



June 20, 2012

VIA ELECTRONIC AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Ms. Mary Claire Ryan
Chair, Board of Trustees
C/o Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York
442 East Houston Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10002

Re: Final School Evaluation Report

Dear Ms. Ryan:

Enclosed you will find the Charter Schools Institute's final report of its site visit to Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York, conducted on November 1, 2011. Earlier, the Institute provided a draft of this report for your review allowing you the opportunity to provide factual corrections and/or other comments.

As you know, this report is part of the State University of New York's charter school monitoring process. The report contains conclusions about your school's progress toward fulfilling its charter provisions. The State University of New York Trustees will use the information contained in this report if, and when, the school chooses to seek renewal. As an independent and autonomous public school, it is up to the school to take the necessary steps to fulfill the terms of its charter. As always, we stand ready to assist you in any way appropriate.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this report or wish to discuss it in detail.

Sincerely,

Susan Miller Barker
Executive Director

Ron Miller
Vice President for Accountability

Enclosure

c: Ms. Anne Lackritz, Elementary School Principal
Ms. Kaitlin Seaver, Middle School Principal

To Learn
To Search
To Serve



Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York

School Evaluation Report 2011-2012

Visit Date: November 1, 2011

Report Issued: June 20, 2012

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State University of New York
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INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes three components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. Finally, in a third section entitled School Evaluation Visit, the report presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks.

The Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) address the academic success of the school, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization, including board oversight and organizational capacity. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides more detailed conclusions, and evidence to support these conclusions, for some benchmarks in order to highlight areas of concern and provide additional feedback. In contrast to the format of reports issued in previous years and in an effort to issue reports in a timelier manner, the Institute now approaches the presentation as an exception report and deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive aspects of the program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of a school organization, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. However, it does summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	January 27, 2004
Date Initial Charter Approved by Board of Regents	March 24, 2004
School Opening Date	August 24, 2005

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2005-06 to 2007-08	333 East 4 th Street, New York, NY	All	New York CSD 1
2008-09 to 2009-10	442 East Houston St, New York, NY	All	New York CSD 1
2010-11 to Present	442 East Houston Street, New York, NY 420 E. 12 th Street, New York, NY	K-4 5-7	New York CSD 1

Current Mission Statement

The mission of Girls Prep is to prepare New York City's girls to graduate from college and succeed in life. Girls Prep girls will embody the core values of scholarship, merit, responsibility and sisterhood and use these values to guide their choices. Girls Prep will graduate scholars who meet or exceed New York State Performance Standards and are active citizens who learn and serve in their communities.

Current Key Design Elements

• High academic standards in a college preparatory environment;
• A longer school day and year;
• A maximum of 25 students per classroom;
• A rigorous educational approach stressing basic skills, literacy, reading comprehension, critical thinking, math, science and social studies;
• A balanced education including music, art, physical education and character development as well
• as academic rigor;
• Extensive professional development for teachers, academic specialists provide support, leadership pipeline from teaching fellow to principal
• School uniforms for students and a dress code for teachers
• Clearly articulated and consistently upheld behavior standards
• Accountability for academic performance as well as attendance and adherence to the uniform policy
• Not labeling students, but rather allowing their individual learning styles to be understood though not used as an excuse;
• Strong school values – scholarship, merit, sisterhood and responsibility
• Holding students accountable for their behavior and progress and celebrating their individual accomplishments
• Students are taught good habits regarding nutrition and physical exercise
• A focus on ethics and personal responsibility; and
• The school is committed to encouraging parental involvement, including classroom volunteers and board representation.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2005-06	80	90	85	K-1	K-1	186
2006-07	140	155	127	K-2	K-2	186
2007-08	200	177	173	K-3	K-3	186
2008-09	260	214	215	K-4	K-4	186
2009-10	248	-	261	K-5	K-5	186
2010-11	342	-	367	K-6	K-6	186
2011-12	412	-	453	K-7	K-7	186

Demographics²

	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 1 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 1 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 1 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	1	0	1	0	1
Black or African American	50	19	56	19	46	18
Hispanic	46	48	41	47	31	45
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	19	1	20	1	21
White	3	13	2	14	1	15
Multiracial	0	0	0	0	21	0
Special Populations						
Students with Disabilities ³	4	N/A	7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Limited English Proficient	1	12	2	12	2	12
Free/Reduced Lunch						
Eligible for Free Lunch	53	58	50	62	56	61
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	20	8	13	8	17	7

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

² Source: 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10 New York State Report Cards

³ New York State Education Department does not report special education data.

