



Renewal Recommendation Report Brooklyn Dreams Charter School

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INTRODUCTION

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”) (revised September 4, 2013 and available at:

<http://www.newyorkcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNY-Renewal-Policies.pdf>).

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: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/operate/existing-schools/renewal/>.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BROOKLYN DREAMS CHARTER SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

Opened in September 2010, Brooklyn Dreams Charter School (“Brooklyn Dreams”) is now in its fifth year of operation. The school’s mission states:

The mission of Brooklyn Dreams Charter School is to offer the families of Brooklyn a school with a culture that values integrity, academic excellence and accountability, where all students are given the opportunity for success in high school, college and beyond by offering an academically rigorous and challenging K-8 educational program.

Brooklyn Dreams partners with National Heritage Academies, Inc. (“NHA”), a Michigan based educational management organization, in the implementation of its academic program. The school remains an independent not-for-profit education corporation.

Brooklyn Dreams currently serves 564 students in grades K-7 in a private facility at 259 Parkville Avenue, Brooklyn, in New York City Community School District (“CSD”) 22.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of its first charter term, Brooklyn Dreams has produced a mixed record of academic success. Based on an analysis of evidence from this renewal visit and information gathered during the current charter term, the Institute finds Brooklyn Dreams’ academic success and program on the ground produced mixed results. Data gathered using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks¹ during the school’s renewal visit on October 15-16, 2014, and previous visits indicate the school has established a program that is sufficiently strong and effective, and, given the additional time a short term renewal will afford, is likely to lead to the school meeting or coming close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

Brooklyn Dreams’ founding leader struggled to implement the academic program with fidelity, impacting overall student achievement on state tests during the school’s first two years of operation. Recognizing this, the Brooklyn Dreams board (the “board”) replaced the founding leader with the school’s current principal prior to the start of the 2012-13 school year. Although the school historically has fallen short of beating its local district in state test performance, results of comparative measures of English language arts (“ELA”) and math achievement generally trended up over the course of the charter term, with the school’s effect size experiencing a drop in the 2013-14 school year in both subjects. It is, however, important to note that the math program

¹ The *State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks* (version 5.0, the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”), available at: <http://newyorkcharters.org/documents/SUNYRenewalBenchmarks5FINAL5-8-12.pdf>.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

has generally proven to be successful with the school still having a positive effect size of 0.63 in math, greater than the Institutes standard of 0.30, despite the drop between the last two testing years.

The school is supported by NHA, which provides many of the oversight responsibilities that the school's board struggles to implement effectively. NHA has, in New York, historically supported schools that initially struggled to produce strong academic outcomes but with more time improved student academics, namely the SUNY authorized Brooklyn Excelsior Charter School. Although the board must increase its ability to oversee both the school and NHA, the school is generally fiscally sound and legally compliant. The Institute noted exceptions in the area of fiscal planning an oversight. As a result, the Institute will add to the proposed renewal charter additional terms to ensure the school's rent, paid to NHA, does not increase, and the school continues to spend the same or a higher percentage of its budget on its academic program. Brooklyn Dreams has supports from its partner organization, quality tools to support the delivery of the educational program and leaders who are well aware of programmatic needs and actively working to develop appropriate systems to support the school. Thus, Brooklyn Dreams is likely to meet or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals with the additional time such a renewal would permit and with the additional terms in the charter.

The Institute notes that in addition to analyses submitted by the school as part of the application for charter renewal, the Institute received supplemental data analyses wherein an independent research firm provided additional statistical analyses of Brooklyn Dreams' outcome data in ELA and mathematics.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: **SHORT-TERM RENEWAL**

The SUNY Charter Schools Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of the Brooklyn Dreams Charter School, and renew its charter for a period of three years with the authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 8th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal with a maximum projected enrollment of 704 students.

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

- (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of educational achievement in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, but have in place and in operation at the time of the renewal inspection visit (i) an academic program of sufficient strength and effectiveness, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks,² which will likely result in the school's being able to meet or come close to meeting those goals with the additional time that renewal would permit, and (ii) a governing board and organizational structures both in the charter school and its education corporation with a demonstrated capacity to meet the charter school's academic Accountability Plan goals and to operate the charter school in an educationally and fiscally sound fashion; or
- (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals but, at the time of the renewal inspection visit, have in place an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is inadequate in multiple and material respects.³

² The Qualitative Education Benchmarks are a subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

³ SUNY Renewal Policies at pp. 12-13.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

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:

- The school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- The Brooklyn Dreams education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,
- 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.⁴

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, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL") program. SUNY⁵ and the Board of Regents finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school in July 2013.

Given the date the school was originally chartered, it does not have statutory targets. However, in accordance with the Act, the Institute, acting on behalf of the SUNY Trustees, considered the school's plans for meeting its future enrollment and retention targets during the next charter term prior to recommending the renewal application for approval. The Institute found the school's plans to meet or exceed the targets satisfactory. Its plans for the education of students with disabilities, ELLs and FRPL students are similarly satisfactory. The Institute also found the school to be making good faith efforts to attract and retain such students in accordance with the Act.

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. As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response.

⁴ See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

⁵ SUNY Trustees' Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

REPORT FORMAT

The Institute makes the foregoing renewal recommendation based on the school's Application for Charter Renewal, evaluation visits conducted and information gathered during the charter term and a renewal evaluation visit conducted near the end of the current charter term. Additionally, the Institute has reviewed the strength and fiscal health of the not for profit education corporation with the authority to operate the school. 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. This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, 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.

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?

The report's Appendix provides a School Overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school, and, if applicable, its education corporation and additional evidence on student achievement contained in the School Performance Summaries.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Brooklyn Dreams has posted mixed progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals. The school posted a strong positive trend in three of four years in which data is available on the effect size measures in ELA and well as in mathematics where it met the ELA standard two years ago and exceeded the standard in mathematics. The school did not meet all of its Accountability Plan goals, however, the school enrolled a much higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch than the district average, more than 20% more in two of the previous three years. As assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, the academic program in place at the time of the renewal review was of sufficient strength that the school would likely meet or come close to meeting its goals given additional time that renewal would permit.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,⁶ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics. The Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures to determine each ELA and math goal attainment. Because the Act requires charters be held “accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results”⁷ and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents”⁸ for other public schools, SUNY’s required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by state wide 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?; and,
- growth performance, i.e., how well did the school do in catching students up – and then keeping them up to grade level proficiency?

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

Because of testing changes made by the state, the Institute has since 2009 consistently de-emphasized the two absolute measures under each goal in schools’ Accountability Plans. The Institute continues to focus primarily on the two comparative measures and the growth measure while also considering any additional evidence the school presents using additional measures identified in its Accountability Plan. The Institute identifies the required measures (absolute

⁶ 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.

⁷ Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

⁸ Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

proficiency, absolute Annual Measurable Objective attainment,⁹ comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, and student growth) in the Performance Summaries appearing in the Appendix at the end of the report.

