



Charter Schools Institute  
*The State University of New York*

## **Green Dot New York Charter School**

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# **School Evaluation Report 2010-11**

Visit Date: May 4, 2011

Report Issued: September 7, 2011

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## INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”), jointly with the New York State Board of Regents, are required by law to provide oversight sufficient to ensure that each charter school that the SUNY Trustees have authorized is in compliance with applicable law and the terms of its charter. The SUNY Trustees, however, consistent with the goals of the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998, view their oversight responsibility more broadly and positively than purely monitoring compliance. Accordingly, they have adopted policies that require the Charter Schools Institute (“the Institute”) to provide ongoing evaluation of SUNY authorized charter schools. By providing this oversight, the SUNY Trustees and the Institute seek to accomplish three goals:

- **Document Performance.** The Institute collects information to build a database of a school’s performance over time. By evaluating the school periodically, the Institute can more clearly ascertain trends, determine areas of strength and weakness, and assess the school’s likelihood for continued success or failure. Having information based on past patterns, the Institute is in a better position to make recommendations regarding the renewal of each school’s charter, and the State University Trustees are better informed in making a decision on whether a school’s charter should be renewed. In addition, a school will have a far better sense of where they stand in the eyes of its authorizer.
- **Facilitate Improvement.** By providing substantive information about the school’s academic, fiscal and organizational strengths and weaknesses to the school’s board of trustees, administration, faculty and other staff, the Institute can play a role in helping the school identify areas for improvement.
- **Disseminate Information.** The Institute disseminates information about the school’s performance not only to its board of trustees, administration and faculty, but to all stakeholders, including parents and the larger community in which the school is located.

This annual School Evaluation Report includes three primary components. The first section, titled Executive Summary of School Evaluation Visit, provides an overview of the primary conclusions of the evaluation team regarding the current visit to the school, summarizing areas of strength and areas for growth. A summary of conclusions from previous school evaluations is also provided, as background and context for the current evaluation. The second section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as summary historical information regarding the life of the school. Finally, in a third section entitled School Evaluation Visit, this report presents the analysis of evidence collected during an evaluation visit conducted in the current school year, with an italicized paragraph that introduces each specific benchmark and provides a summarizing conclusion.

Because of the inherent complexity of an organization such as a school, this Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would indicate at a glance the school’s prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and notes areas in need of improvement with respect to the school’s performance as compared to the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks. To the extent appropriate and useful, we encourage school boards to use this evaluation report in ongoing planning and school improvement efforts.

## **Background**

Institute evaluations of SUNY authorized charter schools are organized by a set of benchmarks that address the academic success of the school, including teaching and learning (e.g., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school as an organization, including such items as governance and management. Entitled the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks, these established criteria are used on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

While the primary focus of the visit is an evaluation of the school's academic program and organizational capacity, issues regarding compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations may be noted (and subsequently addressed); where the Institute finds serious deficiencies in particular relating to student health and safety, it may take additional and immediate action. However, monitoring for compliance is not the principal purpose of the visit.

This is an analysis of the observations and conclusions from this year's evaluation, along with supporting evidence. Some benchmarks are covered in greater detail than others in an effort to highlight areas of concern at the school and provide additional feedback in these areas. Finally, information regarding the conduct of the evaluation, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, is provided.

## **SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT**

The Charter Schools Institute conducted a school renewal visit to Green Dot New York Charter School on March 10, 2009. The evaluation team observed classrooms, interviewed administrators, board members and teachers and reviewed student work and other documents. Following the 2009 renewal evaluation visit, a letter was provided to the school's board of trustees outlining the major conclusions from the visit. The conclusions provided at that time are briefly summarized below.

### **Use of Assessment Data (Benchmark 1.B)**

Green Dot regularly administered formative and summative assessments in all subjects, as well as diagnostic assessments in reading and math.

### **Curriculum (Benchmark 1.C)**

The school had a comprehensive curriculum framework in place for core subjects.

### **Pedagogy (Benchmark 1.D)**

Most teachers planned purposeful lessons with objectives aligned to the school's curriculum.

### **Instructional Leadership (Benchmark 1.E)**

School leaders set high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance.