Current Board of Trustees⁴

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Mary Claire Ryan	Chairperson
Mary Mitchell	Vice- Chairperson
Michael Karangelen	Trustee
Nicole Julius	Trustee
Angi Antommarchi	Trustee

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2004-05 to 2005- 06	Nakia Haskins, Principal
2006-2007	Nakia Haskins, Principal, Miriam Raccah, Acting Principal
2007-08 to 2008-09	Anne Lackritz, Elementary School Principal
2009-10 to 2010-11	Anne Lackritz, Elementary School Principal Kimberly A. Morcate, Middle School Principal
2011-12	Anne Lackritz, Elementary School Principal Kaitlin Seaver, Middle School Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2005-06	First Year Visit	Institute	March 14, 2006
2006-07	Second Year Visit	Institute	March 15, 2007
2007-08	Third Year Visit	External (RMC Research)	March 24-25, 2008
2009-10	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	December 15-17, 2009
2011-12	Subsequent Visit	Institute	November 1, 2011

⁴ Source: Institute board information.

CONDUCT OF VISIT

Specifications

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
November 1, 2011	Jason Sarsfield	Director of School Applications
	Danielle Keen	Analyst for School Evaluation
	Lori Clement	Senior Analyst
	Jenn David-Lang	External Consultant

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle ⁵	
Charter Period	2 nd Year of Second Charter Term
Accountability Period	3 rd Year of Accountability Period
Impending Renewal Visit	Fall 2014

⁵ Because the Institute makes a renewal decision in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment

Girls Preparatory Charter School of New York (“Girls Prep”) has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness.

Girls Prep regularly administers a variety of diagnostic, interim and formative assessments to measure student learning and progress. The school administers interim assessments (IAs) from Achievement Network on a quarterly basis in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, which align to New York State and Common Core standards. Teachers supplement these assessments with the Fountas and Pinnell diagnostic assessment, given three times yearly to measure literacy skills. Teachers also administer more informal unit, weekly and daily formative assessments across the school, such as exit tickets to assess student learning within an individual lesson and performance based projects to determine if students have mastered a set of specific objectives.

The school has a system to collect and analyze the results of assessments and uses assessment data to improve student learning. Individual teachers and teams of teachers analyze assessment data, within grade levels at the elementary school and academic departments at the middle school. The directors of curriculum and assessment lead this effort at both the elementary and middle schools. Individual teachers analyze the results of daily formative assessments to determine the effectiveness of a single lesson and the extent to which all students have mastered daily objectives, while directors of curriculum and assessment regularly analyze IA results by grade or subject areas teams. The directors of curriculum and assessment provide teachers with an item-analysis that enables them to systematically determine the progress of individual students and their entire class towards mastering individual standards.

Based on the analysis of assessment data, teachers work with their respective director of curriculum and assessment to create plans for whole group re-teaching, to determine instructional groupings and identify students in need of academic intervention services within the context of the school’s response to intervention (RTI) process. Using assessment results, teachers at both schools create "data analysis action plans" which guide their re-teaching efforts. Furthermore, school leaders also use assessment data both to better understand and act upon larger trends in the school and make curricular, staffing and professional development decisions. The school regularly communicates student progress and performance on assessments to school stakeholders, including the school board and parents, as appropriate.

1. C Curriculum

The school has a comprehensive and organized curriculum framework.

The elementary and middle schools’ written curricula are at different stages of development. The elementary school, in its seventh year of operation, currently has a clearly defined curriculum framework for all grades and subject areas. The school bases its mathematics curriculum on the Envision Math commercial program. The elementary instructional leadership team has modified the ELA curriculum over time and is currently revising it to fully incorporate the Common Core state standards. The elementary grades also rely on the New York City social studies and science scope and

sequence as the curriculum framework for those subjects. Through the school's shared server, teachers have access to a wide variety of curricular resources including unit, weekly and daily plans, as well as specific curricular resources utilized in previous years. Elementary school teachers are fully aware of the curricula they are responsible to teach, and at the time of the visit, had already analyzed the school's curriculum framework to create unit plans. Furthermore, teachers use the assessment data described above for weekly lesson planning. Overall, teachers at the elementary school effectively use the curriculum framework and related resources to prepare students to meet state performance standards.

