

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**ROOSEVELT CHILDREN'S
ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

VISIT DATE: APRIL 16-17, 2018

REPORT DATE: MAY 24, 2018

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Charter Schools Institute
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A collection of colorful pencils and paper clips is arranged on a dark grey, textured background. The pencils, in various colors including green, blue, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and brown, are laid out diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. Several paper clips in colors like orange, light green, pink, and blue are scattered at the bottom of the frame.

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INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit on April 16-17, 2018. While the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle school evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks. This subset, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization. It provides a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services for at-risk students), as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

Appendix A to the report contains a School Overview with descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. It also provides background information on the conduct of the visit, including information about the evaluation team and puts the visit in the context of the school’s current charter cycle. Appendix B displays the performance summary that contains the school’s performance on the required measures under its ELA and mathematics goals. Appendix C displays the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

This report does not contain an overall rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school’s prospects for renewal. Rather, it summarizes various strengths of the school and notes areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report in order to highlight areas of concern. As such, limited detail about positive elements of the educational program is not an indication that the Institute does not recognize other indicators of program effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The SUNY Trustees approved the original charter for Roosevelt Children’s Academy Charter School (“Roosevelt”) on January 21, 2000. The school opened its doors in the fall of 2000, initially serving 143 students in Kindergarten – 2nd grade. Roosevelt currently enrolls 664 students in Kindergarten – 8th grade. The school is located in the Roosevelt Union Free School District (the “district”) in privately owned space at 105 Pleasant Ave, Roosevelt, NY (Kindergarten – 3rd grade) and 200 W. Centennial Ave., Roosevelt, NY (4th – 8th grade).

Roosevelt is in the third year of its fourth charter term. At the school’s renewal in 2015, the State University of New York Board of Trustees (“SUNY Trustees”) created a set of academic and financial conditions in order for the school to receive full-term renewal of its charter, due to its continued failure to appropriately allocate its abundance of resources to the educational program. The conditions required the school to adopt a detailed educational improvement plan to improve the school’s low academic performance. The five different school leaders from 2015-16 through 2017-18 have made various changes to the program. However, at the time of the current evaluation visit, the school continues to lack systems that provide evidence of a strong academic program across all grades, and the most recent state assessment scores from 2016-17 show Roosevelt again failed to meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals. The school is meeting its fiscal monitoring requirements.

Roosevelt’s mission states:



The mission of RCA is to provide our children with educationally sound programs to broaden their horizons and maximize their abilities, so that they may fulfill their potential and become productive members of our society. Each member of our educational family fosters respect, support, and encouragement. We promote increased parent involvement and participation. As a result, we anticipate that parents will join with staff and students to share in the responsibility of their child’s education. As each member of our educational community sets high expectations for our students, we must also build each child’s confidence and self-esteem, support individualized thinking, encourage critical thinking, and foster a love of learning.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2016-17 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

In 2016-17, the third year of the school's current five year Accountability Period,¹ Roosevelt did not meet its Accountability Plan goal in English language arts ("ELA") for the third consecutive year. The school also failed to meet its mathematics goal in 2016-17 after not meeting the goal the previous year. In 2016-17, the school came close to meeting its science goal and met its No Child Left Behind ("NCLB") goal. Roosevelt has not put in place a sustained and coherent instructional program that supports student success. The school has failed to meet a majority of its key targets of success and based on this record of academic performance, Roosevelt's prospects for earning a renewal are currently in jeopardy.

ELA

Roosevelt did not meet its ELA Accountability Plan goal in 2016-17, after failing to meet it in the previous two years. In 2016-17, 28% of students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency on the state ELA exam, a three percentage point increase from 2015-16. Notwithstanding this nominal improvement, the school posted inconsistent performance across grade levels. For example, during 2016-17, 56% of the school's 3rd grade students scored at or above proficiency while only 11% of the school's 6th grade students scored at or above proficiency with the remaining grade levels posting proficiency rates within that range. Roosevelt's proficiency rate exceeded the district's performance by 11 percentage points, after having also exceeded the district's proficiency in the previous two years. However, the school failed to meet the target for its comparative effect size measure for the third consecutive year, posting a negative effect size in every year of the Accountability Period. This performance indicates that the school performed lower than expected in comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. In 2016-17, the school continued to post a mean growth percentile below the state's median of 50, indicating the school is not sufficiently growing the performance of all students such that they are likely to perform at or above proficiency before matriculating out of the school after completing 8th grade.