Academic Attainment.

Throughout Brooklyn Dreams' four-year Accountability Period, the school posted mixed performance relative to its Accountability Plan goals and measures. Brooklyn Dreams' ELA achievement demonstrates a generally positive trend, though the school did not meet its Accountability Plan goals in ELA. The school is located in CSD 22, a high performing CSD. During the charter term, the school performed lower than its local district overall though enrolled a higher percentage of students receiving free lunch, a proxy indicator for students at greater risk of academic failure. The school performed lower than expected in ELA while exhibiting a generally positive trend (see chart on page 10) compared to demographically similar schools statewide according to the Institute's effect size analysis. Brooklyn Dreams' absolute ELA performance ranked in the 26th percentile statewide during 2013-14, meaning 74 percent of schools throughout the state posted higher ELA performance; however, the school performed higher than 56 percent of schools throughout the state enrolling similar levels of economically disadvantaged students. The school's available growth data is limited and as such does not provide enough data points to make a trend determination. In ELA, the school's performance on this measure during 2012-13 and 2013-14 fell just short of the Institute's performance benchmark of the 50th percentile (the state's median growth).

Brooklyn Dreams submitted to the Institute an analysis of the school's student outcome data prepared by a third party independent policy analysis and program evaluation firm. The analysis provides information about the school's performance on additional measures to those included in its Accountability Plan. Notably, the school's ELA performance exceeded national norms as measured by Northwest Evaluation Association's ("NWEA's") Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP") assessment in 2nd grade through 6th grade. While performance on a nationally normed standardized test was not a goal included in the school's Accountability Plan, the additional data is helpful in assessing the school's outcomes. The school's performance measured on MAP trends generally positively and tracks with the school's performance against its Accountability Plan measures.

Brooklyn Dreams' performance in mathematics is also mixed. The school came close to meeting its mathematics goal during 2011-12 when it performed higher than expected compared to demographically similar schools statewide but fell short of outperforming its local school district. The school met its mathematics goal during 2012-13 when it performed higher than expected according to the Institute's effect size analysis and posted a growth score in the 53rd percentile (exceeding the state median growth score of 50). During 2013-14, Brooklyn Dreams' performance

⁹ While the state has recalibrated the absolute Annual Measurable Objective, the Institute only considers and reports on the 2013-14 results, not on those for 2012-13.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

in mathematics was higher than expected compared to demographically similar schools statewide, its growth in mathematics during that year fell just short of the state's median score and it did not meet or exceed the district's average performance. Controlling for the school's enrollment rate of economically disadvantaged students, the school scored higher than 16 (51 percent) of schools in its local district. Statewide, Brooklyn Dreams scored higher than 79 percent of schools enrolling similar levels of economically disadvantaged students.

The school provided additional data as to its performance in the MAP analysis described above. Brooklyn Dreams performed higher than national norms as measured by the MAP assessment for 2nd through 6th grades. The school's outcomes on the MAP trend generally positively and track with the school's performance against its Accountability Plan measures.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

DESCRIPTION	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL	MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL																				
<p>Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percent of students enrolled at the school in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in ELA and mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the local school district.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>ELA District Comparison Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>18</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage	2012	42	2013	33	2014	18	<table border="1"> <caption>Mathematics District Comparison Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>57</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>39</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Percentage	2012	57	2013	30	2014	39				
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2012	42																					
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2014	39																					
<p>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 and mathematics according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>ELA Effect Size Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Effect Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>-1.34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>-0.19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>0.27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>-0.08</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Effect Size	2011	-1.34	2012	-0.19	2013	0.27	2014	-0.08	<table border="1"> <caption>Mathematics Effect Size Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Effect Size</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>-0.81</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>0.13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>1.03</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>0.63</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Effect Size	2011	-0.81	2012	0.13	2013	1.03	2014	0.63
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<p>Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in ELA and mathematics.</p>	<table border="1"> <caption>ELA Mean Growth Percentile Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Mean Growth Percentile</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>49.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>45.4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Mean Growth Percentile	2013	49.9	2014	45.4	<table border="1"> <caption>Mathematics Mean Growth Percentile Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Mean Growth Percentile</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>53.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>43.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Mean Growth Percentile	2013	53.0	2014	43.0								
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RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

Instructional Leadership. Brooklyn Dreams continues to strengthen its instructional leadership. The school has in place and is using a number of instructional, assessment and professional development tools school-wide to strengthen consistency across the educational program. Brooklyn Dreams has several strong instructional components in place. The school's leadership team works to strengthen the implementation of its instructional coaching and professional development systems to ensure teachers receive coherent, sustained professional development. Teachers feel accountable for student achievement and the school rewards their work as student achievement growth is a component of the schools' evaluation system.

- While the school is aware of the 75% proficiency rating the Institute sets as a target for absolute achievement, Brooklyn Dreams promotes expectations for staged growth of student performance by setting realistic goals for student growth. For example, leaders communicate school-wide benchmarks of 40 percent proficiency in ELA and 50 percent proficiency in mathematics on state tests during weekly instructional coaching meetings. Leaders intentionally choose these benchmarks reflecting the need to set attainable goals that still promote academic growth amongst students.
- Brooklyn Dreams has an adequate number of instructional leaders to support teachers as they work to deliver quality instruction. The Institute noted improvement in the school's instructional program between its 2012 and 2014 visits, but identified the need for leaders to continue work on building coherence into instructional coaching that leads to consistent instructional effectiveness in all classrooms. In addition to the principal, three academic deans serve as instructional leaders. All four of these positions are refining coaching and observation systems focused on the development of teachers' pedagogical skills.
- Teachers attend weekly individual meetings with their corresponding instructional deans to discuss classroom observations, which deans also conduct weekly. This systematic approach to observation and feedback notwithstanding, instructional leaders remain challenged to precisely identify and build on or support the instructional strengths and weaknesses of particular teachers. Despite teacher reports of adequate supports, classroom observations conducted by the visit team and leader interviews showed that it is unclear if teacher strengths and weaknesses are identified and addressed consistently across the school. For example, while the principal identified a specific elementary level teacher as weak, another leader referenced this teacher as strong in instructional planning and lesson implementation.
- The school has in place systematic and sustained weekly grade level and individual meetings with deans to provide coaching and supervision with the goal of supporting teachers to improve instruction. While the school has appropriate structures in place, the effectiveness of the supports provided to staff vary in their strength. Brooklyn Dreams experienced high levels of staff turnover year-to-year. The school has yet to establish and sustain a strategy to retain teachers and therefore must implement a precise and consistently effective set of expectations and supports for instruction that mitigate against teacher turnover.
- NHA provides leaders with tools such as the teacher observation protocol and coaching meeting forms to tie observations to actual coaching and feedback, but in prior years the school implemented them inconsistently and to varying degrees of fidelity. At the time of

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

renewal, the tools were in use and all staff reported using them consistently indicating the school has implemented the system.