The middle school, only in its third year of operation, has begun the process of creating a well-defined curriculum for each grade that aligns to the Common Core standards. Teachers and the middle school director of curriculum and assessment have collaboratively created a scope and sequence. Teachers create their own unit and lesson plans, which the principal and the director of curriculum and assessment review and critique. Using informal assessment data, teachers frequently reflect upon and revise their lesson pacing and unit plans to meet student-learning needs. Teachers have a basic framework that informs them about what to teach and when to teach it for the remainder of the year and this framework provides the basis for individual unit development.

The elementary and middle school programs, as well as the school overall, have established effective processes for the regular review and revision of the written curriculum. The school has prioritized further curriculum development, to enhance alignment of the Common Core standards vertically and horizontally, within and between grade levels. In addition, school leaders from the elementary and middle school programs have begun to work together with leaders at Public Prep to improve the alignment of the curriculum from grade to grade. The school sets aside time at its summer institute to review the curriculum framework for the upcoming year and uses a robust electronic system throughout the year to document modifications and enhancements that teachers make while implementing planned lessons.

1. D Pedagogy

Quality instruction is evident throughout the school.

Purposeful instruction is evident in all classes throughout Girls Prep's elementary and middle schools. Lesson plans and instruction align to the school's evolving curriculum and New York state standards. In some classes, particularly in the elementary grades, teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor and higher order thinking skills. In most cases, teachers accomplish this through a variety of instructional approaches, including direct instruction, small group instruction and collaborative learning activities. Teachers cognitively engage students in quality instruction throughout the elementary school. However, learning objectives in a limited number of classrooms at the elementary grades are not rigorous, well developed or clearly communicated to students.

Teachers engage most students in quality instruction within the middle school grades. As with the elementary grades, teachers utilize a notable variety of instructional strategies to meet the range of learning needs of students. However, some students remain unengaged for extended periods without redirection to the learning activity. This behavior is typically the result of inadequate classroom management techniques. For example, during a collaborative learning activity, two students were off task, discussing unrelated topics with each other for more than 10 minutes while ignoring the contributions of their peers to a class discussion. The teacher attempted to redirect these students

once, but when they remained off task, the teacher permitted them to opt out of learning. Other similar classroom management challenges negatively affect the level of engagement of a few students in several middle school classrooms.

1. E Instructional Leadership

The school has strong instructional leadership.

Girls Prep has strong instructional leadership with high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance. The elementary school principal has led the school for a number of years, while the middle school principal had just begun her first year in the role. Despite her limited time at the school, she has quickly established a comprehensive system to support teachers. Instructional leaders, consisting of principals, directors of curriculum and assessment, grade level and department chairs and learning specialists provide extensive and ongoing support and coaching at both schools. Instructional leaders frequently observe teachers at all grade levels and subject areas, which results in timely and targeted instructional feedback.

The school also has a comprehensive system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness, using the Danielson model as its foundation. School leaders conduct regular reviews and evaluations of the school's academic program, analyzing a variety of student assessment data.

1. F At-Risk Students

The school has a sufficient at-risk program to help students that are struggling academically; however, the school does not currently have a program for English language learners (ELLs).

The Girls Prep elementary and middle schools are effective in helping academically struggling students by deploying sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of student needs. The learning specialist coordinator meets monthly with school leaders to ensure the integration of resources and strategies for serving at-risk students. In the elementary grades, each grade has at least two teachers who provide small and large group instruction to meet the various learning needs of students. The school also employs a collaborative team teaching (CTT) classroom for each grade level. CTT classroom teachers receive additional preparation time each day to coordinate services and lesson plans with learning specialists and classroom teachers. The school provides push-in support services and pull-out intervention services to students in CTT and other classes as appropriate. Teachers communicate regularly with specialists via email and by sharing lesson plans.

The school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students, including a Child Study Team (CST). The CST meets regularly to discuss individual students who might be struggling, analyze these students' assessment data and provide their teachers with appropriate intervention strategies. The learning specialist coordinator provides professional development, training and resources to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students. The learning specialist coordinator also monitors the performance of student participation and progress in support services using well-defined, school-wide criteria and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the school's intervention programs.

