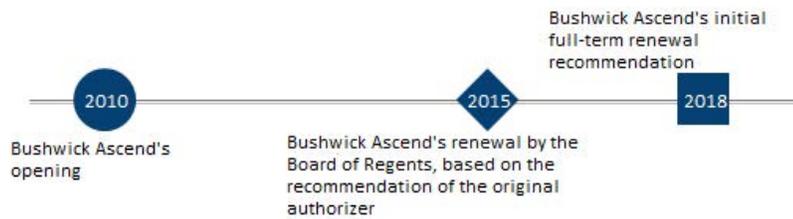
			District Target	School
Enrollment	Economically disadvantaged		93.8	85.1
	English language learners		20.3	21.6
	Students with disabilities		16.2	15.4
Retention	Economically disadvantaged		86.5	87.1
	English language learners		88.4	87.5
	Students with disabilities		91.9	90.0

# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS



## TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



## SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2017-18	Initial Renewal	November 3, 2017

## CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
November 3, 2017	Andrew Kile	Director of School Evaluation
	Kerri Rizzolo	School Evaluation Analyst

# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

ELEMENT	EVIDENT?
Ascend's Common Core curriculum;	+
The Ascend Culture based upon the Responsive Classroom model and restorative justice practices; and,	+
Teacher planning and development.	+

# APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts Bushwick Ascend Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-5			2015-16 Grades Served: K-6			2016-17 Grades Served: K-7			MET
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	19.3 (109)	22.5 (89)	3	34.3 (108)	36.0 (89)	3	40.5 (111)	45.4 (97)	NO
	4	19.1 (115)	22.2 (99)	4	32.7 (104)	35.2 (88)	4	44.7 (103)	47.2 (89)	
	5	29.2 (65)	30.4 (56)	5	21.9 (105)	23.5 (85)	5	27.1 (85)	27.5 (80)	
	6	(0)	(0)	6	40.7 (81)	53.5 (43)	6	19.1 (94)	19.6 (92)	
	7	(0)	(0)	7	(0)	(0)	7	36.5 (74)	38.2 (68)	
	8	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)	
	All	21.5 (289)	24.2 (244)	All	31.9 (398)	34.8 (305)	All	34.0 (467)	35.7 (426)	NO
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PLI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PLI	AMO	NO
	3-6	88	97	3-7	108	104	3-7	110	111	
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</b> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			YES
	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	
	3-6	24.2	15.7	3-7	34.8	24.4	3-7	35.7	25.0	
	% ED	Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted	
	86.1	21.5	18.8	80.9	31.9	27.5	91.1	34.0	24.1	
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Effect Size			Effect Size			Effect Size			NO
	0.19	0.24	0.61							
<b>GROWTH MEASURE</b> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	YES
	4	45.5	55.3	4	55.3	50.0	4	60.9	60.9	
	5	43.6	49.4	5	49.4	50.0	5	43.0	43.0	
	6	0.0	57.6	6	57.6	50.0	6	45.5	45.5	
	7	0.0	0.0	7	0.0	50.0	7	41.4	41.4	
	8	0.0	0.0	8	0.0	50.0	8	0.0	0.0	
	All	44.8	50.0	All	53.8	50.0	All	48.4	50.0	NO

# APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics Bushwick Ascend Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-5			2015-16 Grades Served: K-6			2016-17 Grades Served: K-7			MET	
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	33.0 (109)	34.4 (90)	3	57.4 (108)	57.3 (89)	3	66.7 (111)	72.2 (97)	MET	
	4	35.3 (116)	37.0 (100)	4	37.5 (104)	38.6 (88)	4	60.2 (103)	62.9 (89)		
	5	41.5 (65)	42.9 (56)	5	23.8 (105)	24.7 (85)	5	48.8 (84)	49.4 (79)		
	6	(0)	(0)	6	45.0 (80)	54.8 (42)	6	36.2 (94)	34.8 (92)		
	7	(0)	(0)	7	(0)	(0)	7	52.0 (75)	55.9 (68)		
	8	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)		
	All	35.9 (290)	37.4 (246)	All	40.8 (397)	42.4 (304)	All	53.5 (467)	55.3 (425)		
	Grades	PLI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PLI	AMO		
	3-6	114	94	3-7	118	101	3-7	136	109		
<b>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</b> 2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.  3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.  4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			Comparison: Brooklyn District 32			YES	
	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District		
	3-6	37.4	23.6	3-7	42.4	22.3	3-7	55.3	25.6		
	% ED	Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted		
	86.1	35.9	27.8	80.9	40.8	31.1	91.1	53.5	25.1		
			0.44			0.43			1.54		
	Effect Size										
	Effect Size										
	Effect Size										
<b>GROWTH MEASURE</b> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	YES	
	4	49.8		4	57.2		4	60.2			
	5	49.7		5	41.0		5	60.7			
	6	0.0		6	63.3		6	61.5			
	7	0.0		7	0.0		7	74.3			
	8	0.0		8	0.0		8	0.0			
	All	49.7	50.0	All	53.0	50.0	All	63.6	50.0		
	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State		
	3-6			3-7			3-7				

# APPENDIX C: District Comments

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The NYCDOE held its required hearing on Bushwick Ascend Charter School's renewal on October 10, 2017. Between 25-30 people attended the hearing, and 20 individuals spoke in support of the school's renewal. Speakers were positive in discussing the school, citing examples of the school's supportive environment for student learning.

# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### SCHOOL INFORMATION

#### BALANCE SHEET

Opened 2010-11

##### Assets

##### Current Assets

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 1	-	-	285,376	868,207	1,053,569
Grants and Contracts Receivable	-	-	66,247	191,116	230,217
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	-	-	23,527	21,137	169,598
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	200,000	200,000	-
<b>Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>575,150</b>	<b>1,280,460</b>	<b>1,453,384</b>
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	-	9,392,431	9,211,577	10,782,463
Other Assets	-	-	83,482	83,840	87,143
<b>Total Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,051,063</b>	<b>10,575,877</b>	<b>12,322,990</b>

##### Liabilities and Net Assets

##### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	-	-	280,093	241,388	587,004
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	-	-	239,791	290,279	390,235
Deferred Revenue	-	-	-	-	14,203
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	366,941	240,293	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	299,651
Other	-	-	148,118	317,657	55,675
<b>Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,034,943</b>	<b>1,089,617</b>	<b>1,346,768</b>
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	-	-	8,201,780	8,022,122	9,761,705
<b>Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,236,723</b>	<b>9,111,739</b>	<b>11,108,473</b>

##### Net Assets

Unrestricted	-	-	814,340	1,464,138	1,214,517
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>814,340</b>	<b>1,464,138</b>	<b>1,214,517</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,051,063</b>	<b>10,575,877</b>	<b>12,322,990</b>

#### ACTIVITIES

##### Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment	-	-	7,914,654	9,973,421	10,292,224
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	1,269,605
<b>Grants and Contracts</b>					
State and local	-	-	43,813	259,547	725,702
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	-	336,095	-	394,862
Federal - Other	-	-	-	370,739	22,391
Other	-	-	-	179,652	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	-	-	114,090
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,294,562</b>	<b>10,783,359</b>	<b>12,818,873</b>

##### Expenses

Regular Education	-	-	5,160,965	6,763,579	8,342,689
SPED	-	-	1,326,731	1,927,562	2,605,944
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,487,696</b>	<b>8,691,141</b>	<b>10,948,633</b>
Management and General	-	-	1,600,333	1,445,006	2,127,636
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,088,029</b>	<b>10,136,147</b>	<b>13,076,269</b>
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>206,533</b>	<b>647,212</b>	<b>(257,396)</b>

##### Support and Other Revenue

Contributions	-	-	-	-	2,000
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	1,812
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	2,250	2,586	3,963
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Support and Other Revenue</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,250</b>	<b>2,586</b>	<b>7,775</b>

Total Unrestricted Revenue	-	-	8,296,812	10,785,945	12,826,648
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 &amp; 3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,296,812</b>	<b>10,785,945</b>	<b>12,826,648</b>

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>208,783</b>	<b>649,798</b>	<b>(249,621)</b>
<b>Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>605,557</b>	<b>814,340</b>	<b>1,464,138</b>
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>814,340</b>	<b>1,464,138</b>	<b>1,214,517</b>

# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	-	-	1,575,455
Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	4,038,395
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	76,512
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	3,331,299	4,386,857	-
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	-	-	<b>3,331,299</b>	<b>4,386,857</b>	<b>5,690,362</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	684,599	828,476	983,665
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	714,612	1,223,573	1,578,716
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	864,017	881,884	1,601,585
Staff Development	-	-	57,042	102,812	43,337
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	735,570	369,697	531,285
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	44,745	44,766	118,527
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	147,671	406,788	333,395
Depreciation	-	-	495,885	608,835	709,219
Other	-	-	1,012,589	1,282,459	1,486,179
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	-	<b>8,088,029</b>	<b>10,136,147</b>	<b>13,076,270</b>

### SCHOOL ANALYSIS

#### ENROLLMENT

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Chartered Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - <b>GRAPH 4</b>	-	-	543	637	745
Chartered Grades	-	-	K-4	K-5	K-6
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

#### Primary School District:

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Increase over prior year	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

#### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

##### Revenue

Operating	-	-	15,275	16,928	17,207
Other Revenue and Support	-	-	4	4	10
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>15,280</b>	<b>16,932</b>	<b>17,217</b>

##### Expenses

Program Services	-	-	11,948	13,644	14,696
Management and General, Fundraising	-	-	2,947	2,268	2,856
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>14,895</b>	<b>15,912</b>	<b>17,552</b>
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%	80.2%	85.7%	83.7%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	19.8%	14.3%	16.3%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	0.0%	0.0%	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>-1.9%</b>

#### Student to Faculty Ratio

-	-	-	-	11.6
---	---	---	---	------

#### Faculty to Admin Ratio

-	-	-	-	3.0
---	---	---	---	-----

#### Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.1	0.5
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	N/A	N/A	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Adequate	Fiscally Needs Monitoring

#### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	0	0	(459,793)	190,843	106,616
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.0%	-5.5%	1.8%	0.8%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.2	1.1
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor

#### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.2	1.0
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Good	Good

#### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.9	0.9
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Good	Good	Good

#### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

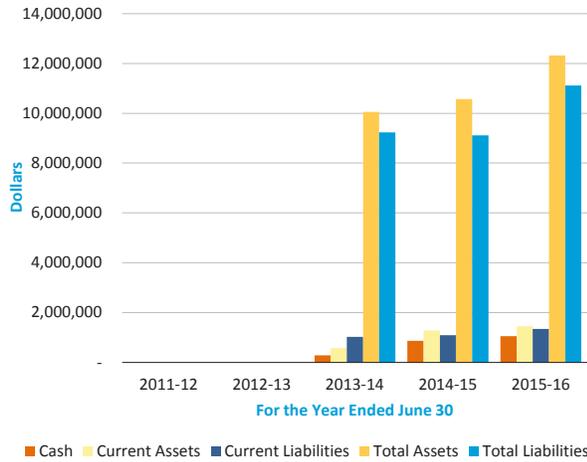
Score	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.0	1.0
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Good	Good

# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

GRAPH 1

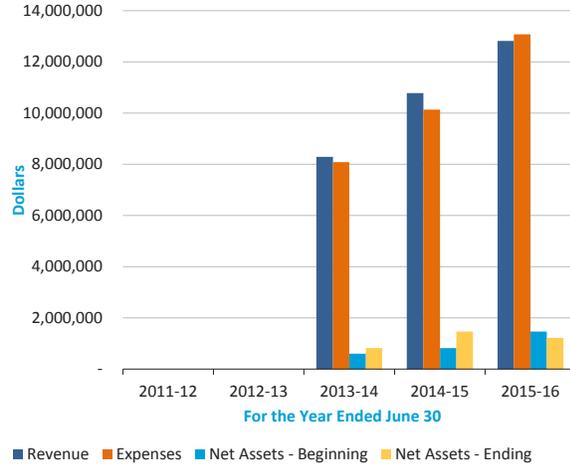
Cash, Assets and Liabilities



This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

GRAPH 2

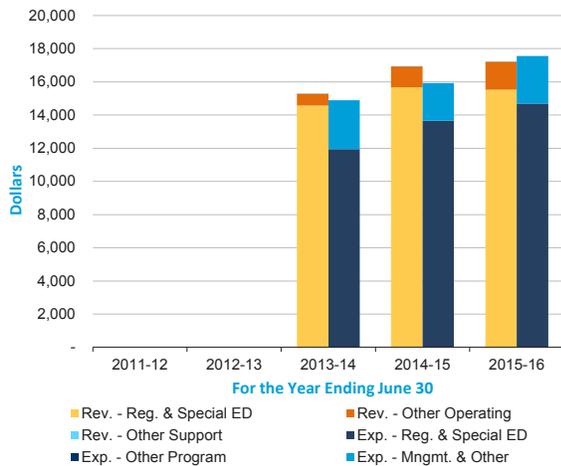
Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.