MATHEMATICS

Roosevelt did not meet its mathematics Accountability Plan goal in 2016-17, after failing to meet it during the previous year. In 2016-17, 28% of students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency on the state's mathematics exam, a marginal improvement from 2015-16. The school's mathematics performance is also inconsistent across grade levels. For instance, 48% of the school's 3rd grade students scored at or above proficiency in 2016-17 while only 15% of the school's 6th grade students did so.

1. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a school in a subsequent charter term, the Accountability Period covers the final year of the previous charter term and ends with the school year prior to the final year of the current charter term.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Roosevelt's proficiency rate exceeded the district's by nine percentage points. The school did not meet the target for its comparative effect size measure in 2016-17, after not meeting the target in 2015-16. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, the school performed lower than expected for the second consecutive year. The school posted growth scores below the target of 50 in each year of its Accountability Period. In 2016-17, the school posted a mean growth percentile six percentile points below the state's median of 50. The school's three years of low growth signal a failure to catch students up to the performance of statewide peers and to grade level expectations.

SCIENCE

After meeting the goal in 2014-15, Roosevelt came close to meeting its science goal in 2015-16 and 2016-17. Although the school exceeded the district's proficiency on the state's science exam throughout the Accountability Period, Roosevelt did not meet the absolute target of 75% in 2016-17 for the second consecutive year when only 70% of its 4th and 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency.

NCLB

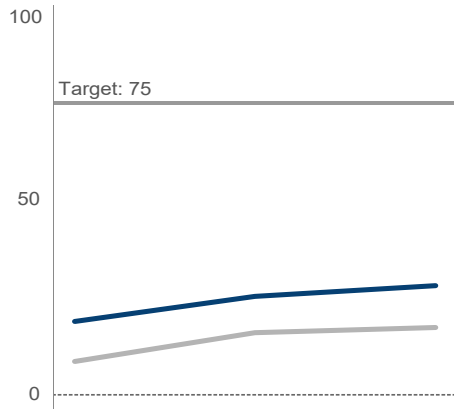
Roosevelt met its NCLB goal during 2016-17, as the school was not identified as a focus charter school or as requiring a local assistance plan under the state's accountability system.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ROOSEVELT CHILDREN'S ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

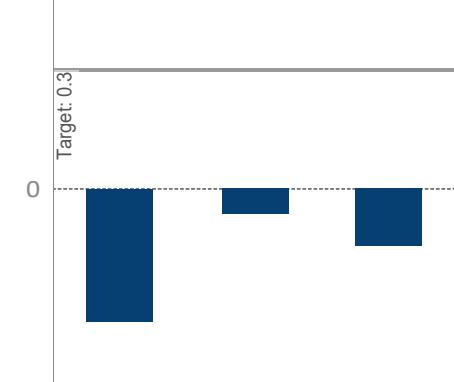
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



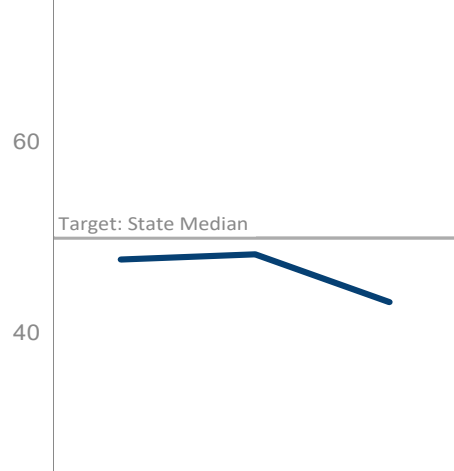
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	School %
2015	3-8	9	19
2016	3-8	16	26
2017	3-8	18	28

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



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2015	3-8	-0.33
2016	3-8	-0.06
2017	3-8	-0.14

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



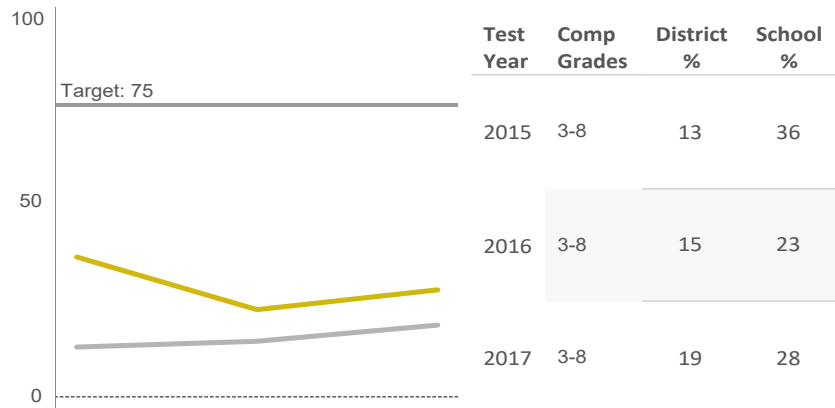
Test Year	School Mean Growth
2015	47.8
2016	48.4
2017	43.4