- The school also focuses on developing classroom management skills among the school's large number of new and struggling teachers. School leaders note that supporting teachers as they work to set a scholarly culture takes away from time that should be focused on instilling core pedagogical competencies in teachers and enabling them to boost student learning and achievement.
- The school provides teachers with one common period per week to plan curriculum and instruction across grade levels. Teachers have curricular tools that support the planning of instruction. Renewal visit interviews and observations indicate teachers require additional guidance in connecting the curriculum materials to the implementation of lessons.
- Brooklyn Dreams has not yet refined its professional development activities into a strategic and consistent approach to developing the competencies and skills of all teachers. Instructional leaders reported using classroom observations as the basis for the school's weekly professional development activities. However, the school's professional development program did not always clearly interrelate with classroom practice or precise analysis of student learning needs.
- Deans continue to conduct mid-year and end-of-year teacher evaluations, which the principal approves. Teachers reported understanding evaluation criteria and the process by which leaders evaluate their performance. The school also continues to hold teachers accountable for student achievement, with student growth scores factoring into teacher evaluation and determining bonuses and salary increases.

Curriculum and Assessment. Brooklyn Dreams implements curricular materials selected and augmented by NHA that align with what is required in state standards but do not consistently demand the rigor required to ensure students have the skills and knowledge to succeed on state measures. Brooklyn Dreams struggles to build out from materials provided to bridge between purchased instructional materials, curriculum frameworks and materials that support students in meeting the demands of state standards. The school has a number of assessments in place, but still works to integrate them into a useful system for tracking students and improving instruction.

- Brooklyn Dreams uses commercial materials (text books, leveled reading sets, etc.) selected by NHA along with the school's skeletal scope and sequence to support instruction. The school also continues to regularly administer assessments that align to its curriculum and state performance standards. These include weekly and unit assessments from commercial materials, in addition to other standardized, mock ELA and math assessments, provided by NHA.
- The school has a skeletal scope and sequence for each grade that schedules when teachers should delivery particular instructional chapters from the textbooks and other media the school has purchased and combined into its curriculum. The scope and sequence uses the standards that correlate to these chapters, however, teachers do not yet benefit from more in-depth documents (question guides, multiple strategies to diversify instruction for unique populations of students, etc.) to guide teachers in their daily planning. While leaders also

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

support teachers in writing lesson plans, leaders continue to work on the systematization of these supports and to explicitly link them to identified professional development needs. Deans assist some teachers directly in one-on-one meetings. Other teachers receive support from grade level colleagues, and yet other teachers reported writing plans without support.

- A small majority of teachers plan purposeful and focused lessons. At the time of the renewal visit, most lesson plans reviewed by the visit team contained objectives (an “I can” statement) that were either immeasurable or too broad to implement during the course of a daily lesson.
- Teachers receive some support in the use of curricular materials and report during interviews that they know what to teach and when to teach it. Lessons observed during the renewal visit revealed some gaps in poorly differentiated lesson activities, lack of strong questioning techniques, more teacher talk and teacher work than student work. School leaders have not yet addressed these opportunities to improve instruction with professional development or targeted coaching activities.
- Brooklyn Dreams has administered the same baseline assessment in the fall and spring of each school year and chose to add a second assessment in the last year of the charter. At the time of the renewal visit, Brooklyn Dreams had yet to implement this second baseline assessment for the 2014-15 school year to provide a comparison to the assessment results the school collects throughout the year. The Institute notes that early baseline assessments support a school’s ability to appropriately adjust scope and sequences to address student gaps and to make systematic, data driven decisions regarding the review and revision of curricular materials.
- The school continues to use the online NHA portal, which helps schools and teachers share formative and other student assessment data with other NHA schools. However, some teachers reported not having access to the portal, which includes student performance on state tests.
- The renewal visit team found no evidence of the disaggregation of state test results by student subgroups. The school continues to work to create systems to train or guide teachers in using assessment data to impact student learning, to help create school-wide professional development activities and to assess overall teacher strengths and weaknesses.
- Brooklyn Dreams continues to communicate student academic progress to parents through the distribution of report cards four times a year. Additionally, parents can regularly check student grades by accessing the school’s online portal.

Pedagogy. Instruction at Brooklyn Dreams has improved over the term of the charter but has yet to prepare all students to meet grade-level performance standards. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 25 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all renewal visits.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION METHODOLOGY: NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS

		GRADE							Total
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	
CONTENT AREA	Math		2	2		3	3	2	12
	ELA	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	11
	Writing				1				1
	Science				1				1
	Soc Stu								
	Specials								
	Total		1	6	4	3	4	4	3

- A small majority of teachers consistently deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school’s curriculum (14 out of 25 classrooms observed). Most teachers observed at the time of the renewal visit presented big concept areas such as daily objectives that were too broad and at times made it difficult to assess how solid students are in deploying new knowledge and skills.
- Teachers are beginning to use techniques that could gauge student understanding, but fail to follow through with those techniques during lessons (19 out of 25 classrooms observed). For example, most teachers circulated the classroom, but do not consistently monitor student work and adjust instruction to reflect student misunderstandings. The lack of consistency in monitoring student work products also impacts lesson pacing as teachers may not recognize when they should move on or slow down based on student understanding of individual work. For example, although some ELA teachers used read aloud activities as an instructional strategy, most teachers moved forward without asking any questions to determine whether or not students are on track to mastering the daily objective.
- Teachers have access to curricular materials that include opportunities for higher order-thinking and problem solving skills. A majority of lessons observed during the renewal visit did not reveal those resources were used with great effectiveness (19 out of 25 classrooms observed). In one class, a teacher distributed a higher-order worksheet that provided a good basis for a higher-order thinking activity, but delivered the lesson in a lecture format limiting students ability to engage with the activity and also leaving little opportunity for peer-to-peer interaction or even whole-group participation in which students are able to elaborate on their findings. This example also underscores the school’s need to strengthen teachers’ questioning skill as well as the consistency with which students do the speaking, thinking and intellectual lifting during lessons.
- Classroom management issues rarely interfered with the delivery of lessons across classrooms (17 out of 25 observed classrooms evidenced no management issues). Most teachers maintained a focus on lesson activities and classroom assignments. Despite two-

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thirds of classrooms observed maintaining this focus, only one-third of teachers communicated a sense of urgency for learning; 80 percent of observed classrooms evidenced slow lesson pacing during the renewal visit.

At-Risk Students. Brooklyn Dreams effectively addresses the educational needs of at-risk students. The school has sufficient processes to identify students with disabilities, ELLs and students who are struggling academically. Brooklyn Dreams relies primarily on pull-out interventions and does not provide extensive professional development activities that focus on classroom teachers' abilities to serve the full range of students within the general education setting. However, specialists and classroom teachers collaborate on a regular basis to plan instruction. The school systematically monitors the progress of students receiving academic interventions.