### **Organizational Capacity (Benchmark 2.C)**

Day-to-day operations were competently managed, and the school had adequate resources to achieve its mission.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CURRENT SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT**

The Charter Schools Institute conducted a school evaluation visit to Green Dot New York Charter School (“Green Dot”) on May 4, 2011. Green Dot is in its third year of operation in its current four-year Accountability Period. Based on the analysis of evidence from the evaluation visit, Green Dot is on a trajectory toward meeting its Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) when the school is scheduled for renewal. This conclusion is drawn from a variety of indicators discussed more fully later in this report. Some of the more salient indicators include the following:

### **Use of Assessment Data (Benchmark 1.B)**

Green Dot administers multiple assessments and uses assessment data to modify instruction and improve student learning.

### **Curriculum (Benchmark 1.C)**

Individual teachers use their discretion to create or select materials for instructional delivery. The school’s administration provides broad oversight to ensure alignment with state standards.

### **Pedagogy (Benchmark 1.D)**

Green Dot has high quality instruction across grades. Teachers implement purposeful lessons using well designed lesson plans that actively engage students in grade appropriate instruction.

### **Instructional Leadership (Benchmark 1.E)**

Green Dot’s instructional leadership team sets high expectations for teachers and students.

### **Organizational Capacity (Benchmark 2.C)**

Green Dot has clearly defined educational partnerships which assist the school’s leadership team in the development and implementation of effective educational services. School staff has systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program and monitor and modify programming when necessary.

## SCHOOL OVERVIEW

### Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	October 26, 2007
Date Initial Charter Approved by Board of Regents	January 15, 2008
School Opening Date	September, 2008

### Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades At Location	District
2008-2009 through present	600 St. Ann's Avenue Bronx, NY	All	New York City CSD 7

### Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Current Partner	Green Dot Public Schools	Charter Management Organization	2007 - present
Current Partner	United Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation	Non-profit Foundation	2007 - present

### Current Mission Statement

The mission of Green Dot New York Charter School is to prepare students for success in college, leadership and life.
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### Current Key Design Elements

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small, safe, personalized school;</li> <li>• High expectations for all students;</li> <li>• Local control with extensive professional development and accountability;</li> <li>• Parent participation expected;</li> <li>• Extended school day;</li> <li>• College-preparatory curriculum;</li> <li>• Faculty office hours;</li> <li>• Data-driven instruction based on regular interim assessments;</li> <li>• History of New York elective based on social and civil right movements;</li> <li>• Formal academic intervention programs for students in ELA and mathematics;</li> <li>• Professional learning plan for all faculty and staff; and</li> <li>• 95 percent to five percent time allocation of key administrative staff (95 percent of time dedicated to work responsibilities, five percent for professional development activities).</li> </ul>
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## School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment <sup>1</sup>	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2008-09	115	121	9	9	185
2009-10	225	213	9-10	9-10	185
2010-11	325	315	9-12	9-12	185

## Student Demographics

	2008-09 <sup>2</sup>		2009-10 <sup>3</sup>	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 7 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 7 Enrollment
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	34	29	36	29
Hispanic	61	69	61	69
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0	1	1	1
White	2	1	1	1
Multiracial	4	0	1	0
<b>Special Populations</b>				
Students with Disabilities <sup>4</sup>	12		11	
Limited English Proficient	9	17	10	19
<b>Free/Reduced Lunch</b>				
Eligible for Free Lunch	78	83	75	86
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	5	6	14	5

<sup>1</sup> 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.)

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2008-09 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

<sup>3</sup> Source: 2009-2010 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

<sup>4</sup> New York State Education Department does not report special education data. Statistics given were provided by the school.

**Current Board of Trustees**

<b>Board Member Name</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Position/Committees</b>
Steve Barr	2011	Chairman, Board of Trustees
Jeffrey Leeds	2011	Member
Randi Weingarten	2011	Member
Bonnie Steingart	2011	Member
Charles King	2011	Member
Gideon Stein	2011	Member
Burt Sacks	2011	Member
Deborah Levitzky	2011	Treasurer

**School Leader(s)**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>School Leader(s) Name and Title</b>
2008-09	Ashish Kapadia, Principal
2009-10	Ashish Kapadia, Principal
2010-11	Ashish Kapadia, Principal

**School Visit History**

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Visit Type</b>	<b>Evaluator (Institute/External)</b>	<b>Date</b>
2008-09	First Year Visit	Institute	March 10, 2009
2010-11	Third Year Visit	Institute	May 4, 2011