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

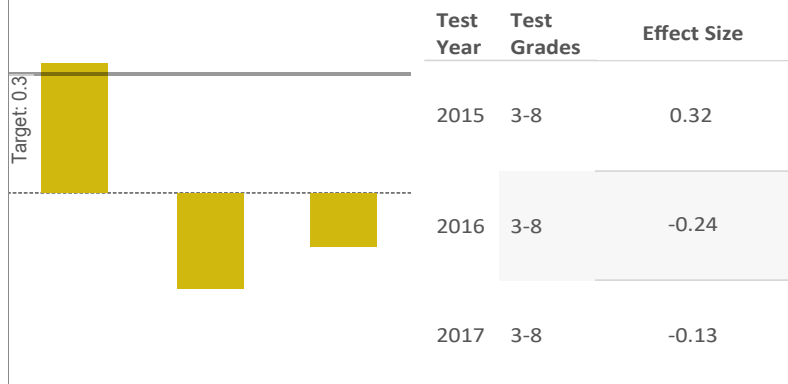
ROOSEVELT CHILDREN'S ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

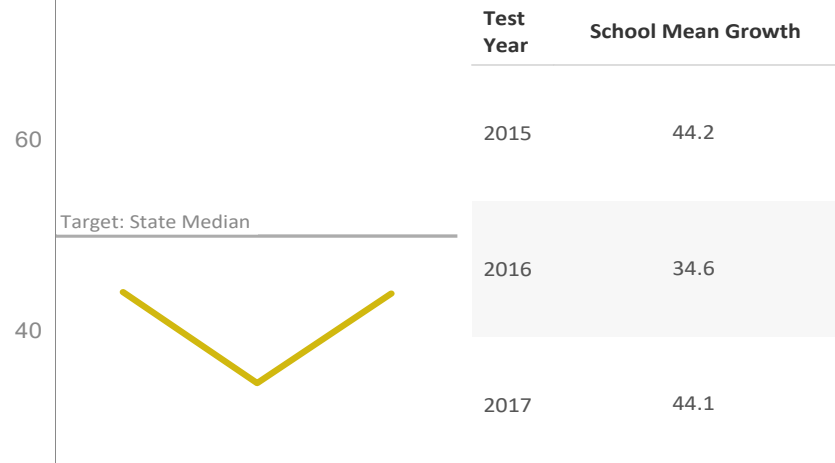
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



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



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

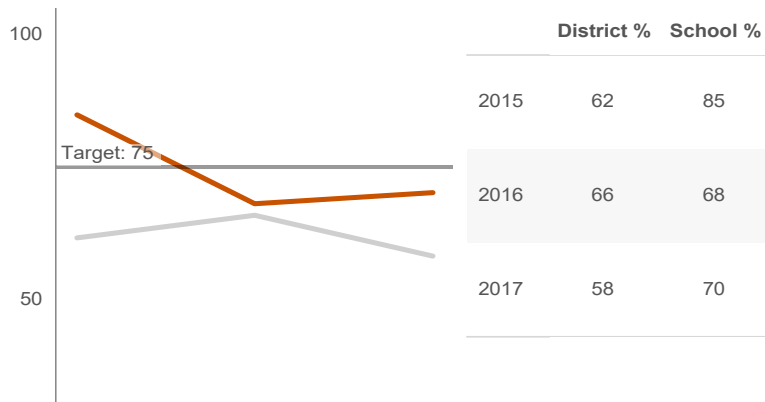


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ROOSEVELT CHILDREN'S ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

	2015	2016	2017
Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	26	43	36
Tested on State Exam	8	20	14
School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	25.0	10.0	0.0
District Percent Proficient	1.0	0.0	3.0

	2015	2016	2017
ELL Enrollment	37	42	38
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	22	26	30
School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	4.5	34.6	13.3

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

The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam.

"Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,² describe the elements in place at schools that are highly effective at providing students from low-income backgrounds the instruction, content, knowledge, and skills necessary to produce strong academic performance. The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks describe the elements an effective school must have in place at the time of renewal.³

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1B

DOES ROOSEVELT HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Under its fourth set of school leaders in four years, Roosevelt’s leaders and teachers inconsistently use assessment data to drive instructional decisions. The school’s systems for scoring and utilizing assessment data lack alignment across grades. The middle school level lacks clear systems for analyzing data and communicating leaders’ action plans. At the elementary level, the school has structures in place for teachers to analyze data to adjust instruction.

- Roosevelt regularly administers valid and reliable assessments. In ELA, the school administers the STAR reading assessment for all grades three times per year, the Fountas and Pinnell (“F&P”) benchmark reading assessment for Kindergarten – 4th grade, the Journeys reading benchmark assessment for 2nd – 4th grade three times per year, and three ELA benchmark assessments created from ReadyNY materials for 5th – 8th grade. In mathematics, the elementary level administers the STAR mathematics assessment three times per year and a mathematics midterm and end-of-year exam. At the middle school level, the school administers one mathematics benchmark assessment and primarily relies on the curricular program’s provided assessments. Although the majority of assessments are valid and reliable, the Journeys reading benchmark assessments do not match the rigor of the state assessments, rendering the data less useful in accurately measuring students’ progress and mastery against state standards.
- Roosevelt has a valid and reliable process for scoring assessments at the elementary level but not at the middle school level. Across all grades, most ELA assessments consist primarily of multiple choice items, and teachers scan responses into a web-based platform that compiles data reports. For mathematics, teachers and the mathematics specialists score assessments. For F&P assessments, the school provided teachers with three training sessions and utilizes time in grade team meetings to norm student responses to comprehension questions. At the middle school level, some teachers norm

2. An extensive body of research identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades. Selected sources include:

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/80/77488.pdf>; and http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_revision_final.pdf.

3. Additional details regarding the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks are available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/suny-renewal-benchmarks/.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

scoring practices for assessments and class assignments. However, the middle school does not have a consistent norming practice across all content areas. The Institute's review of student work indicated a lack of reliability in scoring, with different teachers assigning different scores for similar work.

- Although Roosevelt makes assessment data available to teachers, leaders, and board members, stakeholders' effectiveness in using the data varies. The school utilizes an online program in which teachers can quickly scan multiple choice question sheets and teachers and leaders can review a report of student performance. At the middle school level, leaders utilize student level data with few mechanisms to demonstrate an understanding of the trends of all students' performance across the middle school grades. The principals present proficiency rates on recent benchmark assessments as well as STAR data to the board, but these reports lack clear student growth outcomes over multiple assessments and include a plethora of qualitative data that does not clearly demonstrate students' progress.
- Roosevelt lacks consistent expectations between the elementary and middle school for teachers to utilize data to adjust instruction. At the elementary level, teachers consistently utilize data to review standards for reteaching and remediation, and teachers create centers based on data analysis. Teachers work closely during grade team meetings to present an action plan for how to support student learning. At the middle school level, the school does not have a consistent action plan process for teachers to utilize assessment data, nor do leaders follow up to ensure that teachers adjust instruction.
- Roosevelt leaders do not utilize assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop coaching strategies. The school's evaluation system does not include achievement results in the evaluation criteria. Leaders rely primarily on observations and teacher feedback to determine professional development topics rather than systematically analyzing data to determine specific needs for teacher development.

DOES ROOSEVELT'S CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING?