- Teachers are well aware of the process for accessing additional academic services for their students. For students who are struggling academically, teachers initiate intervention services with a referral to the school's intervention assistance team ("IAT"). The four special education teachers, a dean and one general education teacher comprise the standing membership of the IAT; other teachers and deans participate as needed.
- Interventions are fluid; the IAT monitors students' progress in six-week cycles. Students who have made adequate progress move out of interventions but may re-enter if performance dips. If a student has not made adequate progress (as assessed by classroom test performance, standardized assessment results and teachers' observations), the IAT develops additional instructional plans and monitors progress for an additional six weeks. According to specialists, Brooklyn Dreams rarely refers students for special education services prior to the completion of two to three monitoring cycles.
- Four special education teachers, one of whom serves as the administrative coordinator, provide pull-out services for 68 (12.1 percent of the school's overall enrollment during 2014-15) students with Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") and collaborate with classroom teachers to align instructional activities. The specialists attend weekly grade level planning meetings with classroom teachers during which they discuss individual students' progress and needs as well as provide suggestions for differentiating lessons.
- Brooklyn Dreams continues to provide effective supports for ELLs. An English as a Second-Language teacher provides pull-out services for the school's 29 (or 5.1 percent of the school's overall enrollment) ELLs. Students' past performance on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test ("NYSESLAT") demonstrates the program's effectiveness: 13 of 21 students advanced at least one level during the 2013-14 school year and nine students met English proficiency standards.
- Brooklyn Dreams provides few opportunities for teachers to build skills that they can utilize to support students with disabilities and ELLs within general education classrooms. Teachers had not participated in targeted professional development activities as of the time of the renewal visit. Because so many of the school's teachers are inexperienced, this lack of training may result in at-risk students' decreased access to the full educational program.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Enrollment (N) Receiving Mandated Academic Services	(34)	(63)	(68)
Tested on State Exams (N)	(19)	(28)	(46)
RESULTS			
Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	15.8	0	6.5
Percent Proficient Statewide	15.5	5.0	5.2

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
ELL Enrollment (N)	(10)	(13)	(19)
Tested on NYSESLAT¹⁰ Exam (N)	(12)	(11)	(19)
RESULTS			
Percent 'Proficient' or Making Progress¹¹ on NYSESLAT	N/A	18.2	42.1

¹⁰ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.

¹¹ Defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into four categories/proficiency levels: Beginning; Intermediate; Advanced; and, Proficient.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Brooklyn Dreams is an effective and viable organization. The education corporation board carries out its oversight responsibilities adequately and states that it receives adequate support from NHA for the academic program. Thus, the school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program but needs a greater sense of urgency with respect to improved student performance and financial support for the academic program. During the current charter term, the board, with certain minor exceptions, has been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, by-laws, applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board Oversight. While the Brooklyn Dreams board is in general and substantial compliance with all of its oversight responsibilities, over the charter term, the board has not acted with urgency to significantly improve student learning and achievement. The board has yet to establish long-term priorities or processes to hold the school leader, the management organization and itself accountable for improved student achievement outcomes.

- Board members possess a range of skills and areas of expertise relevant to school governance including finance, law and education and use these areas to guide the school. In the last two years of the charter, the board has begun to organize to fully leverage these skills to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals. For example, the board receives academic and operational reports from both NHA and the principal monthly but has not used these reports to hold either accountable for results.
- The board takes ad hoc action based on requests from the school leader and recommendations from NHA but has not set long-term priorities during the charter term. As has been the case throughout the charter term, the board does not establish systems to oversee and evaluate the effectiveness of key components of the school organization, causing it to set less robust priorities and not thoroughly probe student achievement and teacher professional development data, mainly in reaction to student performance on state tests and staffing needs.
- The board recognizes that low teacher retention continues to hinder the effectiveness of the academic program. Although it reported that both uncompetitive salaries and the replacement of the school leader in the middle of the charter term caused teachers to leave over the course of the school's existence, the board continued to function without a plan to address current concerns around teacher attrition and to assist the school leader in establishing staff stability at the school.
- The board has not prioritized setting standards for NHA's support of the school leader, as can be seen through its lack of full review of NHA's formal evaluation of the principal.
- The Brooklyn Dreams board did not set measurable performance goals for itself, the school leader or the management organization. The board had no systematic process to evaluate the school leader, having only informal conversations about performance expectations and goals. The board understands the need for scores to improve, but did not communicate

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

expectations in regards to student performance targets and failed to set clear benchmarks that the principal is responsible for meeting.

- While the board members communicated specific expectations for NHA with respect to operational, financial and hiring functions, the board failed to do so in other areas. The board expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by NHA but did not have a formal tool to evaluate the quality of those services or link them to the quality of student academic performance. These processes proved to be ineffective in enabling the board to hold the principal or NHA accountable for student achievement.

Organizational Capacity. Brooklyn Dreams continues to develop an organizational structure to support the delivery of the educational program. Having experienced considerable teacher turnover late in the charter term, the school has taken steps to incentivize teachers to remain with the school.

- The school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow it to carry out its academic program. Brooklyn Dreams has revised its administrative structure during the charter term in response to staff and student needs.
- The school has experienced high levels of teacher turnover in the past two years. Following the 2013-14 school year, eight out of 28 teachers chose to leave the school. This turnover leading into the current school year resulted in late hiring for some positions and a largely inexperienced teaching team. NHA has a system in place to conduct exit interviews, but the school and the management organization appear to struggle to use this information to create a more strategic hiring and retention plan. While some degree of turnover is expected – and sometimes beneficial – the rate at Brooklyn Dreams directly impacts students with interruptions to instruction. During the 2013-14 school year, 6th grade students had three different teachers in a core content area.
- Brooklyn Dreams is a positive learning environment with students' multi-media artwork saturating bulletin boards and stairways. A well-established and consistently applied student discipline system is in place; it is clearly effective in the majority of classrooms across the school. Every class has a social contract in place to communicate expectations for respectful community participation.
- The school generally allocates sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals. Classroom teachers report having adequate instructional resources to support student learning. Brooklyn Dreams has not yet responded to the need for increased professional development for its new staff with additional resource allocations. Taken together with a proposed increase in rent proposed in the original renewal application, the Institute decided to add terms to the education corporation's charter to ensure proper funding for the educational program.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER & PARENT SATISFACTION

As part of their initial applications and their Applications for Charter Renewal, schools identify the Key Design Elements that reflect their mission and distinguish the schools. The table below reflects the intended Key Design Elements and indicates for each if the school is implementing the element as included in the school’s charter.

Key Design Elements	Evident?
Character Development;	+
Academic Excellence; and,	-
Accountability	-

Parent Satisfaction. The Institute compiled data from the New York City Department of Education’s (the “NYCDOE’s”) 2013-14 NYC School Survey. The NYCDOE distributes the survey to families each year to compile data about school culture, instruction, and systems for improvement. Results from 2013-14 indicate parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school; however, the survey response rate is sufficiently low that it does not constitute a group that is representative of the school community.