## **SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT**

### **Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence**

#### **Use of Assessment Data (Benchmark 1.B)**

*Green Dot administers multiple assessments and uses assessment data to modify instruction and improve student learning.*

Green Dot administers multiple assessments throughout the academic year. Teachers administer quarterly benchmark assessments in English language arts (ELA), math, science and social studies. The school contracts with testing vendors for test-item development of ELA and social studies. The school staff develops science and math assessments. The vendor-developed benchmark assessments contain previously administered Regents exam items, which the school leader reports align with state standards. The teacher-developed benchmark assessment items (science and math) align with the school's curriculum; teachers report these test items also align with state standards.

Teachers also administer lesson “warm-up” quizzes and “brain-crusher” pop-quizzes during lessons and “exit-ticket” quizzes at the end of daily lessons. In addition to daily quizzes, teachers regularly call upon students to assess their levels of lesson understanding. Teachers create daily quizzes as part of their lesson planning process. They report that these quizzes align with the school's curriculum and that the quizzes provide timely feedback on students' mastery of lesson objectives.

Teachers gather and input completed ELA and social studies assessment items into a data management software system. The school's contracted testing vendors assist the school leader with assessment result scoring, disaggregation and data presentation formats. Teachers gather and score the science and math assessments. Teachers report participating in math and science content area meetings to create and refine assessment items as well as score and disaggregate science and math assessment results.

Benchmark assessment results are analyzed by school, grade, class and student. Teachers also analyze test items for each student and chart student progress within each assessed subject area. Teachers report that the school has regular, school-wide data meetings and that they meet in their content areas to examine benchmark testing trends. The school uses assessment results to assign students to academic remediation classes and to modify classroom instruction. A remedial math teacher reports using student-level assessment data to create individualized instruction plans to meet the academic needs of each student. Teachers also report using daily quiz results to re-teach lesson content and modify lesson objectives.

#### **Curriculum (Benchmark 1.C)**

*Individual teachers use their discretion to create or select materials for instructional delivery. The school's administration provides broad oversight to ensure alignment with state standards.*

Green Dot teachers develop, monitor and adjust lesson content and materials for each class taught. Teachers report updating their curriculum binders weekly and using them to store and continually add new lesson plans. Teachers regularly collaborate within their content area and grade level counterparts to create subject content and to ensure that curriculum and materials align to state standards. They describe the content area meetings as a collegial, collaborative process without much oversight. Teachers also report regularly reviewing their content area lesson plans for alignment with state standards.

The principal describes curriculum development, review and revision as ad-hoc activities with general administrative oversight. He reports that the school provides teachers with suggested curriculum maps, but teachers choose whether to use them. Teachers say that they have autonomy over the creation of curriculum content. In addition, teachers confirm that they have responsibility for ensuring that lessons and materials align with state standards. The principal reports that he and the assistant principal regularly review curriculum binders and observe classrooms to validate that teachers implement lessons aligned with state standards.

### **Pedagogy (Benchmark 1.D)**

*Green Dot has high quality instruction across grades. Teachers implement purposeful lessons using well designed lesson plans that actively engage students in grade appropriate instruction.*

Teachers implement rigorous and purposeful instruction. All lessons have warm-up activities to assess students' prior knowledge as well as frequent checks-for-understanding and end-of-lesson assessments. Teachers also make instruction relevant to students by creating links between lesson objectives and students' lives. For example, the teacher in an English language arts class described how learning to write strong introductory statements helps students in college and their careers.

Teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to encourage student-to-student interaction. They may use direct instruction to introduce a lesson and use group-work to stimulate meaningful discussion between students. Teachers use higher-order questioning techniques and place emphasis on students developing ideas, presenting findings and conducting presentations within classrooms. In addition, teachers challenge students through meaningful dialogue to create highly verbal students who focus on solving problems.

Through well-designed lesson plans, constant checks for understanding and small class sizes teachers modify lessons to meet individual student needs. Teachers report that school leaders also provide helpful lesson modification suggestions when they observe their classes. Teacher's report that they know their students well which enables them to monitor student performance and provide remediation assistance in a timely manner.