Girls Prep New York does not have a program that meets the needs of ELLs. While appropriate processes are in place for identifying ELLs at the middle school, the school has not yet implemented a formal program for meeting their needs, due in large part to the low number of ELLs enrolled in the

school. The learning specialist coordinator is the primary person responsible for serving the needs of ELLs. Several students with more severe language learning needs have recently enrolled in the school. While the learning specialist coordinator currently receives some support to develop her skills in assisting ELLs, the school does not employ a certified English-as-a-Second Language teacher. The school acknowledges that the low number of ELLs enrolled in the school has not necessitated additional staffing in the past and that a more robust program is needed.

1. G Student Order and Discipline

The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.

Girls Prep is safe and orderly. The elementary and middle school programs each have an appropriately documented discipline system that they communicate to parents through family handbooks and other communications. The elementary school utilizes a number of school-wide approaches to ensure consistency in implementing its discipline policy. At no time during the visit, did student behavior negatively affect the delivery of teachers' lessons. In the middle school, teachers tolerate low-level misbehavior in many classes, and though teachers engage most students in learning activities, some opt out of these activities or otherwise remain unengaged without sufficient redirection. Both schools have created a culture that emphasizes character education and "sisterhood" which is evident in students' interactions with each other and with teachers.

1. H Professional Development

The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.

The school has a comprehensive professional development program, including a focus on teacher leadership at the middle school. Members of the school's instructional staff have numerous opportunities for professional growth and advancement. Teaching fellows -- considered full time professional staff and assigned to a classroom to assist the lead teacher with small group instruction, monitoring of behavior, etc. -- often advance to the role of lead teacher after serving in the fellow role. Experienced and successful teachers also assume roles as department or grade level leaders.

The content of the professional development program is consistent with the school's mission and priorities, including but not limited to, the implementation of the Common Core state standards and curriculum mapping, as well as the use of Achievement Network. School leaders perform a data-driven needs assessment and conduct a staff survey in order to determine professional development topics for the year. In addition, teachers set individual goals for their development. School leaders support teachers in meeting these goals by recommending differentiated professional development opportunities.

2. A Mission and Key Design Elements

The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.

Girls Prep has remained faithful to its mission. The school has implemented a number of strategies to promote college preparation, admission and completion and has thoughtfully engaged parents in this

process. For example, the school has worked with one of its institutional partners to establish a college savings account for each student. The school provides parents with several workshops to assist them in planning for the financial and academic demands of college. The school has also hired a director of high school admissions and college completion to assist each student in securing an appropriate high school placement and to monitor, support and track student performance as the girls ultimately enroll in college.

2.C Organizational Capacity

The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.

Girls Prep has established a well functioning organizational structure with staff, systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. The school carefully develops staff and student schedules to support the school's mission and priorities. The organizational structure provides clear lines of responsibility and accountability. In addition, the school organization has made effective use of its two shared facilities. This year, the school's charter management organization, Public Prep, which has begun to communicate more systematically with school staff, provides additional organizational and instructional support. The school appears to have benefited from its collaboration with the Girls Prep Charter School of the Bronx, which Public Prep also manages. For example, school leaders regularly compare student assessment data and effective instructional practices to improve the educational program in place at each school. Public Prep leaders and school leaders have also begun to work collaboratively to develop a consistent written curriculum. These efforts and collaboration are likely to continue to benefit both schools.

2. D Board Oversight

The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the educational program.

The Girls Prep Board of Trustees has continued to maintain adequate skills and expertise to provide rigorous oversight of the school, including academic, non-profit, financial, real estate and legal expertise. The academic committee of the board understands the core business of the school – academic achievement – in sufficient depth to provide effective oversight. This committee meets regularly in conjunction with the academic committee of the board of trustees of the Girls Prep Charter School of the Bronx to discuss student performance data and the progress of each school. The board is keenly aware of the performance of the school against the goals contained in its Accountability Plan and areas in need of improvement, namely the recent academic performance of its middle school students. The full school board receives regular and sufficient information from school leaders, including comparative student performance data, fiscal information and operational updates.