GRAPH 3

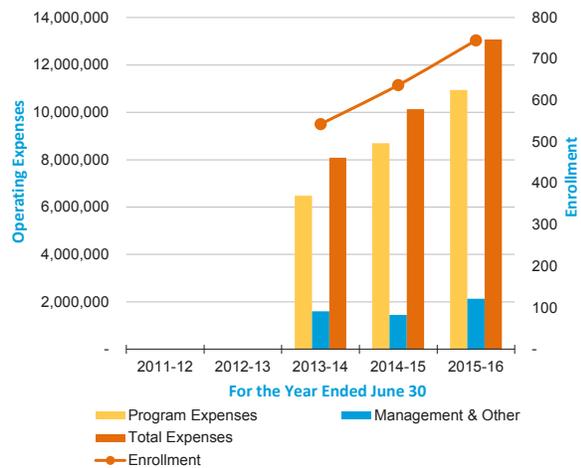
Revenue & Expenses Per Pupil



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.

GRAPH 4

Enrollment vs. Operating Expenses



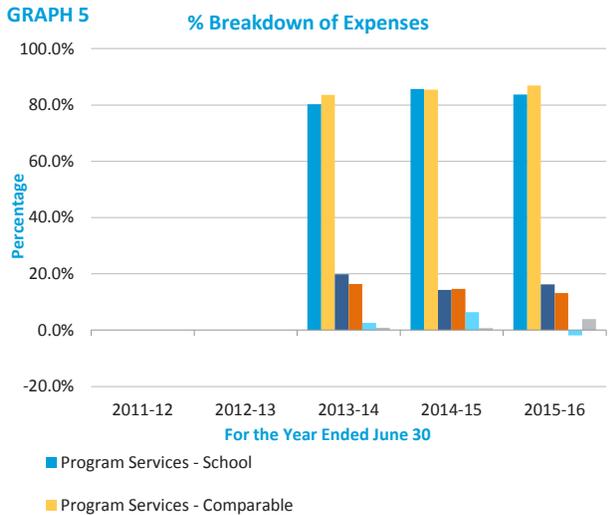
This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

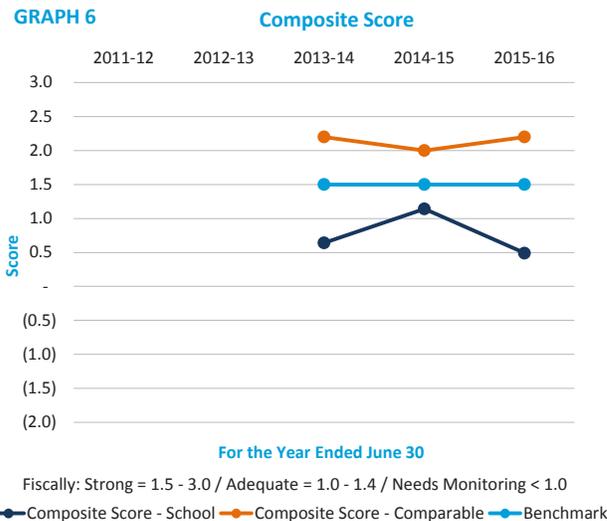
## BUSHWICK ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

### Comparable School, Region or Network: All SUNY Authorized Charter Schools (Including Closed Schools)

\* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

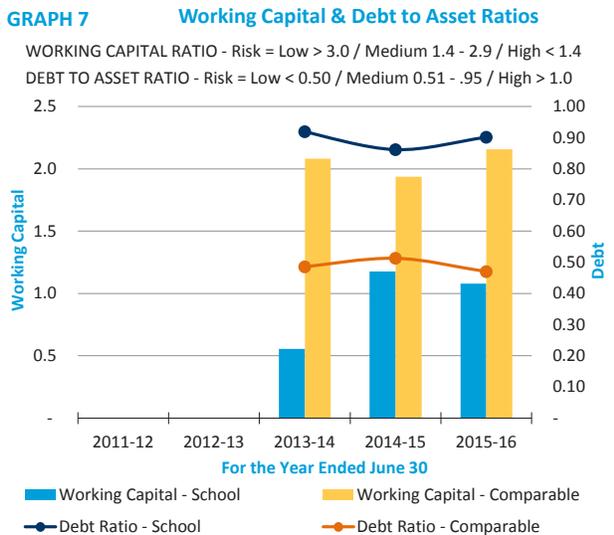


This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.

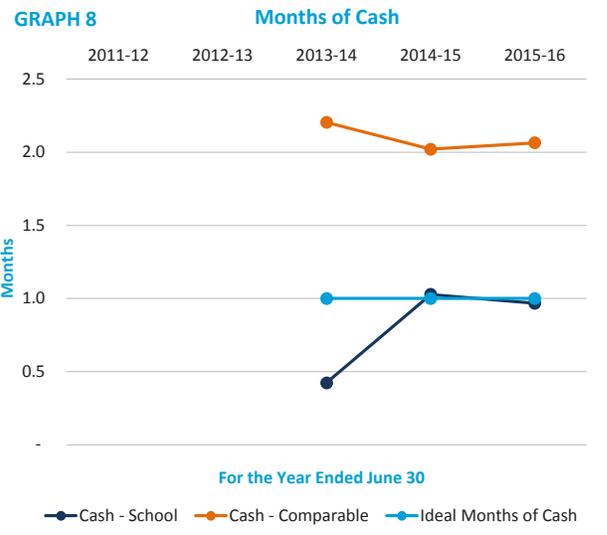


Fiscally: Strong = 1.5 - 3.0 / Adequate = 1.0 - 1.4 / Needs Monitoring < 1.0  
 Composite Score - School Composite Score - Comparable Benchmark

This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.



This chart illustrates Working Capital and Debt to Asset Ratios. The Working Capital ratio indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. The Debt to Asset ratio indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1B

### ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>

For strong performing SUNY authorized charter schools that implement a common school design across multiple schools, the Institute provides an analysis and description of the schools' academic design structured using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. This subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks focuses on assessment, curriculum, instruction, leadership, at-risk programs, board oversight, and organizational capacity. The following program description analyzes and reports on the school design that produced the high quality outcomes captured in the body of this renewal report.

### DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Ascend Charter Schools ("Ascend") uses a robust and rigorous assessment system to elevate instructional effectiveness and to improve student learning. Ascend schools administer a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to establish a clear picture of achievement for each student. Ascend schools administer the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP")<sup>2</sup> assessment in ELA one to three times per year based on the grade level and in mathematics once per year to measure student growth against the growth of a national sample of similarly situated students. Instructional staff members administer the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress ("STEP")<sup>3</sup> assessment to students in Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> grade every nine weeks to measure reading proficiency. The network academic team develops assessments internally. Students take content- and unit-based assessments aligned to the Ascend Learning curriculum and state standards every three to five weeks to measure ongoing progress towards content mastery. Additionally, students in 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade take benchmark assessments in ELA and mathematics two times per year as well as a yearly mock assessment, modeled after the New York state assessments for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Leaders use the benchmark and mock exam results to predict student performance on the state ELA and mathematics assessments. The network stores and analyzes assessment data using Illuminate, an online data management system that allows teachers and leaders to immediately access and analyze data.

Ascend uses their robust system of assessment data to support and inform a myriad of practices aimed at strengthening the academic program and increasing student achievement including evaluating the academic program, identifying areas where students require skill-building practice, and supporting teachers in their instructional practice. Throughout the year, the network provides teachers with extensive training to facilitate data-driven instruction during benchmark assessment data meetings, teacher planning and development meetings, and all-day professional development days. Ascend Learning launched the teacher planning and development program ("TPD") in 2016 to create a platform for teacher collaboration through more dedicated time in teachers' and leaders'

1. Ascend Charter Schools is a not-for-profit charter school education corporation that is served by Ascend Learning, Inc., a New York, not-for-profit charter management organization (the "network" or "CMO"). For additional information, please visit [www.ascendlearning.org](http://www.ascendlearning.org).

2. The MAP assessment is a nationally normed assessment that measures student performance against grade level standards. For more information, please refer to [www.nwea.org/](http://www.nwea.org/).

3. The STEP Assessment measures student reading growth and performance. For more information please refer to [www.uchicagoimpact.org/steptm-assessment-kit/](http://www.uchicagoimpact.org/steptm-assessment-kit/).

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

schedules for analysis of student work, tracking data, and developing teacher strategies for improving responses to students' performance during lessons. Staff surveys from 2016-17 indicate general satisfaction with the TPD program. Teachers and leaders credit the launch of the TPD program with an increase in student achievement in 2016-17.

Additionally, school leaders use assessment data to identify teachers in need of additional instructional support, detect schoolwide trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's educational model. The network also provides school leaders access to school-level data across the network which allows leaders to regularly assess their own school's progress relative to the network. School leaders also use this data to identify best instructional practices in the network and develop professional development based on those best practices. School leaders provide the Ascend board of trustees (the "board") with assessment data on a regular basis. The board uses the data to monitor schools' effectiveness and evaluate the school leaders' performance.

## DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING?

Ascend's rigorous and comprehensive internally developed curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning within and across grade levels. Since the 2014-15 school year, the network has implemented this Ascend educational model. Ascend made the decision to move to an internally created curriculum after evaluating its previous academic program, and determining it was not effective in supporting students to master grade level standards. The percentage of students meeting grade level standards has steadily improved since shifting the curriculum. The network saw growth in ELA and mathematics state assessment results between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years; the percent of students proficient increased by 6% in ELA and by 11% in mathematics. The network regularly measures the effectiveness of the curriculum. The internal assessment system is one example of this; teachers and leaders regularly review data and student work samples to monitor whether they have successfully implemented the curriculum, and whether it is effective for students. The network elicits curricular feedback from teachers via surveys, annual town hall meetings, and email. This system of ongoing feedback allows the network to make immediate curricular adjustments.

Ascend creates documents that guide teachers in their daily planning process and inform teachers of what to teach and when to teach it. In all content areas, teachers receive curricular materials such as pacing charts, unit guides, assessments, and examples of exemplary student work that guide them in the planning process. The TPD program also supports teachers in the planning and delivery of curricular components. Teachers attend multiple TPD meetings per unit that involve deepening their content knowledge, planning instruction, modeling lessons, and conducting quantitative and qualitative analyses of

**SUNY  
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BENCHMARK  
1C**

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

student work. Based on the student work analyses, teachers develop strategies for re-teaching content where students performed below expectations, and also provide curricular feedback to the network curriculum team based on students' progress with the curriculum. This feedback allows the network team to identify trends across schools and decide if curricular adjustments are necessary to ensure students are successful with the academic content.