2013-14
Response Rate: 18%
Instructional Core: 83%
Systems for Improvement: 85%
School Culture: 90%

Persistence in Enrollment. The Institute derived the following statistical information from its database. No comparative data from NYCDOE or the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) is available to the Institute to provide either district wide or by CSD comparison. As such, the data presented is for information purposes but does not allow for comparative analysis.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Percent of Eligible Students Returning From Previous Year ¹²	84.9	88.5	92.0

¹² The Institute calculated these statistics using the school’s 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 BEDS reports.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

COMPLIANCE

Governance. In material respects, the board has implemented, and abides by, adequate and appropriate policies, systems and procedures to ensure governance and oversight of the school with the exception in establishing and measuring clear goals for the academic program as noted above. The board demonstrates an understanding of its role in holding both the school leadership and NHA accountable for academic results and fiscal soundness, but needs to practice stronger oversight with respect to both in the area of student achievement.

- The board uses a committee structure that includes education, audit/compliance and finance standing committees. The education committee receives specific, detailed academic information from the school leadership.
- The board minutes reflect trustee attendance at meetings including telephonic participation, but do not specify that those participating by telephone do not count toward quorum and are not counted in board votes.
- The board appears to have materially complied with the terms of its by-laws.

Legal Requirements. The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter with certain, minor exceptions.

- While the Institute received a few informal complaints related to student discipline and records access, the Institute found no violations of law or policy.

The Institute found exceptions to the school's general compliance in the following areas. In all areas noted below, the Institute will work with the school to ensure all issues are addressed in a future charter term.

- **Open Meetings Law.** The board takes adequate minutes but as noted above, needs to include some further relevant detail to demonstrate compliance with the New York Public Officers Law.
- **Code of Ethics.** The education corporation's Code of Ethics did not conform to the current requirements of the New York General Municipal Law.
- **By-laws.** Minor provisions of the education corporation's by-laws related to committees and meeting notices do not comply with the New York Education Law and/or Not-For-Profit Corporation Law.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on evidence collected in the renewal review, Brooklyn Dreams is fiscally sound but the Institute has identified a need for greater oversight of resources flowing to the educational program and irregularities surrounding sales tax charges on purchases made by NHA on behalf of the school. The education corporation engages in a management agreement with NHA, a for-profit charter management organization. The management agreement is considered a “sweep contract,” whereby NHA provides a facility and then makes contributions to cover any shortfalls and sweeps any profits. The education corporation has successfully managed cash flow and has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. However, the renewal application and other evidence demonstrated that that board needed to exercise greater diligence in securing funds for the educational program. As a result, the Institute will add terms to the proposed renewal charter to not allow an increase in the rent (paid to NHA) and to keep funding for the core educational program at current levels or higher. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard,¹³ a multi-year financial data and analysis for SUNY authorized charter schools appears below in the Appendix.

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning. Throughout the charter term, Brooklyn Dreams has maintained fiscal soundness by implementing effective budgeting practices and routine monitoring of revenues and expenses. Net assets each year consist of the modest Board Reserve, which is reserved on an annual basis, up to \$35,000 and to be spent at the education corporation’s discretion on the academic program activities and initiatives beyond what is provided by NHA’s academic program.

- The education corporation development of annual budgets includes a projected budget provided by NHA to the education corporation board. The budgets contain reasonable assumptions and detail as requested by the board in accordance with normal charter school budgetary procedures and guidelines. Within the framework of the NHA management contract, the budget process and negotiations surrounding same with NHA, constitute the key factors for the board to provide an effective educational program.
- NHA receives all revenues as its gross management fee from which it pays all operating costs of the school contained in the budget approved by the board. In the fourth year of operation, the school reached its break-even point and NHA no longer needs to make contributions to cover shortfalls.
- NHA, on behalf of Brooklyn Dreams, prepares monthly financial reports that include a budget-versus-actual-expenditure report with major assumptions.
- Throughout the year, the budget may be revised to reflect changes in actual enrollment and ensure that the budget covers all costs necessary to provide the academic program. The board determines if additional resources are necessary to meet the expectations of the program, and then must discuss/negotiate same with NHA to fund same.

¹³ 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.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

- The Institute identified the facility lease costs contained in the projected five year budget as a financial concern in discussions with the board. NHA holds the master lease for the facility and then leases the premises to the charter school through June 30, 2015 with renewable one year terms. The New York State Comptroller issued a recent audit report on another NHA managed chartered school and identified the facility rent charged by NHA as the landlord to be unreasonably high and without any fair market analysis. In that situation the rent was lowered for the future term. The Institute has required the board exercise adequate oversight over the school's fiscal affairs and determine the value of the lease to be a reasonable use of public funds and ensure that the academic program has sufficient funding to sustain a rigorous program. The board states that it plans to conduct an independent fair-market analysis regarding the cost of the future lease. The Institute will add a term to the charter agreement to make certain the rent does not increase during the charter term except with respect to pass-through costs from the building's owner, and the Institute will monitor the budget allocations of facility costs and academic program costs to ensure that the program is sustainable and receives no less percentage of the budget for the duration of the charter term.,
- The Institute has identified irregularities surrounding NHA's accounting system that includes sales tax charges being included and paid by NHA on purchases for the school for curriculum materials, books, supplies, equipment and purchased services and the sales tax charges are being categorized as standard expense items and not identified as sales tax. The Institute required that the board promptly obtain its New York State Sales Tax Exemption Certificate and that NHA follow tax exemption guidelines. The Institute further required that the board and NHA arrive at an agreement on the value of sales tax that has been contained within the school budget line items since the school opened in 2010-2011 and that the school board recover from NHA the funds to be directed to the academic program, monitored by the board. Board counsel and the Institute are in discussion regarding changes that are needed to rectify the sales tax issue.
- The education corporation submitted a revised budget to the Institute that reflected adjustments to the academic program to include the addition of the Dean of Intervention, increased salaries, increased curriculum development, increased software and technology, increased training, professional development and staff recruiting/marketing.

Internal Controls. Brooklyn Dreams has established and maintains appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and controls, with the exception of the sales tax issue. Written policies address key issues including financial reporting, revenues, procurement, expenditures, payroll, banking, capital assets, and record retention. NHA has contractual responsibility for the following fiscal operations: assisting with budget development, preparing monthly financial statements, recording and tracking income and expenses related to all grants and contracts, recording all accounts payable invoices and cash receipts, preparing all vendor checks, reconciling checking accounts each month, providing and maintaining payroll services, and interfacing with the school's independent external auditor.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

- Brooklyn Dreams has accurately recorded and appropriately documented transactions in accordance with established policies, except as noted above, the recording and payment of sales tax on purchases on behalf of the school. These policies are comprehensive and updated as needed on an annual basis.
- Brooklyn Dreams ensures that key staff members receive appropriate professional development in operations and financial management. The sales tax issue, noted above, was an exception where greater internal controls were needed.
- Brooklyn Dreams' most recent audit reports of internal controls related to financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations and grants, disclosed no material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance. As previously noted, the Institute found irregularities within NHA's accounting system with respect to the charging of sales tax.