### **Instructional Leadership (Benchmark 1.E)**

*Green Dot's instructional leadership team sets high expectations for teachers and students.*

The principal reports that he values teacher's knowledge and expertise and encourages them to set high pedagogical goals. Teachers, in turn, report that the principal expects them to

“push” themselves when creating rigorous lessons. Teachers report that the principal encourages students, to whom he refers as professional learners, to set short-and-long term college and career goals.

The school partners with a charter management organization (CMO)\* and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). The CMO supports the school’s academic program and the UFT provides operations support to teachers.

The principal and assistant principal have a comprehensive system to evaluate teachers. They observe and provide feedback to novice teachers twice a week, while experienced teachers receive the same treatment once per week. The principal uses a well-defined, detailed formative evaluation rubric to evaluate teachers at the end of the academic year. Teachers report that they understand the evaluation process and appreciate its depth and consideration of multiple observations. The principal has identified teachers in need of improvement and developed personalized improvement plans for these teachers. The principal reports that he holds teachers accountable for student achievement. Teachers who do not meet expectations are not asked to return.

### **At-Risk Students (Benchmark 1.F)**

*Green Dot has adequate support systems in place to address the needs of academically struggling students.*

The school supports the academic needs of all students through specialized programming and individualized instruction. All entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade students receive academic remediation through a summer “bridge” program where teachers assess individual student’s academic strengths and weaknesses in ELA and math. Teachers use this information to place students in ELA and math summer courses commensurate to student skill levels and then implement differentiated lessons which focus on individual student academic needs. Teachers report that this program increases the likelihood that students will graduate from high school in four years.

Green Dot has well-defined policies to identify special education and English language learners and unique programs to serve these students. The special education teacher manages the caseload of special education students and provides direct services to these students during an advisory class. Green Dot also employs one guidance counselor per grade level. Guidance counselors meet regularly with students to discuss their academic progress. The guidance counselors also assist classroom teachers in planning academic remediation or enrichment lessons during advisory classes, which meet four times per week and focus students on individualized lessons designed to support their academic needs. Additionally, classroom teachers use specialized curriculum products like Read 180 to support low-level readers. The school also has an initiative entitled “kid-talk” where teachers and school counselors identify students who may be at “high-risk” of academic failure. The school monitors and supports these students for the entire academic year.

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\* Green Dot’s CMO is Green Dot Public Schools.

## **Student Order and Discipline (Benchmark 1.G)**

*Green Dot promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.*

Teachers set high academic expectations for their students, treating them with respect and dignity and expecting the students to treat them with respect. The school has a behavior policy entitled “quality matters” which details student behavioral expectations. Teachers treat students as “professional learners” and do not tolerate tardiness, inappropriate behavior and low-level misbehavior.

Green Dot has a uniform dress policy, including guidelines on the use of make-up. Classrooms and public places are safe and orderly, and the school environment is conducive to learning. In classrooms, teachers encourage students to be expansive in responding to questions. They present students with challenging ideas and encourage talking in groups. Consequently, classrooms are noisy by design rather than an indication of poor classroom management.

## **Professional Development (Benchmark 1.H)**

*Green Dot’s professional development program adequately addresses school priorities.*

The principal and assistant principal create a year-long professional development scope and sequence with topics related to perceived teacher needs. The principal creates this year long plan at the start of the school year and also sets professional development priorities such as developing the writing program. The principal also solicits teacher input on professional development topics and will modify content as he identifies new or additional teacher needs. Teachers report that they have identified classroom management, student-centered learning and strategies for English language learners as topics for this academic year.

The school conducts one week of professional development prior to school opening and sessions continue every Tuesday afternoon throughout the academic year. In addition to the school’s professional development sessions, teachers may attend trainings of their choosing outside of school. The school supports some teachers by sending them to education conferences.

## **Mission & Key Design Elements (Benchmark 2.A)**

*Green Dot is faithful to its mission of preparing students for college.*

Green Dot’s mission is to prepare students for college, leadership and life. The school is demonstrably preparing students for college. For example, the school provides entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade students with academic supports to place them on a trajectory to graduate from high school in four years. Students identify academic gaps quickly and the school provides remediation assistance. As students matriculate into high school, they are supported with academic counselors and advisory instructors who develop individualized learning plans. These supports increase the likelihood that students will graduate in four years prepared for college entrance exams.

Green Dot has rigorous, grade appropriate courses and offers one advanced placement course. The school supports high school students as they prepare for college entrance exams by registering them at a sanctioned SAT administration site and offering PSAT and SAT preparation courses.