The Ascend educational model relies on a combination of network-developed and commercial curricula. ELA program components include the Foundations<sup>4</sup> phonics program (Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade), literature circle, read aloud, and guided reading (Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> grade), independent reading (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade), shared text (2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade), writing (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and humanities English and humanities social studies (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade). The program draws resources from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project<sup>5</sup> and other external curricula to create an ELA program that enhances students' literacy skills through small group discussion, close reading, and frequent assessment of student understanding. Beginning in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students participate in a network-created humanities program that expands the core knowledge base of students in history, geography, and the arts while also facilitating independent thought and discourse, a key component of developing critical thinking skills in students, as well as developing reading and writing skills. Ascend's mathematics program draws upon curricular materials from Singapore Math,<sup>6</sup> EngageNY,<sup>7</sup> Math in Context,<sup>8</sup> and Cognitively Guided Instruction ("CGI").<sup>9</sup> The program, consisting of number stories (Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> grade), mathematics workshop, and mathematics routines (Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade), fosters a strong conceptual understanding of mathematics, along with reasoning, logic, and problem solving skills. The instructional approach to mathematics blends direct instruction, inquiry learning, CGI, and daily practice in math fluency. The science program is inquiry-based and aligns to the Next Generation Science Standards and state standards. The elementary school employs MacMillan/McGraw-Hill's A Closer Look<sup>10</sup> science program. At the middle school level, students study standards-based science in the context of intriguing personal and society issues through Science Education for Public Understanding Program ("SEPUP").<sup>11</sup>

4. For additional information, please visit [www.wilsonlanguage.com/](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com/).

5. For additional information, please visit [www.readingandwritingproject.org/](http://www.readingandwritingproject.org/).

6. For additional information, please visit [www.singaporemath.com/](http://www.singaporemath.com/).

7. For additional information, please visit [www.engageny.org/](http://www.engageny.org/).

8. For additional information, please visit [www.mathincontext.eb.com/](http://www.mathincontext.eb.com/).

9. For additional information, please visit [www.heinemann.com/cgimath/](http://www.heinemann.com/cgimath/).

10. For additional information, please visit [www.mhschool.com](http://www.mhschool.com)

11. For additional information, please visit [www.sepuphs.org/](http://www.sepuphs.org/).

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

### IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS?

High quality instruction that incorporates carefully structured direct instruction, inquiry-based learning experiences, and college-style discussion creates an environment focused on academic achievement and critical thinking at Ascend schools. Pedagogical approaches vary in an intentional way to foster engagement and deep conceptual understanding of core content in students. During visits to Ascend schools, the Institute team has consistently observed classrooms with well-designed lessons, clear objectives, effective checks for understanding, and lessons that provide students with multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer discussion. Additionally, Ascend schools establish learning environments that have a clear focus on academic achievement and that are positively reinforced through the Responsive Classroom model in Kindergarten—8<sup>th</sup> grade and restorative practices in the high school grades, respectively.

Ascend believes that direct instruction alone will not foster the critical thinking and conceptual understanding necessary to master state standards and, therefore, utilizes a variety of pedagogies. Consistent in all lessons are clear learning objectives that build on students' previous skills and knowledge. Lesson activities are purposeful and align to the identified and carefully crafted learning objective. Teachers' assignments are often open-ended, requiring students to produce high quality work products. Teachers also employ strong checks for understanding and in-the-moment data collection. Teachers then use this information to immediately adjust their instruction, ensuring students reach the intended lesson objective. Teachers at Ascend schools regularly challenge students with questions and activities that develop their higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Teachers provide students with opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer discussions in which they are able to push one another in their own thinking.

Teachers and leaders establish and maintain learning environments that are filled with a sense of urgency and a consistent focus on academic achievement. They do this using the Responsive Classroom model and positive reinforcement discipline methodology, as well as restorative practices at the high school level. This represents a shift away from the previous "No Excuses" disciplinary system. With the prior discipline system the network identified a need to be more culturally responsive and provide students with the opportunity to build agency. Ascend Learning shifted to the new culture model in 2014.

### DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Ascend has instructional leadership with the structure, capacity, and expertise to lead network schools to strong academic outcomes. The chief schools officer and three network managing director positions make up the network schools team and provide schools with extensive coaching and professional development designed to accelerate teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The school level instructional leadership team includes the school director, dean(s) of instruction, dean(s) of students, and dean of student services. The school director is the school's head instructional leader and responsible for

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1E

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

managing and coaching the deans. The dean of instruction is responsible for teaching, learning, and academic data at the school. This includes coaching and developing the teaching staff, and managing successful implementation of the Ascend instructional model. The dean of students supports teachers in implementing effective instructional techniques, coaches teachers in using the Responsive Classroom model to build strong student culture, and maintains a safe environment with strong procedures throughout the school. The dean of student services is responsible for overseeing that students with disabilities fully participate in the educational program and receive supports and services mandated by their Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”). Leadership team members have clear roles and responsibilities, which provide clear reporting structures for teachers, and allow instructional staff to focus on teaching and learning.

Ascend provides leaders with intensive, ongoing professional development throughout the year, and provides the framework for teacher professional development led by school leaders. This starts with pre-service training in the summer and continues through the school year with professional development days, after-school sessions, weekly grade-team meetings, and ongoing in-the-moment instructional coaching. During the summer pre-service training, the network provides two weeks of professional development specifically for the leadership team. New teachers participate in four weeks of professional development and returning teachers participate in two weeks of professional development. During the school year, staff members attend four full-day professional development sessions and weekly professional development on Friday afternoons. For school year training sessions, school leadership determines the topics based on the specific needs of the school and ongoing analysis of student data and leads the professional development activities. The TPD program also plays a significant role in developing teachers’ content knowledge and skills. Deans of instruction and grade team leaders facilitate TPD meetings during regular grade team meetings. Through the facilitation of TPD meetings, leaders help teachers develop their content knowledge, instructional delivery, and data analysis skills.

Ascend provides network-wide coaching for specialized leadership roles. The managing director and chief schools officer develop and evaluate the school director and meet monthly for coaching sessions. School directors also participate in a professional learning community focused on school leadership skills with school leaders across the network. The school director manages and coaches their school-based deans, meeting regularly to check-in on their goals. Deans also participate in numerous professional development sessions per year specific to their role with deans across the network. For example, deans of instruction attend sessions on in-the-moment instructional coaching, instructional action plans, and unit studies.

## DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

Ascend has systems and procedures in place to identify and meet the needs of at-risk students. Ascend administers diagnostics tests at the start of each school year to identify students struggling academically and that may require remediation under the Response to Intervention (“RTI”) program. School leaders regularly review assessment data to identify students who are academically at-risk.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

The dean of student services, dean of students, dean of instruction, and classroom teachers form a committee to review data about students they have identified for RTI. The committee reviews academic assessment data, behavior records, and teacher observations, then the team develops a plan for interventions to meet the needs of the student. In Ascend’s RTI system, tier 1 interventions take place within the general classroom provided by the classroom teacher. These types of interventions include small group re-teaching, intentional partner pairing, or peer instruction. Tier 2 interventions consist of weekly small-group and supplemental instruction during the school day in ELA and mathematics. Students assigned to tier 3 may be in the evaluation process for special education services or currently have an IEP. Students who were previously retained in their grade level also start the next academic school year receiving tier 3 supports. Teachers provide additional tutoring in small groups outside of regular mathematics and ELA instructional time, including before and after school sessions, to students who are not making progress with tier 2 and 3 supports. Some Ascend schools also provide a Saturday morning peer tutoring program in which students with strong academic achievement will assist peers in mastering specific concepts in ELA and mathematics.

To meet the needs of students with IEPs mandating academic services, Ascend schools implement a number of instructional settings including push-in and pull-out special education teacher support services (“SETSS”), and classrooms with integrated co-teaching (“ICT”), in which students have a general education teacher and special education teacher supporting them in core content.

To identify English language learners (“ELLs”), Ascend employs a home language identification survey and administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners. The school’s staff is also responsible for detecting potential limited English language proficiency among students and is trained accordingly by the network. Ascend Learning schools provide ELLs with a structured English immersion setting. Ascend Learning schools use research based English language acquisition strategies as well as several intervention programs to support its ELLs, such as leveled literacy intervention and aspects of the general education curriculum designed to focus on phonics, reading, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition. ELL teachers push-in to the literature circle block and pull-out during shared text and guided reading blocks to provide more individualized instruction to ELLs. Students requiring additional support with English language development also spend time using Lexia,<sup>12</sup> a computer-based program that provides language acquisition instruction to students. Ascend annually measures its ELLs’ proficiency using the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”).

Ascend provides opportunities for classroom teachers and at-risk program staff to collaborate regularly. The schools’ at-risk program staff attend grade team meetings and TPDs that relate to their student caseloads. Teachers also share resources electronically and meet with at-risk staff on an as needed basis. Classroom teachers are aware of students’ IEP goals and check-in with at-risk staff frequently to address student needs. Co-teachers in ICT classrooms plan together daily. The network director of student services provides ongoing professional development and training on at-risk populations to the school teams, which provides an additional opportunity for classroom teachers and at-risk staff to work together.

12. For additional information, please visit [www.lexialearning.com/](http://www.lexialearning.com/).

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2C

### DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

Ascend has operational systems in place that support high-level academic achievement and the successful delivery of Ascend's educational model. The network has clearly defined roles within its organization, which allows network- and school-based instructional leaders to focus on student learning and teacher support. The organizational design has managing directors of schools supporting the network's school directors, who are the schools' primary instructional leaders. The network provides differentiated coaching and development to deans, the secondary instructional leaders, and school-based directors of operations.

Ascend implements a variety of effective initiatives to support the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. At the end of the 2016-17 school year, leaders promoted 12 teachers to leadership roles within the network. Ascend has established a resident director program to develop an internal pipeline for future school leaders. The network strategically pairs program participants with a high performing school director, who provides close mentorship and support for up to two years. The network finance, operations, and human resources teams plan and facilitate professional development sessions as part of the resident director program to ensure future leaders at Ascend schools have appropriate training on non-instructional components necessary for running a high quality school. The network has also established a teaching fellows program as a pipeline to develop lead teachers. Ascend plans to grow this program substantially over the next charter term; currently there are four fellows in the program. The network talent team uses teacher satisfaction and performance data to inform the network's practices related to recruitment, onboarding, and retention. Additionally, the network's talent team effectively collaborates with the chief schools officer and managing directors to evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of Ascend's leadership and instructional staff. For example, the network collects performance data on new hires and uses the data to refine the onboarding process and plan for future professional development.

Ascend has sufficient resources to support the educational model. The network provides quality school facilities, sufficient materials for students, funding for schoolwide staffing, and staff and student recruitment support from the network office. The network finance team meets monthly with school directors and directors of operations to review finance reports and develop the schools' annual budgets. The network provides school leaders autonomy in this process while also providing the appropriate network oversight.

The network manages the student recruitment process and provides effective student recruitment support for the schools. Additionally, the network monitors each school's enrollment and retention targets. In response to the majority of schools not meeting the enrollment targets for ELLs and students with disabilities, Ascend Learning established a strategic and targeted recruitment strategy to specifically target these two subgroups of students during the upcoming recruitment season. For example, the network is partnering with Community LinkED, a Brooklyn-based community organizer, to support the network with improving its recruitment strategies. Additionally, Ascend also hires temporary staff to conduct on-the-ground outreach during the peak recruitment season. The recruitment

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

team targets areas with high populations of ELLs and economically disadvantaged students, as well as local programs that service students with disabilities for its outreach. The network also provides a website designed for families and a family newsletter. Each school holds three open houses per year for prospective families. As of August 2017, Ascend has a waitlist of over 4,500 prospective students.