The school board regularly evaluates the performance of Public Prep leadership using defined and rigorous criteria, including student performance data and elements that relate directly to the school's mission. In the school year preceding the visit, the school board worked with Public Prep to remove an ineffective school leader from the middle school site and worked effectively using a rigorous process to replace that leader.

APPENDIX A: RENEWAL BENCHMARKS USED DURING THE VISIT

*An excerpt of the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks follows.
Visit the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/renewalBenchmarks.doc> to see the complete listing of Benchmarks.*

Benchmarks 1B – 1H, and Benchmarks 2A – 2E were using in conducting this evaluation visit.

Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1B</p> <p>Use of Assessment Data</p>	<p>The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school’s curriculum framework and state performance standards; • the school systematically collects and analyzes data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, and makes it accessible to teachers, school leaders and the school board; • the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy; • the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school’s Accountability Plan goals are being achieved; • the school’s leaders use assessment data to monitor, change and improve the school’s academic program, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, staffing and intervention services; • the school’s teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students; • a common understanding exists between and among teachers and administrators of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, e.g., changes to the instructional program, access to remediation, promotion to the next grade; • the school regularly communicates each student’s progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and • the school regularly communicates to the school community overall academic performance as well as the school’s progress toward meeting its academic

	Accountability Plan goals.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1C</p> <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to achieve as specified by New York State standards and performance indicators; • the school has carefully analyzed all curriculum resources (including commercial materials) currently in use in relation to the school's curriculum framework, identified areas of deficiency and/or misalignment, and addressed them in the instructional program; • the curriculum <i>as implemented</i> is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade; • teachers are fully aware of the curricula that they are responsible to teach and have access to curricular documents such as scope and sequence documents, pacing charts, and/or curriculum maps that guide the development of their lesson plans; • teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school's curriculum; • the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and • the curriculum supports the school's stated mission.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1D</p> <p>Pedagogy</p>	<p>High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach; • instruction is rigorous and focused on learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson; • lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators; • instruction is differentiated to meet the range of learning needs represented in the school's student population, e.g. flexible student grouping, differentiated materials, pedagogical techniques, and/or assessments; • all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time; • learning time is maximized (e.g., appropriate pacing, high on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students), transitions are efficient, and there is day-to-day instructional continuity; and • teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote

	<p>academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.</p>
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1E</p> <p>Instructional Leadership</p>	<p>The school has strong instructional leadership.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement; • the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement); • the school’s instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school’s instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school’s leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school’s instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual teachers; • the school’s leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and • the school’s leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school’s academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development.
<p>State University Renewal</p>	<p>The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.</p>

<p>Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p>	<p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students’ needs; • all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; • the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; • the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; • all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students’ Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; • the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and • the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1G</p> <p>Student Order & Discipline</p>	<p>The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; • classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; • low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and • throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1H</p> <p>Professional Development</p>	<p>The school’s professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers’ pedagogical skills and content knowledge.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program; • the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school’s mission, curriculum, and instructional programs; • annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests; • professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school’s Accountability Plan goals; • teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities; • the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers’

	<p>varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.
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Renewal Question 2	
Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2A</p> <p>Mission & Key Design Elements</p>	<p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders are aware of the mission; the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2B</p> <p>Parents & Students</p>	<p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school; the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2C</p> <p>Organizational Capacity</p>	<p>The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school's mission; the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their

	<p>regular review and revision;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school’s leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school’s management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school’s management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p>	<p>The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school’s mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school; • the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight; • the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school’s management and leaders; • the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity; • the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school’s management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management organization(s), and/or partner organizations that provide services to the school), and has acted on the results where such evaluations demonstrated shortcomings in performance; • where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school’s academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion; • the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and • the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development.
<p>State University Renewal</p>	<p>The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.</p>

<p>Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school’s goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities; • the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity; • the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter; • the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner; • the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints; • the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies; • the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and • the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p>	<p>The school has substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during its charter period, the school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL, and Open Meetings Law; • at the time of renewal, the school is in substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; • over the charter period, the school has abided by the terms of its monitoring plan; • the school has designed and put in place effective systems and controls to ensure that legal and charter requirements were and are met; and • the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and makes recommendations and handles other legal matters as needed.