### **Organizational Capacity (Benchmark 2.C)**

*Green Dot has clearly defined educational partnerships which assist the school's leadership team in the development and implementation of effective educational services. School staff has systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program and monitor and modify programming when necessary.*

The school's partner organizations, the UFT and Green Dot, provide distinct, clear lines of support to the school. Together these organizations provide significant operational and academic program support. UFT provides finance and human resources support to enable school personnel to focus on instructional delivery. Green Dot supplies the campus with academic program needs such as professional development, instructional technology, curriculum materials and leadership support. These partners provide support to implement the school's mission and develop a college preparatory high school.

The school leader manages the relationship with the partner organizations and provides effective management of the school's day-to-day operations. Teachers know and understand the school's organizational reporting structure and solicit the principal for academic support needs. Teachers report that the school runs smoothly and they have the necessary resources for success. School leaders and staff regularly examine school programs and initiatives and change them if data indicates they lack effectiveness. For example, the school did not perform as well as anticipated on the writing portion of the Regents exam so the principal instituted a school-wide writing program.

### **Governance (Benchmark 2.D-E)**

*Green Dot's board works effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.*

The school's board has 11 members who have a strong combination of education, business, law and finance experience. The board chair reports that the board closely monitors the school's financial activity and that they have a strong commitment to support the needs of the teachers, providing them with the supplies and materials necessary to deliver an effective education program.

The board holds the school's leader, CMO and itself accountable for student achievement. The board chair reports that there are consistent and ongoing processes for the principal to update the board. The principal regularly and consistently emails the board chair and provides an update to the board during scheduled board meetings. The board chair reports that the board, in conjunction with the school's partner organizations, is in the process of completing the cumulative end-of-year principal evaluation. The principal reports that he knows, understands and is aware of this evaluation process.

## **Conduct of the Visit**

The Charter Schools Institute conducted the school evaluation visit at Green Dot New York Charter High School on May 4, 2011. Listed below are the names and backgrounds of the individuals who conducted the visit:

**Team Leader: Dr. Paul Wright** was recently appointed Director of School Evaluation at the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. Dr. Wright will be responsible for the Institute's extensive school evaluation program, overseeing and in many cases leading school evaluation visits by Institute staff as well as coordinating the independent evaluations done on the Institute's behalf. Dr. Wright will lead ongoing efforts to refine the Institute's nationally regarded evaluation protocols and reporting tools; including oversight of the production of the Institute's school evaluation reports which provide valuable information to schools and the public about school progress. He will also coordinate internal staff training on school evaluation. Prior to joining the Institute, Dr. Wright directed Quality Education Partnership, Inc., a national consulting network that conducted evaluations of traditional and charter schools and created strategic management plans for school improvement. The former Development Director for School Design and Strategic Planning of Mesa Public Schools in Arizona, Dr. Wright developed unique schools of choice serving a wide spectrum of learners in coordination with Mesa Public Schools. Dr. Wright also served as Vice President for Student Services at the Leona Group, an Educational Management Organization providing educational services to students throughout Arizona. Dr. Wright received his Ed. D. and his M. Ed. from Arizona State University and his B.A. in Psychology from the State University of New York at Albany

**Institute Team Member: Sean Fitzsimons** is a Program Analyst for the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. He supports SUNY's new charter school application process by addressing questions from applicants, reviewing and analyzing new applications, coordinating the review of applications to establish new charter schools by Institute staff and external educational experts, and drafting application summaries and other related documents. Mr. Fitzsimons most recently served as Chair of the Social Studies Department at Manassas Park Middle School in Manassas Park, Virginia where he guided curriculum sequencing and pacing to align the school's courses with state standards, trained and mentored faculty, and designed and implemented courses in Civics and Economics, American Studies, American History, and World Geography. He also taught remedial reading curriculum to special education students and English language learners. Prior to his service at Manassas Park Middle School, Mr. Fitzsimons was an Administrative and Research Assistant at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. In addition, Mr. Fitzsimons was a visiting instructor at Shanghai Teachers University in Shanghai, China, where he designed and taught curriculum for English language learners. Mr. Fitzsimons received his Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction and Secondary Education Social Studies from George Mason University and his Bachelor of Arts degrees in International Relations and Political Science from the State University of New York, College at Geneseo.