The network regularly monitors and evaluates the educational program and makes necessary changes. During the school year, instructional staff provide curricular feedback regularly via surveys, town halls, and TPD meetings. The network schools team oversees any necessary programmatic changes that need to be implemented during the school year. The network schools team works with the network curriculum team to review the ongoing feedback and student data, and the curriculum team makes any necessary curricular changes during the summer for leaders to implement the following academic year, which the network rolls out to staff when they return prior to the upcoming school year.

## DOES THE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS EDUCATION CORPORATION BOARD WORK EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE SCHOOLS' ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

The Ascend board works effectively to achieve all open schools' Accountability Plan goals. Of the seven schools the board oversees, five schools are currently operating in the borough of Brooklyn: Brooklyn Ascend, Brownsville Ascend, Bushwick Ascend, Canarsie Ascend, and Central Brooklyn Ascend. The two additional schools, Central Brooklyn Ascend 2 and Central Brooklyn Ascend 3, will open in Brooklyn in August 2018 with students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

The board is comprised of members with diverse skill sets from a variety of sectors such as education, finance, talent, insurance, and law. The board possesses the necessary expertise to provide oversight of the schools with student outcomes as the central focus. The board utilizes a committee structure including finance, hiring, nominating, executive, academics, and an ad hoc committee for strategy and growth.

The board regularly assesses whether Ascend Learning complies with the management agreement by monitoring educational, operational, and financial indicators and regularly monitoring the schools' progress towards their Accountability Plan goals. The network provides the board with a dashboard at each meeting to provide an at-a-glance summary of academic and operational performance. This dashboard includes data on academics by grade and content area, enrollment, attendance, attrition, and finances. If applicable, recent assessment data is also included, such as annual state assessment results. The board uses the dashboard to inform its oversight and evaluation of the Ascend educational model. Additionally, school directors and network staff provide monthly reports orally or in writing at each meeting.

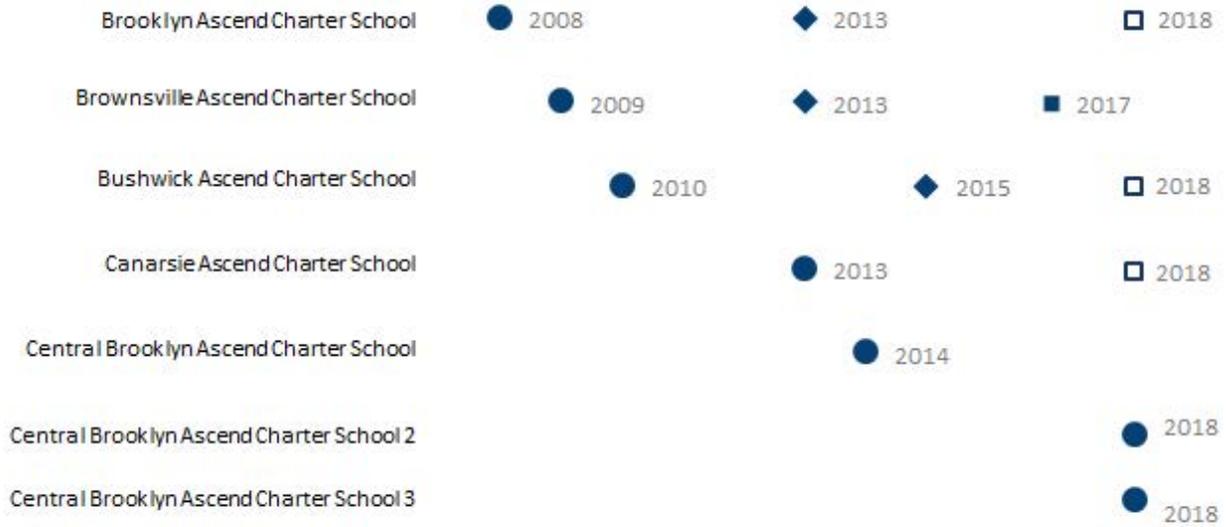
With support from Ascend network staff, the board evaluates the school directors annually in areas such as academic performance, mission alignment, student and parents relations, and financial and operational management. The board has the authority to select and hire school directors.

**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
2D**

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## EDUCATION CORPORATION TIMELINE OF CHARTER RENEWAL

- School Opening
- Initial Renewal - Full-Term
- Initial Renewal Recommendation - Full-Term
- ◆ Renewal by Original Authorizer



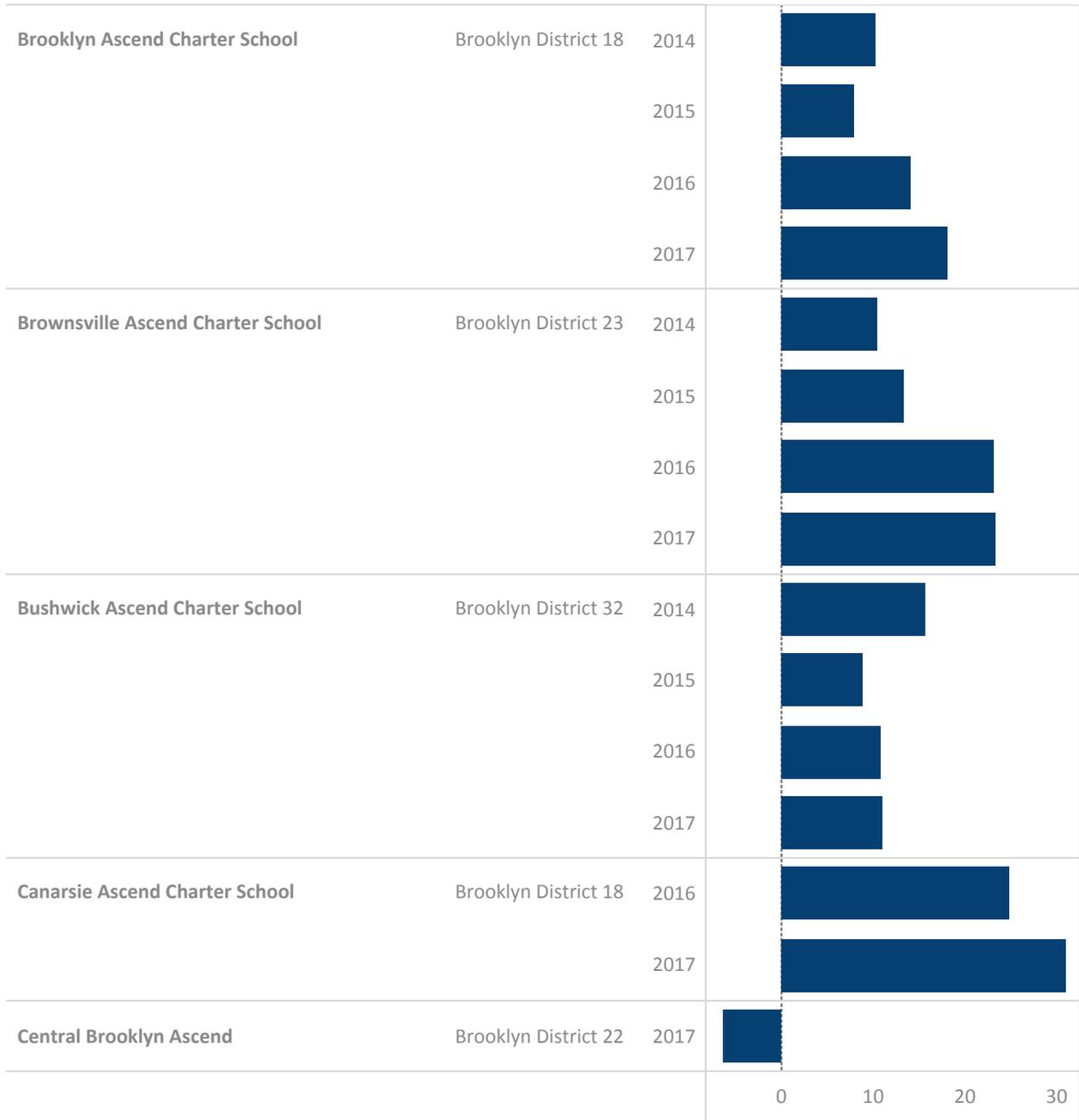
# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## EDUCATION CORPORATION SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School	Local District	Co-located?	Chartered Enrollment	Grade Span
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	CSD 18	No	1,277	K-11
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	CSD 23	No	1,028	K-8
Bushwick Ascend Charter School	CSD 32	No	889	K-8
Canarsie Ascend Charter School	CSD 18	No	616	K-5
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	CSD 22	No	413	K-4
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 2	CSD 19	Not Open	Not Open	Not Open
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 3	CSD 19	Not Open	Not Open	Not Open

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

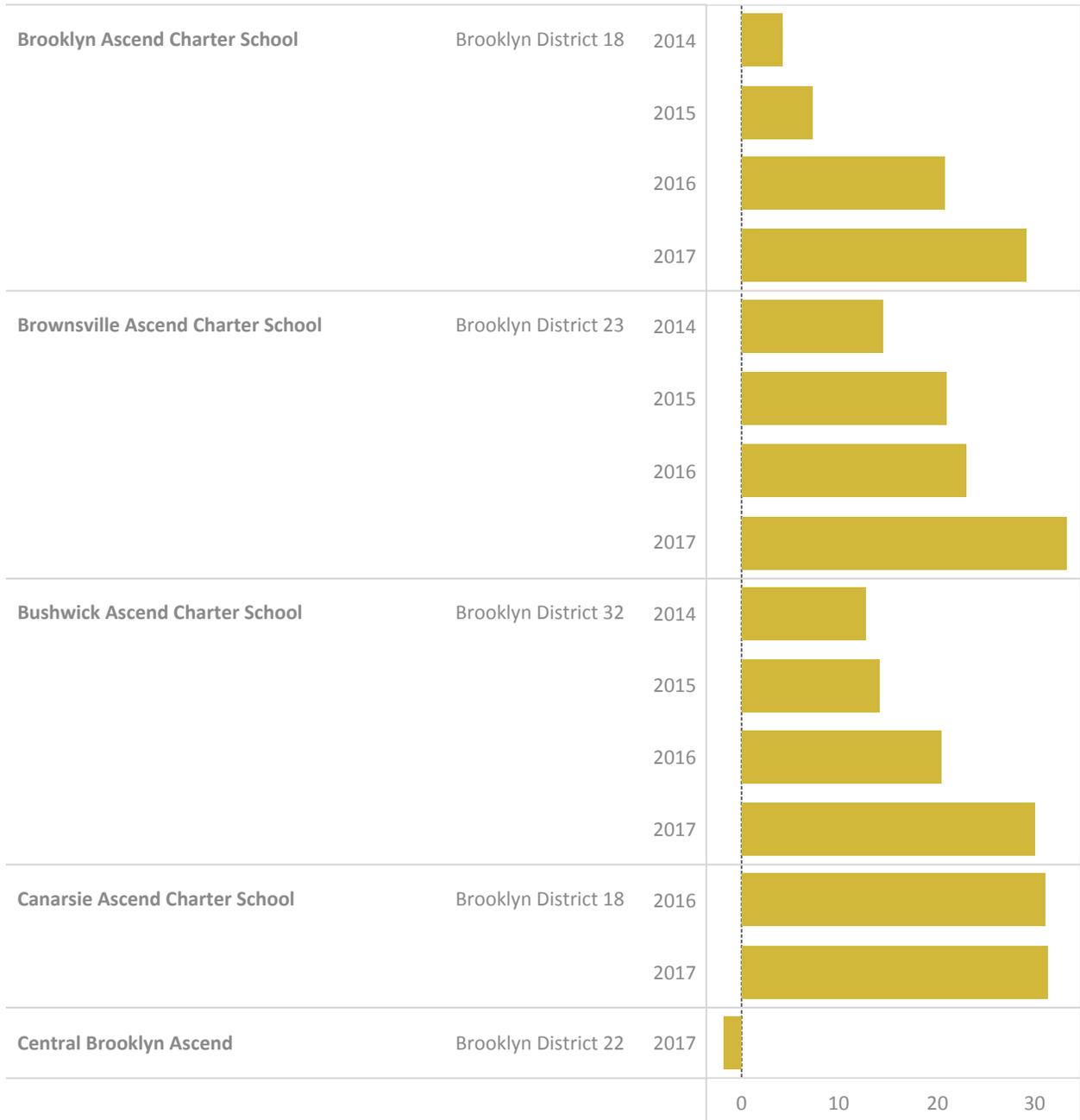
## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: ELA