Financial Reporting. Brooklyn Dreams has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and NYSED with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP").

- Brooklyn Dreams presents its annual financial statements in accordance with GAAP and the independent audits of those statements have received unqualified opinions.
- Brooklyn Dreams has generally filed key reports timely and accurately including audit reports, budgets, cash-flow statements, unaudited reports of income, expenses and enrollment.

Financial Condition. Brooklyn Dreams maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- Brooklyn Dreams has posted low composite-score ratings on the Institute's financial dashboard consistent with the nature of the sweep contract over the charter contract term.¹⁴
- Brooklyn Dreams has a facility lease that shall expire June 30, 2015 with renewable one year terms. The board identified their intentions to stay in the same facility as it meets the academic program needs going forward through the next charter term.
- The Institute identified the facility lease costs as a financial concern in discussions with the board. NHA holds the master lease for the facility and NHA then leases the premises to the charter school through June 30, 2015 with renewable one year terms. The board has not conducted a fair-market analysis regarding the cost of the lease. Through additional terms in the proposed renewal charter, noted above, the Institute will receive a fair market value of the lease, and ensure rent levels remain at or below current levels.
- SUNY charter agreements have changed to include a required \$75,000 Dissolution Reserve Fund for the purpose of covering legal and administrative costs associated with the

¹⁴ The composite score assists in measuring the financial health of an education corporation using a blended score that measures the school's performances on key financial indicators. The blended score offsets financial strengths against areas where there may be financial weaknesses.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

closure/dissolution of a school. To be funded, at a minimum, by reserving twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) per year during the first three years of the charter term. The funds need to be identified in the financial statements and audit report notes to the financial statements.

The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard, provided in the Appendix, presents color coded tables and charts indicating that Brooklyn Dreams has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of its charter term.

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

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

To the extent that Brooklyn Dreams posted mixed results relative to its academic Accountability Plan goals and the school has in place a sufficiently strong educational program that supports achieving those goals, operates as an effective and viable organization and the education corporation is fiscally sound, the plans to implement the educational program as proposed during the next 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.

MISSION FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM

The mission of Brooklyn Dreams Charter School is to offer the families of Brooklyn a school with a culture that values integrity, academic excellence and accountability, where all students are given the opportunity for success in high school, college and beyond by offering an academically rigorous and challenging K-8 educational program.

Plans for the Educational Program. Brooklyn Dreams plans to continue to make adjustments to its educational program, specifically in ELA where the school has historically struggled. The program will expand to serve eighth grade students in its private facility.

	Current Charter Term	End of Next Charter Term
Enrollment	574	704
Grade Span	K-7	K-8
Teaching Staff	30 (Grades K-7)	40 (Grades K-8)
Days of Instruction	181	181

Plans for Board Oversight and Governance. Board members express an interest in continuing to serve Brooklyn Dreams in the next charter term and may add additional members in the future.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. The education corporation has presented a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the term of the next charter including budgets that are feasible and achievable with

RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS

the additional terms the Institute will add to its charter. Brooklyn Dreams plans to remain in its current private facility.

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. The school has amended or will amend other key aspects of the renewal application -- including bylaws and code of ethics -- to comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

The mission of Brooklyn Dreams Charter School is to offer the families of Brooklyn a school with a culture that values integrity, academic excellence and accountability, where all students are given the opportunity for success in high school, college and beyond by offering an academically rigorous and challenging K-8 educational program.

Board of Trustees¹⁵

Board Member Name	Position
Richard Conti	President
Joanne Oplustil	Vice-President
Michael Leit	Treasurer
Michele Morais-Weekes	Secretary
Katherine O'Neill	Trustee
Tamara Charles	Trustee
Michele Scotto	Trustee

School Characteristics

School Year	Proposed Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹⁶	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
2010-11	196	193	K-3	K-3
2011-12	248	244	K-4	K-4
2012-13	418	414	K-5	K-5
2013-14	496	491	K-6	K-6
2014-15	574	564	K-7	K-7

¹⁵ Institute Board Records at the time of the renewal review.

¹⁶ Source: The Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Student Demographics

	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14 ¹⁷
	% of School Enrollment	% of NYC CSD 22 Enrollment	% of School Enrollment	% of NYC CSD 22 Enrollment ¹⁸	% of School Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	1	0	1
Black or African American	69	41	65	39	66
Hispanic	21	14	20	14	18
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	5	17	9	17	11
White	3	27	2	28	2
Multiracial	2	0	2	0	2
Special Populations					
Students with Disabilities	14	13	14	14	12
English Language Learners	4	11	4	11	4
Free/Reduced Lunch					
Eligible for Free Lunch	77	58	74	49	-- ¹⁹
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	9	9	9	7	--
Economically Disadvantaged	88	74	80	73	58

School Leaders

School Year(s)	Name(s) and Title(s)
2010-2011 to 2011-12	Yvette Wilds, Principal
2012-13 to Present	Letta Belle, Principal

¹⁷ The Institute derived the 2013-14 Students with Disabilities, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics from the school's October 2013 student enrollment report to NYSED (2013-14 BEDS Report). District data are not yet available. Because NYSED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

¹⁸ The Institute derived the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school and district enrollment data from the corresponding New York State report cards.

¹⁹ School FRPL enrollment data for 2013-14 are not available.

APPENDIX: SCHOOL OVERVIEW

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2010-11	First Year Visit	Institute	March 22, 2011
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	Institute	March 19-20, 2012
2012-13	Informal Visit	Institute	January 29, 2013
2014-15	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	October 15-16, 2014

Conduct of the Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
October 15-16, 2014	Aaron Campbell	Senior Analyst
	Natasha Howard, PhD	Managing Director of Program
	Jenn David-Lang	Consultant

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

Brooklyn Dreams Charter School

SCHOOL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 2
Grants and Contracts Receivable
Accounts Receivable
Prepaid Expenses
Contributions and Other Receivables

Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2

Property, Building and Equipment, net

Other Assets

Total Assets - GRAPH 2

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 2

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2

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 - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 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 - GRAPH 1