**External Team Member: John Schoener** began his own research and evaluation consulting firm, Schoener and Associates, Inc, more than 10 years ago. Schoener and Associate's services include evaluating and improving school program implementation; using data effectively to support teaching and learning; reviewing and refocusing organizational culture; developing leadership teams; and fostering the growth of professional learning communities.

Schoener and Associates has worked with education departments and school systems throughout the United States. Dr. Schoener has also worked on USAID and World Bank Projects with Ministries of Education and their schools throughout Europe, Eastern Europe, and South America to develop and implement evaluation and assessment systems and to improve school leadership. He has worked in Cyprus over the past five years to develop and implement effective active learning and assessment strategies. Prior to beginning his consulting firm Dr. Schoener held positions in education at the school, district, and state level, as well as in higher education. In addition to having been a classroom teacher, Dr. Schoener has served as the Director of Assessment Development for the New York State Education Department, Chief Administrator of Research and Evaluation for the New York City Department of Education, and Senior Research Scientist in Educational and Social Policy at New York University. He currently teaches at Bank Street College of Education's Principal Leadership Institute. Dr. Schoener is a licensed psychologist and holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York – with a focus on testing and measurement. Dr. Schoener earned his Master's degree in Psychology from the New School for Social Research and his B.A. in Psychology and Chemistry from New York University.

**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.

<b>Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?</b>	
<b><u>Evidence Category</u></b>	<b><u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u></b>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1B</b></p> <p><b>Use of Assessment Data</b></p>	<p><b>The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school’s curriculum framework and state performance standards;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy;</li> <li>• the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school’s Accountability Plan goals are being achieved;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• the school’s teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• the school regularly communicates each student’s progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1C</b></p> <p><b>Curriculum</b></p>	<p><b>The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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;</li> <li>the curriculum <i>as implemented</i> is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school’s curriculum;</li> <li>the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and</li> <li>the curriculum supports the school’s stated mission.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1D</b></p> <p><b>Pedagogy</b></p>	<p><b>High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school’s curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time;</li> <li>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</li> <li>teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1E</b></p> <p><b>Instructional Leadership</b></p>	<p><b>The school has strong instructional leadership.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement;</li> <li>the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement);</li> <li>the school’s instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>the school’s instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional</li> </ul>
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	<p>development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual teachers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1F</b></p> <p><b>At-Risk Students</b></p>	<p><b>The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students’ needs;</li> <li>all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program;</li> <li>the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students’ Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals;</li> <li>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</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1G</b></p> <p><b>Student Order &amp; Discipline</b></p>	<p><b>The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied;</li> <li>classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident;</li> <li>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</li> <li>throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 1H</b></p> <p><b>Professional Development</b></p>	<p><b>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.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program;</li> <li>the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school’s</li> </ul>

	<p>mission, curriculum, and instructional programs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests;</li> <li>• professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school’s Accountability Plan goals;</li> <li>• teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities;</li> <li>• the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers’ varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities;</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.</li> </ul>
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<b>Renewal Question 2</b> <b>Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</b>	
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<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u>
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<b>State University Renewal Benchmark 2A</b>  <b>Mission &amp; Key Design Elements</b>	<p><b>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stakeholders are aware of the mission;</li> <li>• the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and</li> <li>• the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.</li> </ul>
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<b>State University Renewal Benchmark 2B</b>  <b>Parents &amp; Students</b>	<p><b>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school;</li> <li>• the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it;</li> <li>• few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school;</li> <li>• a large number of parents seek entrance to the school;</li> <li>• parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and</li> <li>• the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.</li> </ul>
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<b>State University Renewal Benchmark 2C</b>  <b>Organizational Capacity</b>	<p><b>The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations;</li> <li>• staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school’s mission;</li> <li>• the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving</li> </ul>
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	<p>its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals;</li> <li>• the roles and responsibilities of the school’s leadership and staff members are clearly defined;</li> <li>• the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability;</li> <li>• the school’s management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted;</li> <li>• the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and</li> <li>• the school’s management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 2D</b></p> <p><b>Board Oversight</b></p>	<p><b>The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school’s mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• 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;</li> <li>• the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>State University Renewal Benchmark 2E</b></p> <p><b>Governance</b></p>	<p><b>The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.</b></p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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;</li> </ul>

- 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.