District difference for each year broken down by school and district (in NYC, the Institute uses the CSD). These charts compare a school's performance to that of the district. Each bar represents the difference between the school's performance and the district's. A positive result (showing the bar to the right of zero) indicates the amount by which the school outscored the district. A negative result (with the bar to the left of zero) illustrates the amount by which the school performed lower than the district. A score of zero indicates that the school performed exactly even with the district. School scores reflect the achievement of students enrolled for at least two years per the schools' Accountability Plans.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

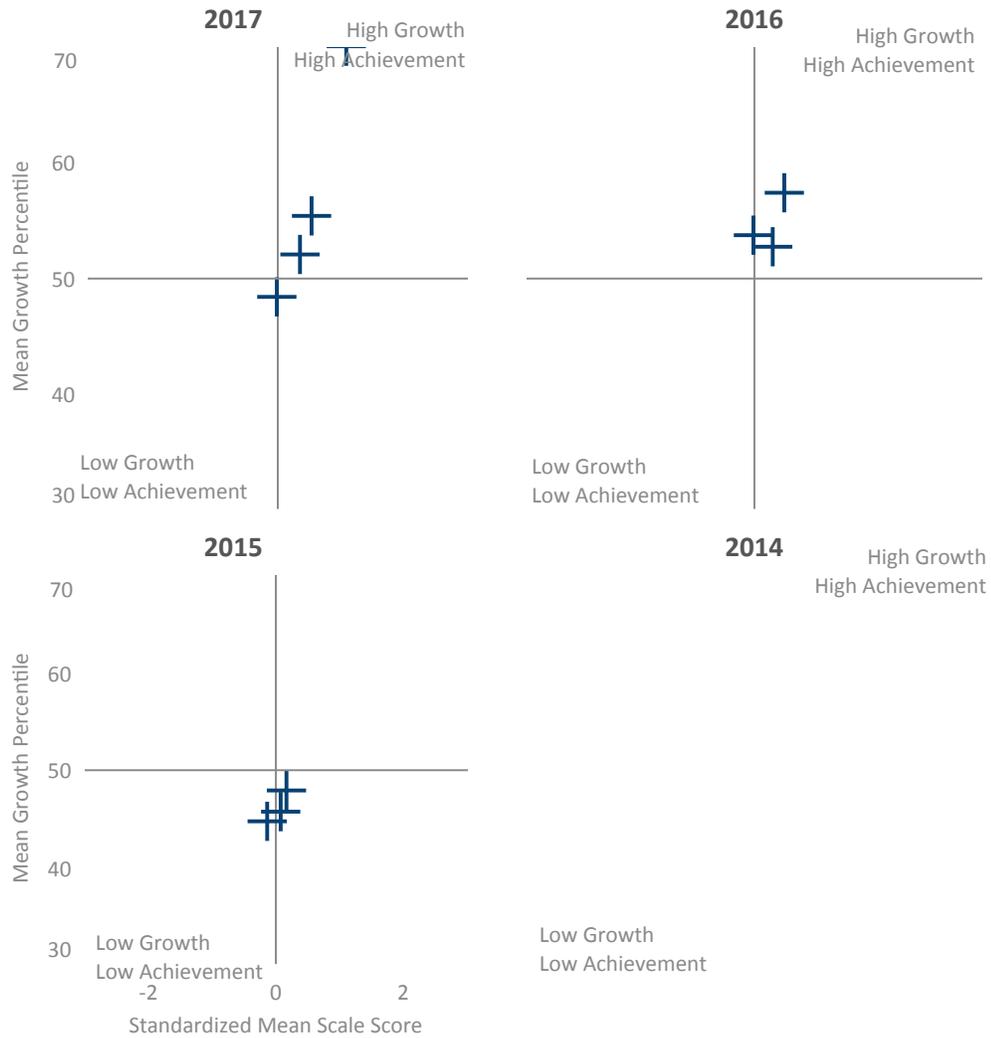
## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: MATH



District difference for each year broken down by school and district (in NYC, the Institute uses the CSD). These charts compare a school's performance to that of the district. Each bar represents the difference between the school's performance and the district's. A positive result (showing the bar to the right of zero) indicates the amount by which the school outscored the district. A negative result (with the bar to the left of zero) illustrates the amount by which the school performed lower than the district. A score of zero indicates that the school performed exactly even with the district. School scores reflect the achievement of students enrolled for at least two years per the schools' Accountability Plans.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## ELA GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT: 2013-14 THROUGH 2016-17

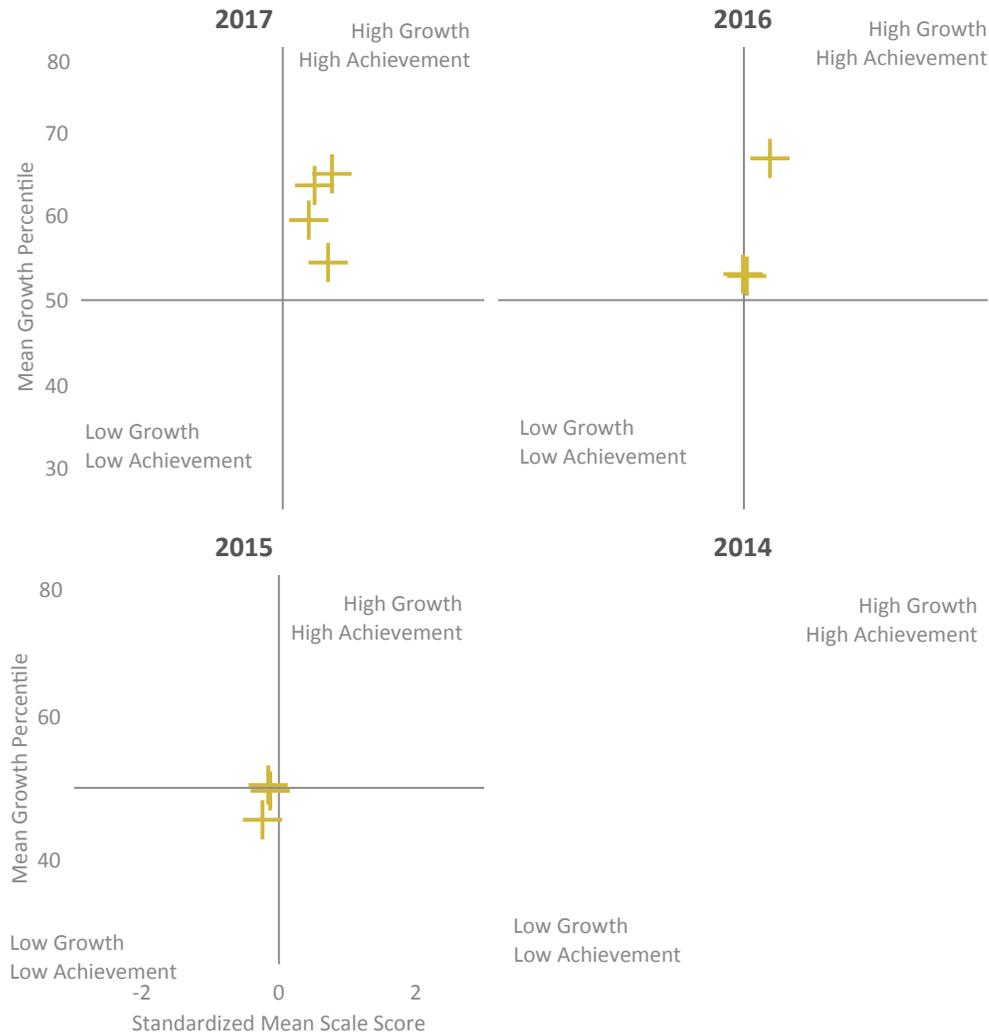


These charts compare a school's ability to grow student achievement with a school's absolute student performance. Schools located in the upper right hand quadrant of each chart show strong results in helping students make learning gains while at the same time helping students achieve strong absolute scores on state assessments. Schools in the lower right hand quadrant show strong absolute scores but lower growth. Because the student growth percentile uses the previous year's scale score as a baseline, it becomes more difficult for a school to maintain strong overall growth scores when students already post high absolute scores.

These charts are produced by comparing growth as measured by the state's student growth percentile to its overall achievement as measured by scale score standardized to the statewide grade level mean over each year for which data are available during the charter term. The growth axis (labeled Mean Growth Percentile) represents the statewide median growth score. The achievement axis (labeled Standardized Mean Scale Score) represents the statewide mean-centered achievement level for each grade served by each school.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## MATH GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT: 2013-14 THROUGH 2016-17



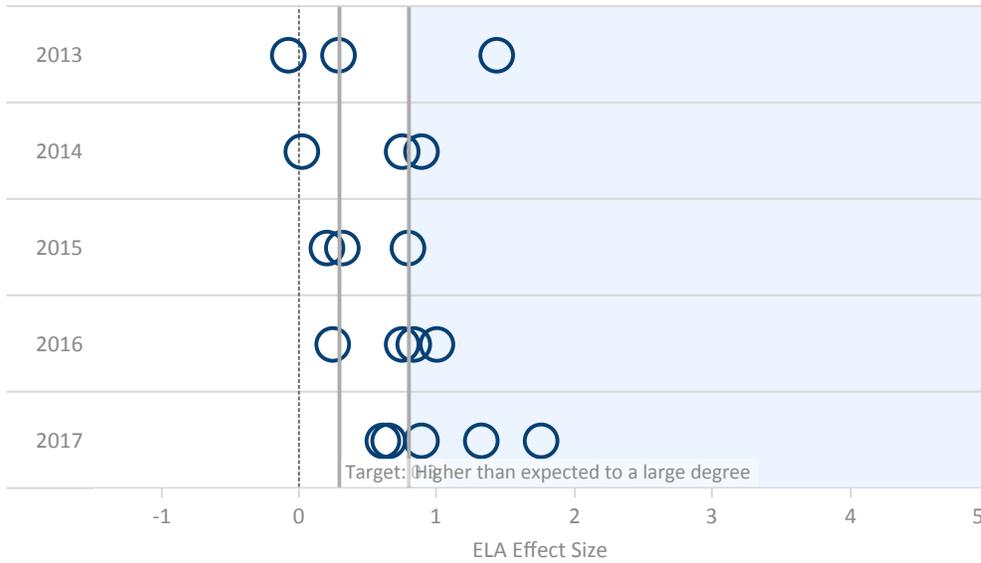
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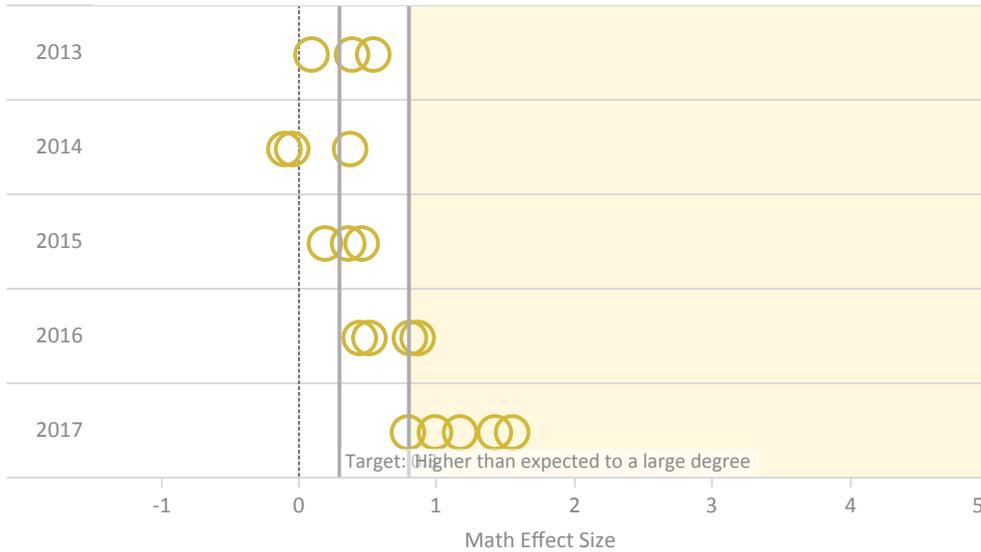
# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE DOT PLOTS: 2012-13 THROUGH 2016-17