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1

Opened 2010-11					
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2	-	486,286	297,645	183,231	281,508
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	-	25,893	23,731	21,812
Other Assets	-	-	-	-	-
Total Assets - GRAPH 2	-	486,286	323,538	206,962	303,320
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	451,286	249,982	163,969	258,537
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	451,286	249,982	163,969	258,537
Total Net Assets	-	35,000	73,556	42,993	44,783
Unrestricted	-	35,000	73,556	42,993	44,783
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	-	35,000	73,556	42,993	44,783
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	-	486,286	323,538	206,962	303,320
Total Operating Revenue	-	3,280,391	4,002,003	6,229,904	7,349,894
Resident Student Enrollment	-	2,611,726	3,322,285	5,570,730	6,647,560
Students with Disabilities	-	56,886	128,695	127,174	183,742
Grants and Contracts	-	-	-	-	-
State and local	-	95,703	31,367	-	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	109,690	109,857	313,415	261,762
Federal - Other	-	248,252	271,326	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	158,134	138,473	218,585	256,830
Total Expenses - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 4	-	5,518,688	5,744,304	6,713,634	7,371,787
Regular Education	-	4,799,847	4,941,715	5,803,122	6,303,149
SPED	-	194,572	353,346	343,782	407,919
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Services	-	4,994,419	5,295,061	6,146,904	6,711,068
Management and General	-	524,269	449,243	566,730	660,719
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	-	(2,238,297)	(1,742,301)	(483,730)	(21,893)
Total Support and Other Revenue	-	2,273,297	1,780,857	453,167	23,683
Contributions	-	2,243,088	1,770,625	436,431	-
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	30,209	10,232	16,736	23,683
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
Total Unrestricted Revenue	-	5,553,688	5,782,860	6,683,071	7,373,577
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue - GRAPH 1	-	5,553,688	5,782,860	6,683,071	7,373,577
Change in Net Assets	-	35,000	38,556	(30,563)	1,790
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1	-	-	35,000	73,556	42,993
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1	-	35,000	73,556	42,993	44,783

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



Brooklyn Dreams Charter School

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	296,048	225,139	348,509	427,698
Instructional Personnel	-	720,618	902,639	1,472,716	1,900,214
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	24,753	166,896	47,875	59,048
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	-	1,041,419	1,294,674	1,869,100	2,386,960
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	229,197	313,905	480,056	525,023
Retirement	-	13,043	24,350	31,484	35,959
Management Company Fees	-	150,301	167,552	249,990	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	2,445,245	2,364,757	2,364,757	2,364,757
Staff Development	-	109,744	80,878	81,140	78,443
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	221,025	311,531	322,326	405,165
Marketing / Recruitment	-	17,538	25,880	35,770	59,038
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	629,825	308,678	310,928	294,495
Depreciation	-	-	2,162	2,162	2,904
Other	-	661,351	849,937	965,921	1,219,043
Total Expenses	-	5,518,688	5,744,304	6,713,634	7,371,787

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Chartered Enroll	-	196	248	418	496
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	-	193	244	414	491
Chartered Grades	Planning	K-3	K-4	K-5	K-6
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District: 1001

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	9,084	10,196	11,023	12,443	12,443
Increase over prior year	5.8%	12.2%	8.1%	12.9%	0.0%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term
Revenue						
Operating	-	16,997	16,402	15,061	14,979	15,860
Other Revenue and Support	-	11,779	7,299	1,096	48	5,055
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	28,776	23,700	16,157	15,027	20,915
Expenses						
Program Services	-	25,878	21,701	14,860	13,677	19,029
Management and General, Fundraising	-	2,716	1,841	1,370	1,347	1,819
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	28,594	23,542	16,231	15,023	20,848
% of Program Services	0.0%	90.5%	92.2%	91.6%	91.0%	91.3%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	9.5%	7.8%	8.4%	9.0%	8.7%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	0.0%	0.6%	0.7%	-0.5%	0.0%	0.3%

Student to Faculty Ratio

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	-	13.8	17.4	18.8	-

Faculty to Admin Ratio

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	-	4.7	4.7	7.3	-

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	0.0	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.6
	N/A	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Net Working Capital	0	35,000	47,663	19,262	22,971	31,224
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	0.0	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1
	N/A	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	0.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.8
	N/A	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor

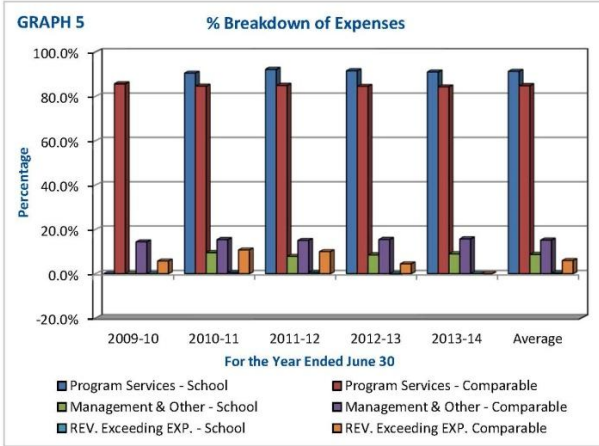
APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD



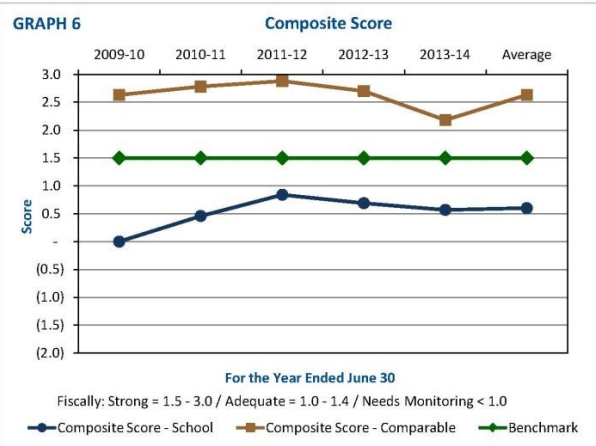
Brooklyn Dreams Charter School

Comparable School, Region or Network: New York City & Long Island Schools

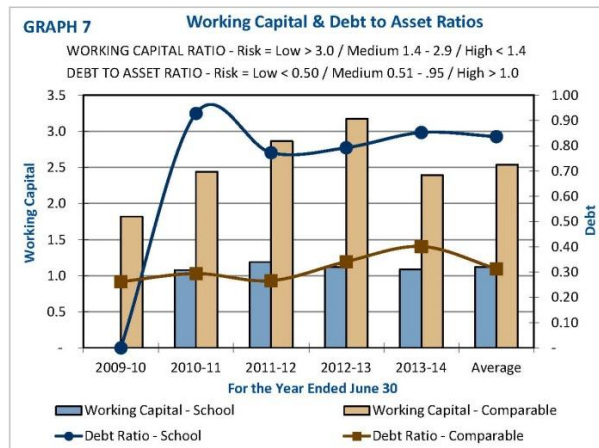
* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term



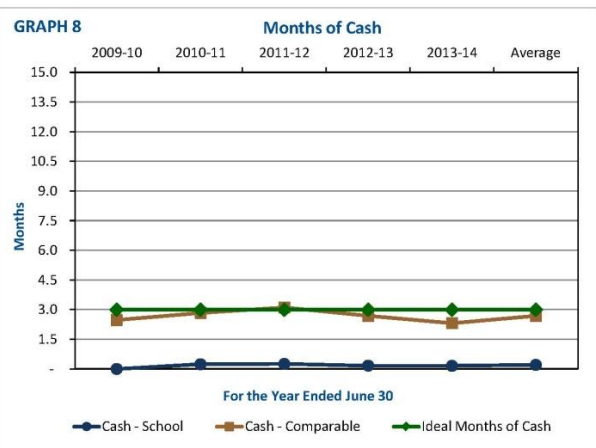
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding 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. W/C indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. Debt to Asset 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.