**ELA Effect Size by Year and School**



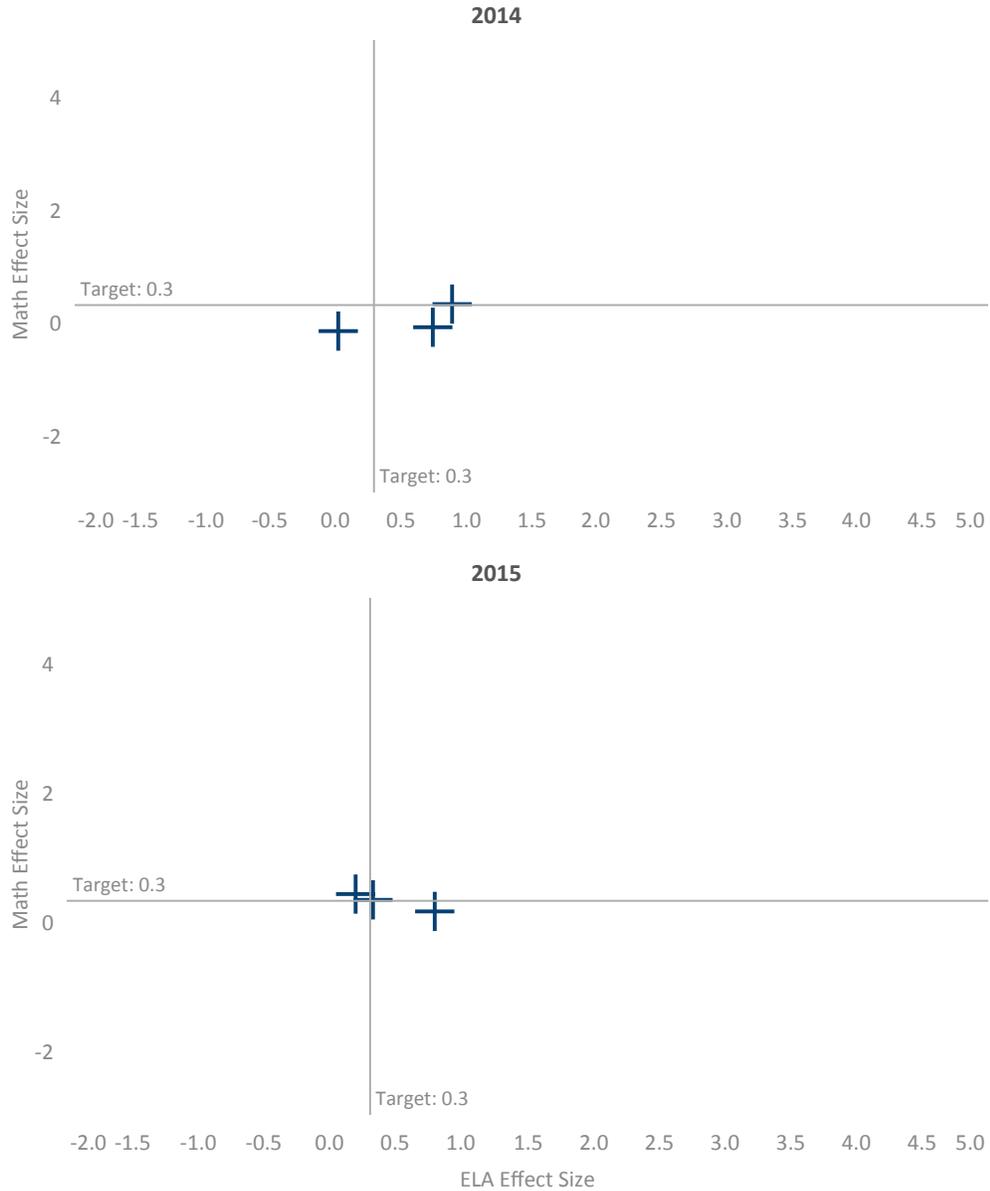
**Math Effect Size by Year and School**



The charts illustrate the comparative effect size performance at each school across the ed corp by each year for which data are available throughout the charter term. Schools performing at or above 0.3 are meeting SUNY's benchmark for the measure. Schools performing at or above 0.8 are performing higher than expected to a large degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar levels of economically disadvantaged students.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

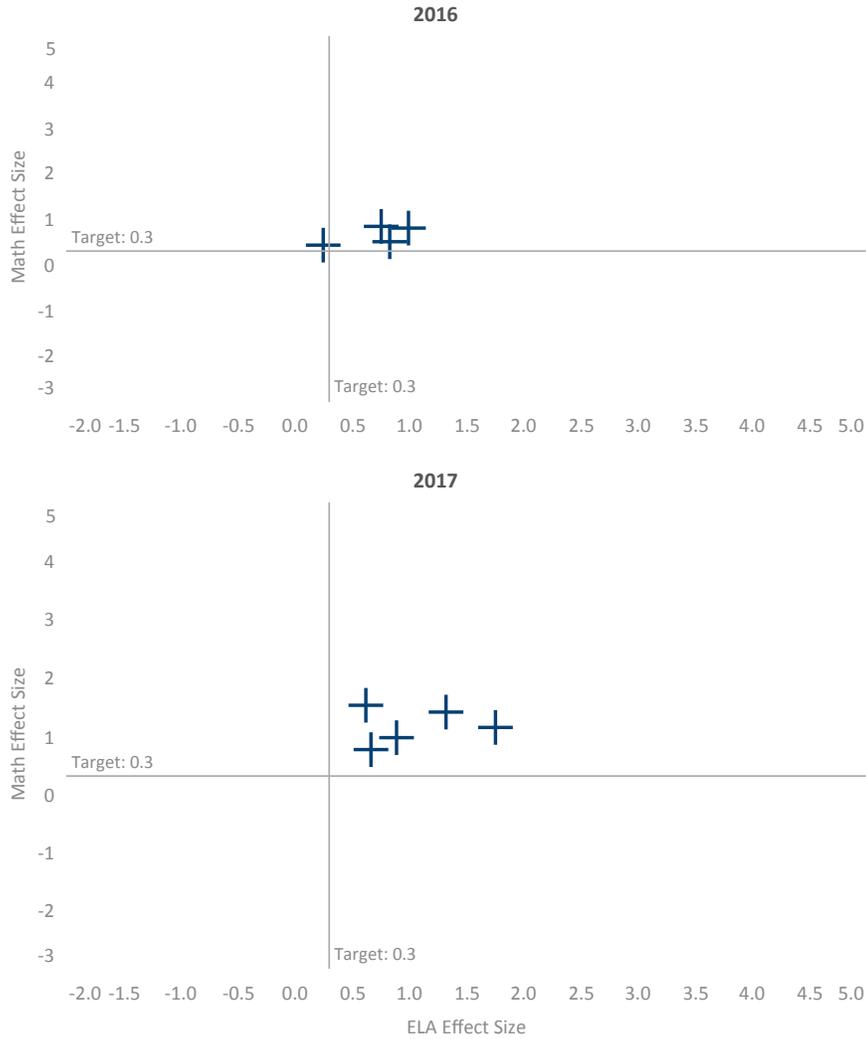
## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2013-14 THROUGH 2014-15



The charts compare a school's ELA and math effect sizes over each year for which data are available during the charter term. An effect size measures school performance in comparison to other schools statewide enrolling students with similar proportions of economic disadvantage. Schools with an ELA or math effect size that is less than 0 performed lower than expected based on the economic disadvantage statistic. Schools posting an effect size greater than 0 but less than 0.3 perform about the same as the comparison schools. Schools with an ELA or math effect size greater than 0.3 (SUNY's performance target for the measure) outperformed similar schools statewide to a meaningful degree, while schools with effect sizes greater than 0.8 perform higher than expected to a large degree.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

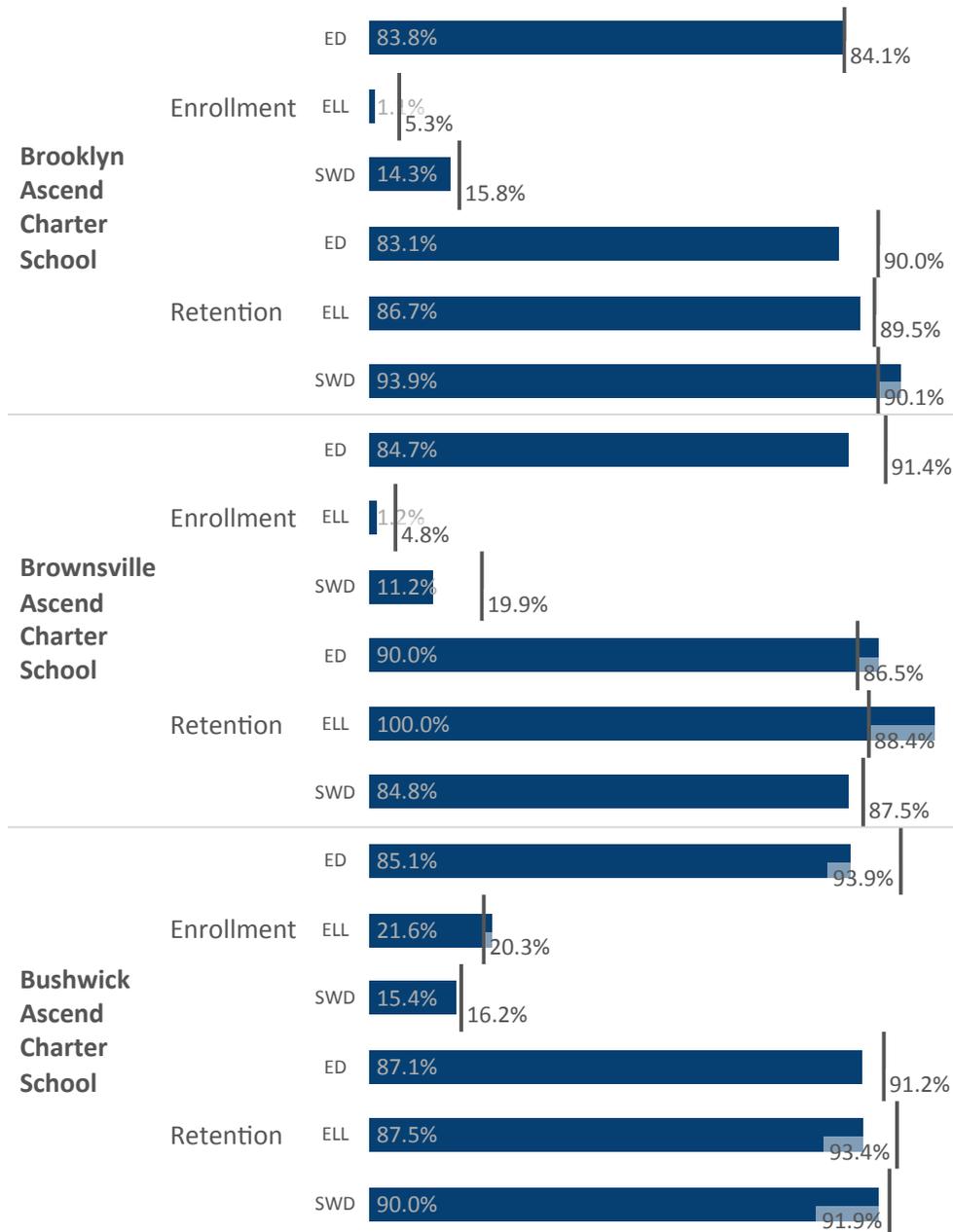
## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2015-16 THROUGH 2016-17



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# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

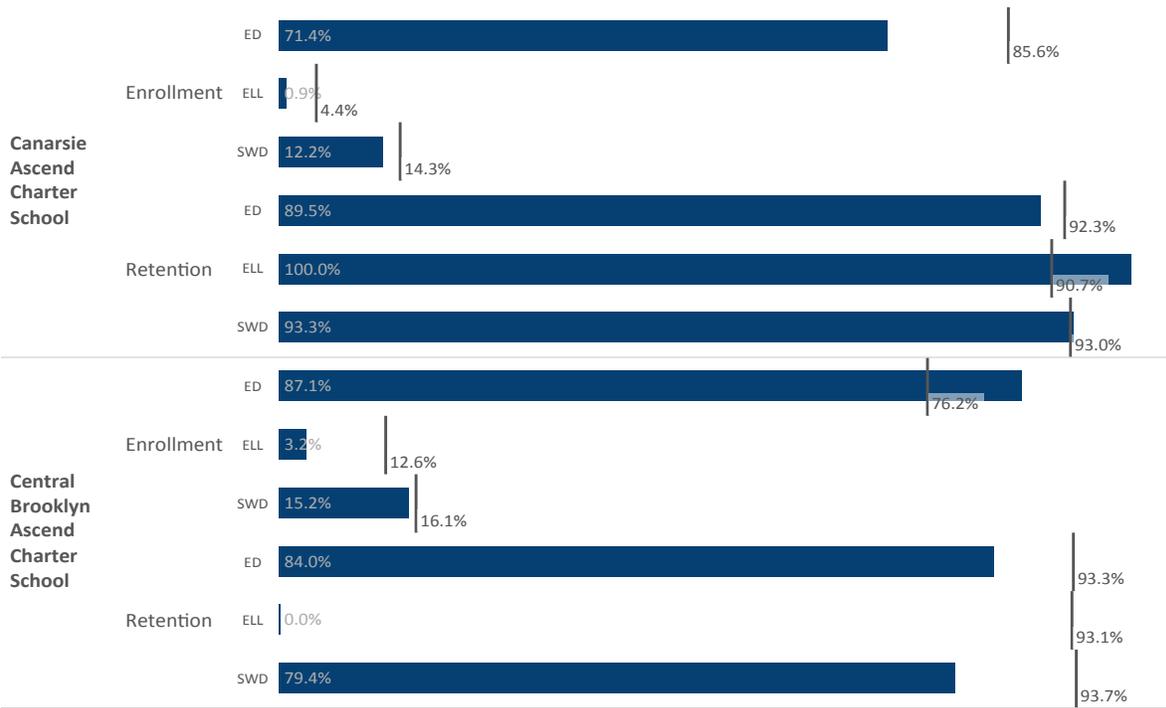
## ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



The chart illustrates the **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets** for each operating school in the education corporation. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school 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 2016-17 enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the network.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

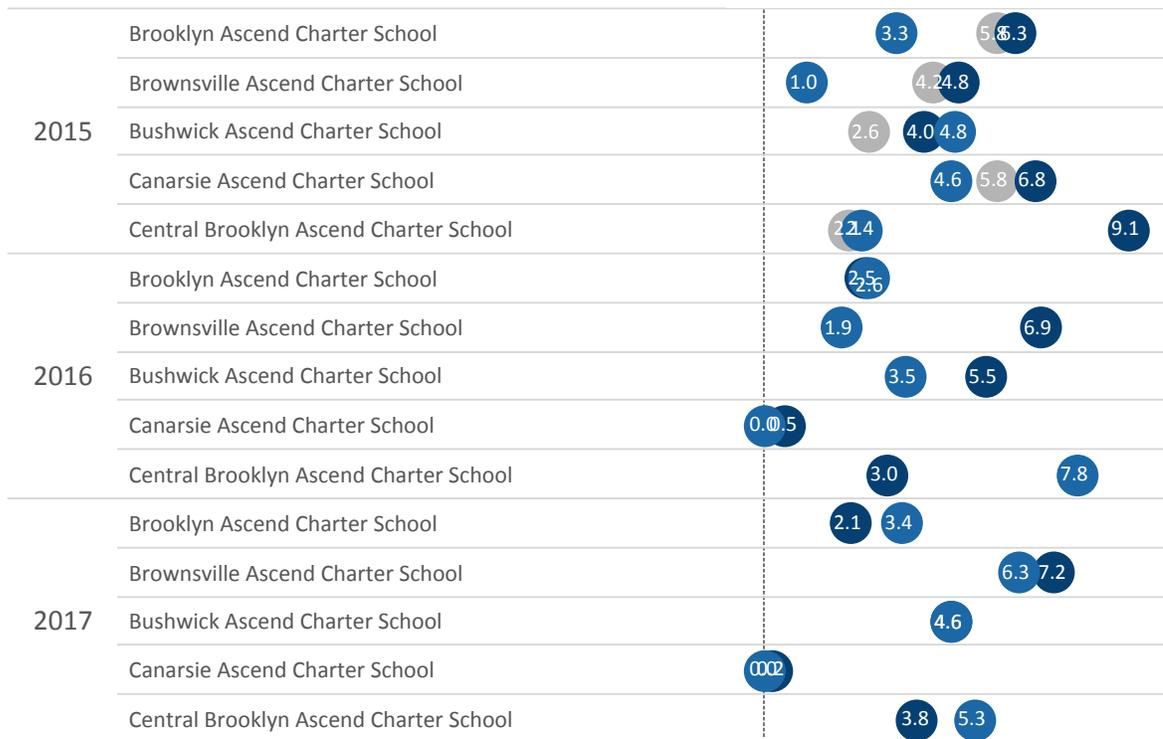
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# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

**Suspensions: Ascend Charter Schools' out of school suspension rate, in school suspension rate, and the district overall suspension rate.**



Although Community School District (“CSD”) and school suspension rates are presented on the same graph, a direct comparison between the rates is not possible because available CSD data includes Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grades and school data includes only the grades served by the school. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education: 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 school years ending in 2015, 2016, and 2017 Ascend Charter Schools expelled 0 students.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## PERSISTENCE IN ENROLLMENT



# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

## ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

### SCHOOL INFORMATION

#### BALANCE SHEET

##### Assets

##### Current Assets

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

##### Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1

Property, Building and Equipment, net

##### Other Assets

##### Total Assets - GRAPH 1

##### Liabilities and Net Assets

##### Current Liabilities

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

##### Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

##### Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1

##### Net Assets

Unrestricted	
Temporarily restricted	

##### Total Net Assets

##### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

#### ACTIVITIES

##### Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment	
Students with Disabilities	

##### Grants and Contracts

State and local	
Federal - Title and IDEA	
Federal - Other	
Other	
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	

##### Total Operating Revenue

##### Expenses

Regular Education	
SPED	
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	
Other	

##### Total Program Services

Management and General	
Fundraising	

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

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

##### Support and Other Revenue

Contributions	
Fundraising	
Miscellaneous Income	
Net assets released from restriction	

##### Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue	
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	

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

##### Change in Net Assets

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

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

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

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 1	254,418	977,910	1,854,497	3,938,163	5,696,217
Grants and Contracts Receivable	48,607	387,326	1,565,724	2,055,542	3,121,856
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	44,316	-
Prepaid Expenses	132,859	145,372	86,605	740,931	519,892
Contributions and Other Receivables	656	200,000	572,220	-	-
<b>Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>436,540</b>	<b>1,710,608</b>	<b>4,079,046</b>	<b>6,778,952</b>	<b>9,337,965</b>
Property, Building and Equipment, net	1,854,352	14,242,674	15,221,313	20,598,249	23,198,550
Other Assets	117,534	302,070	360,013	434,454	339,542
<b>Total Assets - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>2,408,426</b>	<b>16,255,352</b>	<b>19,660,372</b>	<b>27,811,655</b>	<b>32,876,057</b>

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	318,675	1,198,630	1,467,089	2,068,289	1,200,165
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	244,600	1,048,644	1,380,160	1,813,801	2,252,678
Deferred Revenue	8,871	-	-	64,651	1,626,649
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	366,941	240,293	27,564	501,773
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	630,321	299,651	81,250
Other	2,246,197	728,364	929,565	1,546,758	109,840
<b>Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>2,818,343</b>	<b>3,342,579</b>	<b>4,647,428</b>	<b>5,820,714</b>	<b>5,772,355</b>
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	500,000	16,636,112	17,668,741	23,109,122	27,531,615
<b>Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1</b>	<b>3,318,343</b>	<b>19,978,691</b>	<b>22,316,169</b>	<b>28,929,836</b>	<b>33,303,970</b>

Unrestricted	(909,917)	(3,723,339)	(2,655,797)	(1,118,181)	(427,913)
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>(909,917)</b>	<b>(3,723,339)</b>	<b>(2,655,797)</b>	<b>(1,118,181)</b>	<b>(427,913)</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>2,408,426</b>	<b>16,255,352</b>	<b>19,660,372</b>	<b>27,811,655</b>	<b>32,876,057</b>

Resident Student Enrollment	7,599,973	33,022,368	42,765,866	47,642,864	57,478,104
Students with Disabilities	-	187,080	208,110	5,096,223	5,779,185

State and local	42,999	247,347	781,670	3,334,599	298,512
Federal - Title and IDEA	305,393	1,995,302	1,903,391	1,531,684	867,713
Federal - Other	85,841	219,552	898,330	265,388	3,355,124
Other	-	-	553,835	628,004	3,742,361
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	245,840	-	-	1,141,784	-
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>8,280,046</b>	<b>35,671,649</b>	<b>47,111,202</b>	<b>59,640,545</b>	<b>71,521,000</b>

Regular Education	7,966,314	27,607,477	32,324,000	37,408,694	44,816,221
SPED	1,257,891	5,226,094	7,681,868	11,412,633	14,237,572
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Program Services</b>	<b>9,224,205</b>	<b>32,833,571</b>	<b>40,005,868</b>	<b>48,821,327</b>	<b>59,053,793</b>

Management and General	1,125,940	5,601,029	6,694,929	9,480,005	12,129,335
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>10,350,145</b>	<b>38,434,600</b>	<b>46,700,797</b>	<b>58,301,332</b>	<b>71,183,128</b>

<b>Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations</b>	<b>(2,070,099)</b>	<b>(2,762,951)</b>	<b>410,405</b>	<b>1,339,213</b>	<b>337,872</b>
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Contributions	45,000	51,010	27,601	11,228	172,558
Fundraising	-	26,592	19,124	5,056	-
Miscellaneous Income	2,573	58,318	610,412	182,119	179,838
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Support and Other Revenue</b>	<b>47,573</b>	<b>135,920</b>	<b>657,137</b>	<b>198,403</b>	<b>352,396</b>