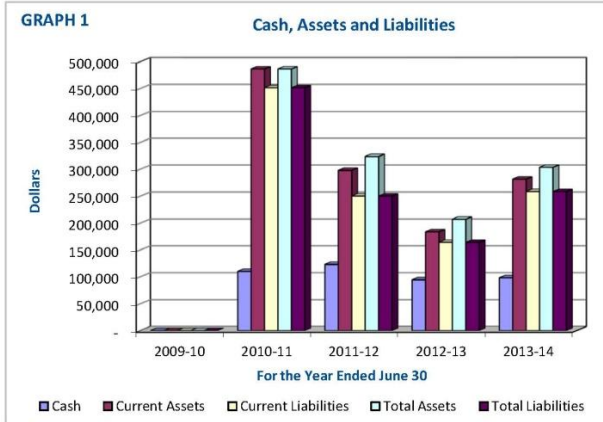
This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash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

APPENDIX: FISCAL DASHBOARD

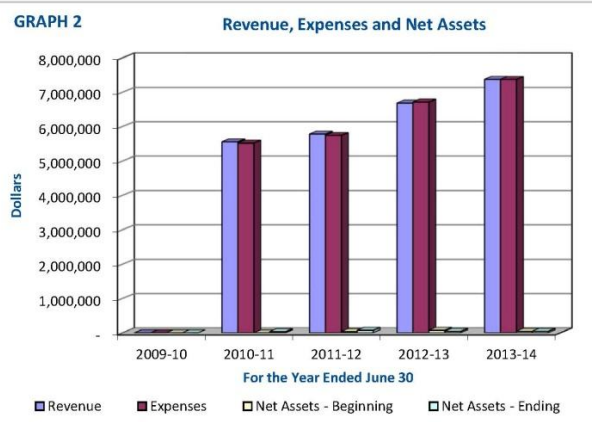


Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

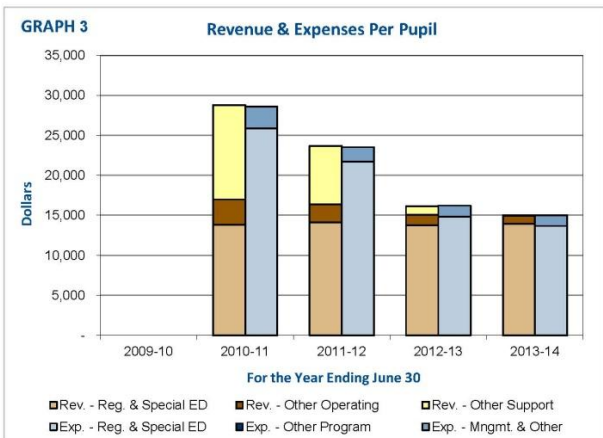
Brooklyn Dreams Charter School



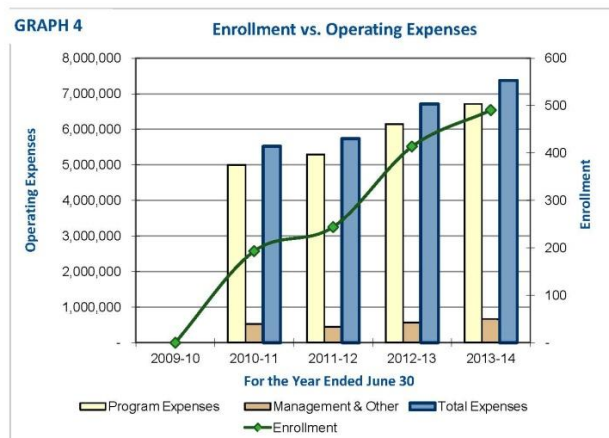
This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year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



This chart illustrates the 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 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: PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts Brooklyn Dreams Charter School



	2011-12 Grades Served: K-4			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-5			MET	2013-14 Grades Served: K-6			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)				
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 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	40.4 (52)	38.8 (49)	NO	3	27.3 (77)	27.9 (43)	NA	3	21.5 (79)	22.2 (63)	NA			
	4	39.2 (51)	45.2 (42)		4	17.3 (52)	16.7 (42)		4	19.2 (73)	23.7 (59)				
	5	(0)	(0)		5	11.8 (51)	10.6 (47)		5	15.4 (52)	11.6 (43)				
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	9.8 (51)	11.1 (45)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	39.8 (103)	41.8 (91)		All	20.0 (180)	18.2 (132)		All	17.3 (255)	18.1 (210)				
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	PI	AMO	NO	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO	NA			
	3-4	132	135		3-5	82	3-6		85	89					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 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 22			NO	Comparison: Brooklyn District 22			NO	Comparison: Brooklyn District 22			NO			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3-4	41.8	58.0		3-5	18.2	33.4		3-6	18.1	34.5				
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.	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO
	76.7	39.8	42.9	-0.19		90.1	20.1	17.4	0.27		89.4	17.3	18.6	-0.08	
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO			
	4				4	51.9			4	44.8					
	5				5	48.2			5	43.0					
	6				6	0.0			6	48.4					
	7				7	0.0			7	0.0					
	8				8	0.0			8	0.0					
	All		50.0		All	49.9	50.0		All	45.4	50.0				

APPENDIX: PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Brooklyn Dreams Charter School



	2011-12 Grades Served: K-4			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-5			MET	2013-14 Grades Served: K-6			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)				
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 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	57.7 (52)	57.1 (49)	NO	3	55.8 (77)	53.5 (43)	NA	3	46.8 (79)	47.6 (63)	NA			
	4	52.9 (51)	57.1 (42)		4	32.7 (52)	28.6 (42)		4	32.9 (73)	40.7 (59)				
	5	(0)	(0)		5	7.8 (51)	8.5 (47)		5	40.4 (52)	37.2 (43)				
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	27.5 (51)	26.7 (45)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	55.3 (103)	57.1 (91)		All	35.6 (180)	29.5 (132)		All	37.6 (255)	39.0 (210)				
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	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO	NA			
	3-4	150	148		3-5	111	3-6		115	86					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 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 22			NO	Comparison: Brooklyn District 22			NO	Comparison: Brooklyn District 22			NO			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3-4	57.1	67.0		3-5	29.5	37.8		3-6	39.0	42.8				
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.	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES
	76.7	55.3	52.8	0.13		90.1	35.6	20.6	1.03		89.4	37.6	26.5	0.63	
GROWTH MEASURE 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	YES	Grades	School	State	NO			
	4				4	52.7			4	24.6					
	5				5	53.3			5	47.5					
	6				6	0.0			6	64.7					
	7				7	0.0			7	0.0					
	8				8	0.0			8	0.0					
	All				All	53.0	50.0		All	43.0	50.0				