Total Unrestricted Revenue	8,282,619	35,807,569	47,768,339	59,838,948	71,873,396
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	45,000	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 &amp; 3</b>	<b>8,327,619</b>	<b>35,807,569</b>	<b>47,768,339</b>	<b>59,838,948</b>	<b>71,873,396</b>

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>(2,022,526)</b>	<b>(2,627,031)</b>	<b>1,067,542</b>	<b>1,537,616</b>	<b>690,268</b>
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<b>Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	<b>1,112,609</b>	<b>(1,096,308)</b>	<b>(3,723,339)</b>	<b>(2,655,797)</b>	<b>(628,258)</b>
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Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	(489,923)
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<b>Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2</b>	<b>(909,917)</b>	<b>(3,723,339)</b>	<b>(2,655,797)</b>	<b>(1,118,181)</b>	<b>(427,913)</b>
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# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

## ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

### SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	119,406	92,727	6,836,305	-
Instructional Personnel	-	1,090,101	2,597,626	18,507,382	-
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	210,870	128,595	447,384	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	3,255,173	13,834,177	17,402,949	-	32,670,741
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	<b>3,255,173</b>	<b>15,254,554</b>	<b>20,221,897</b>	<b>25,791,071</b>	<b>32,670,741</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	600,621	2,860,646	3,830,003	4,579,163	5,939,054
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	2,998,379	4,653,308	7,131,077	8,527,882
Building and Land Rent / Lease	1,467,081	7,857,918	7,957,819	9,096,485	11,582,037
Staff Development	21,885	230,710	446,991	266,552	482,608
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	867,460	3,228,062	1,432,999	1,885,770	1,887,836
Marketing / Recruitment	52,404	246,804	142,358	470,006	226,599
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	117,783	799,048	1,637,306	1,621,394	1,543,523
Depreciation	153,389	1,104,191	1,256,031	1,600,684	2,064,964
Other	1,051,711	3,854,288	2,303,140	5,858,927	6,257,884
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>7,587,507</b>	<b>38,434,600</b>	<b>43,881,852</b>	<b>58,301,129</b>	<b>71,183,128</b>

### SCHOOL ANALYSIS

#### ENROLLMENT

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Chartered Enroll	1,695	2,305	2,860	3,473	3,848
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	1,674	2,274	2,789	3,443	3,976
Chartered Grades	-	-	-	-	-
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

#### Primary School District:

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Increase over prior year	13,527	13,527	13,877	13,877	14,027
	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	1.1%

#### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

##### Revenue

Operating	4,946	15,687	16,890	17,323	17,988
Other Revenue and Support	28	60	236	58	89
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>15,747</b>	<b>17,126</b>	<b>17,380</b>	<b>18,077</b>

##### Expenses

Program Services	5,510	14,439	14,343	14,180	14,853
Management and General, Fundraising	673	2,463	2,400	2,753	3,051
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	<b>6,183</b>	<b>16,902</b>	<b>16,743</b>	<b>16,934</b>	<b>17,903</b>
% of Program Services	89.1%	85.4%	85.7%	83.7%	83.0%
% of Management and Other	10.9%	14.6%	14.3%	16.3%	17.0%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	<b>-19.5%</b>	<b>-6.8%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>

#### Student to Faculty Ratio

-	-	-	-	-
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#### Faculty to Admin Ratio

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

Score	(1.0)	(1.0)	(0.3)	0.2	0.2
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	Fiscally Needs Monitoring				

#### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	(2,381,803)	(1,631,971)	(568,382)	958,238	3,565,610
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	-28.8%	-4.6%	-1.2%	1.6%	5.0%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.2	1.6
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

#### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	0.1	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.5
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Good

#### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

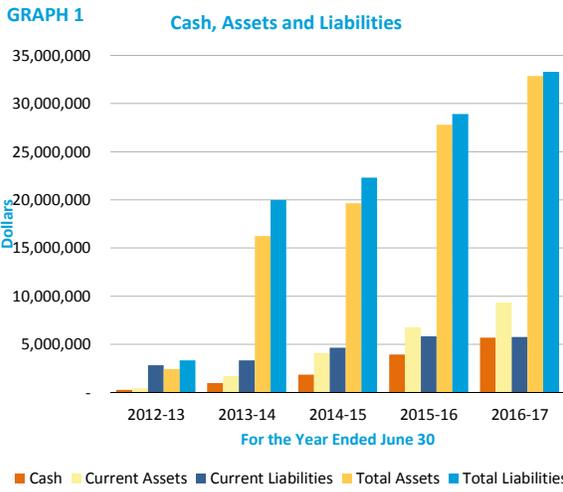
Score	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor

#### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

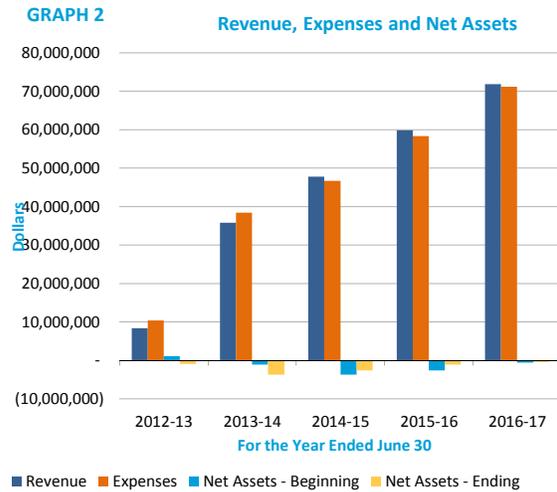
Score	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.0
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

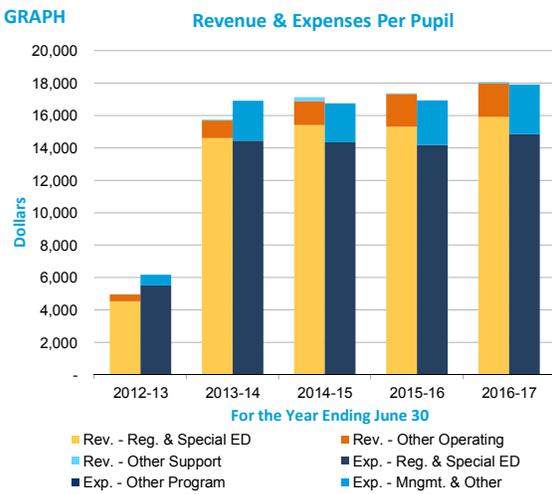
## ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)



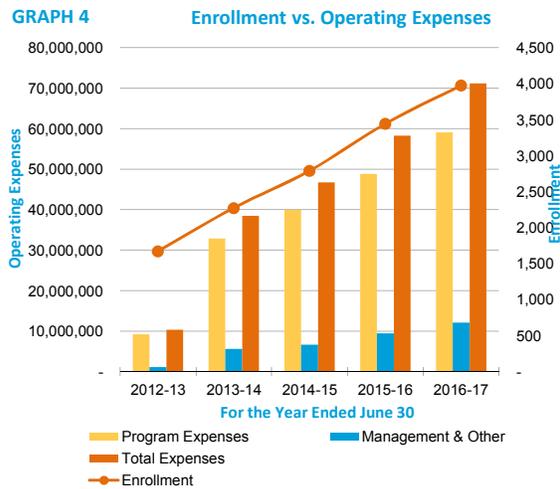
This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.



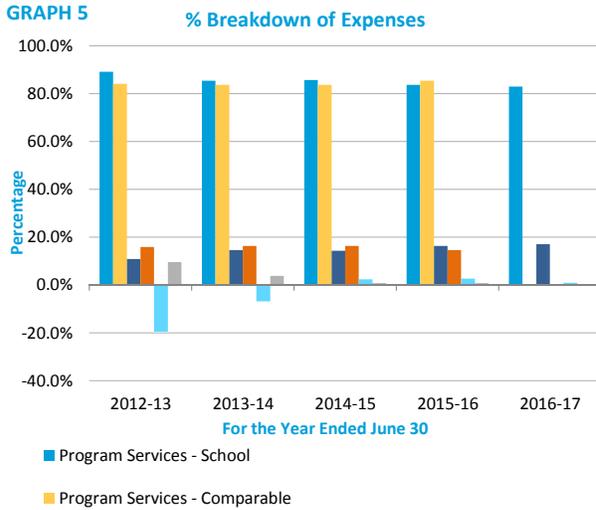
This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

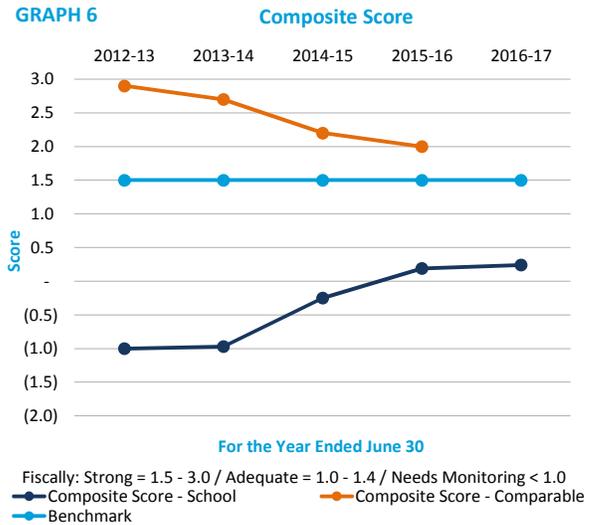
## ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

### Comparable School, Region or Network: All SUNY Authorized Charter Schools (Including Closed Schools)

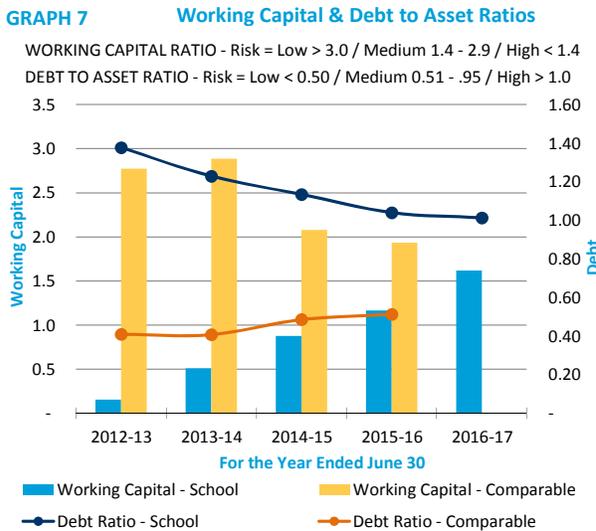
\* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term



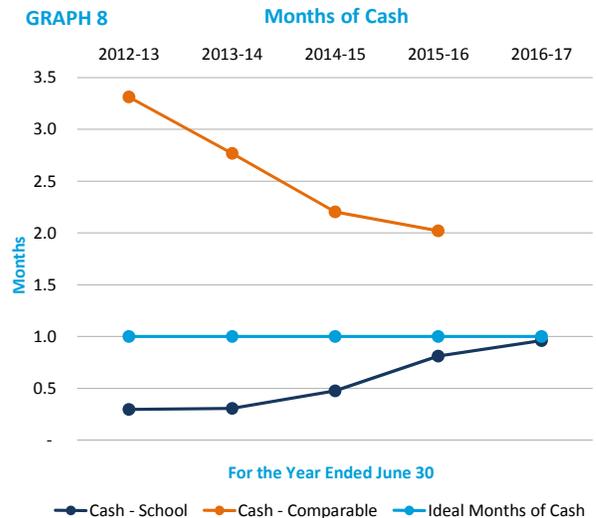
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.



This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.



This chart illustrates Working Capital and Debt to Asset Ratios. The Working Capital ratio indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. The Debt to Asset ratio indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