Due to multiple leadership transitions and organizational changes the school has not developed a systematic process to review and refine its curriculum on an annual basis, support teachers in instructional planning, and ensure alignment between the elementary and middle school levels.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Roosevelt does not have an established process for selecting, developing, and reviewing its curriculum due to multiple leadership transitions over the charter term. At the time of the Institute’s 2017 visit, the former chief academic officer (“CAO”) made curricular changes when first assuming the position at the start of the 2016-17 school year. At the time, the CAO made the curricular decisions based on experience and comfort with specific programs, rather than student achievement data. The current principals have made other curricular adjustments this school year but have not provided sufficient guidance to teachers for implementation. Additionally, content specialists from the elementary grades and middle school grades rarely work together to review curricular materials and ensure alignment over time.
- Roosevelt has a curriculum framework that is aligned to state standards but lacks clear articulation across grades. In mathematics, the school continues to use the Go Math! program in Kindergarten – 8th grade. This year, the social studies and science programs use McGraw Hill and Science Fusion, respectively. The ELA program draws upon a variety of supplemental resources which include Wonders, Ready Read, Reading Mastery, and EngageNY. Because the school does not have an established system to review teachers’ modified materials and commercial curricula, the overall program in Kindergarten – 8th grade lacks coherence and vertical alignment.
- The school has supporting documents that provide a bridge between the curricular programs and lesson plans, but they are insufficient given the quality of instruction at the school. Content specialists regularly adjust the pacing guides during the school year based on teachers’ progress, but leaders do not provide oversight to ensure teachers teach all necessary standards to the level of rigor required by the state standards by the end of each school year. Teachers are responsible for either creating unit plans or adjusting unit plans from the purchased curricula, but not all teachers do so. Roosevelt lacks a system to ensure that supporting documents are high quality and sufficiently aid teachers in lesson planning.
- Teachers do not consistently plan purposeful and focused lessons. Teachers email their lesson plans to leaders and content specialists each week. Teachers’ lesson plans vary in quality, and the quality and frequency of leaders’ lesson plan feedback are inconsistent by grade and content area. While lesson plans include clear objectives, the plans focus on outlining activities and do not include meaningful details about content delivery, student questioning, or differentiation and support for struggling students, students with disabilities, and English language learners (“ELLs”).

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

IS HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT ROOSEVELT?

In its 18th year of operation, instruction at Roosevelt fails to develop students' higher order thinking skills and engage students in rigorous learning, notwithstanding some improvements since the Institute's last visit in June 2017. As shown in the chart below, Institute team members conducted 24 classroom observations using a defined protocol used in all school evaluation visits.

		GRADE									Total
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
CONTENT AREA	ELA		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
	Math	2	1		2	1	1	1	1	1	10
	Soc Stu									1	1
	Science		1	1				1		1	4
	Total	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	4	24

- Most teachers deliver lessons with clear objectives, aligned to the school's curriculum (16 out of 24 lessons observed). The school has improved in this area since the Institute's last visit as teachers now consistently post or share objectives with students and more lessons have measurable objectives that are consistent across grade level classrooms and aligned to the school's curriculum. Although individual lessons align with the school's curriculum, the curriculum lacks appropriate pacing and overall alignment across Kindergarten – 8th grade, thereby rendering lessons less effective in meeting long-term student achievement goals. Additionally, similar to the Institute's last visit, the school continues to underutilize co-teachers, leading to missed opportunities to leverage the student to teacher ratio during instructional delivery. In a majority of observations, teaching assistants support behavior but do not play an active role in facilitating the instructional components of the lesson.
- About half of teachers regularly and effectively check for understanding (14 out of 24 lessons observed). Teachers monitor student work and ask targeted questions during small group instruction but fail to effectively assess understanding during whole class instruction and group work. Some teachers make attempts at questioning, but do not effectively elicit students' misconceptions nor adjust their instruction in the moment based on student responses. When students participate in group work, co-teachers and lead teachers circulate the classroom to monitor behavior and restate directions, but rarely use this time to collect data on student work and adjust instruction.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Few teachers at Roosevelt include opportunities to challenge students with questions or activities that develop their higher order thinking and problem solving skills (2 out of 24 lessons observed). Teachers ask low level questions and accept one word answers from students. Teachers do not push students to elaborate or extend their thinking. Lesson activities rarely present students with open-ended problems, again limiting students' ability to develop depth of understanding about the content. For example, in one lesson, the teacher told students exactly when and what important information to underline when analyzing a text, rather than allowing students to complete an analysis first.
- Half of lessons maximize learning time and demonstrate a consistent focus on academic achievement (13 out of 24 lessons observed). The school has improved in this area since the Institute's last visit; however, almost half of the classrooms observed continue to lack urgency or demonstrate appropriate pacing throughout the lesson, leading to lost instructional time and student disengagement. Teaching assistants wait to respond to off-task behavior rather than actively anticipate and redirect misbehavior before it takes place.

DOES ROOSEVELT HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

After the turnover of four school leaders since 2014-15, Roosevelt has begun to incorporate systems to support and develop teachers in improving student achievement. Classroom observation feedback and professional development are more systematically implemented across the elementary and middle school levels. However, the leadership restructuring has created two separate schools that lack one comprehensive approach for instruction.

- Leaders set expectations for student achievement but lack clear expectations for teachers' instructional performance and growth. In response to low overall proficiency on ELA and mathematics state assessments in 2016-17, the principals and specialists worked with an external consultant to set academic goals in August 2017, then shared them with staff. At the time of the Institute's visit, teachers understood the academic goals for their students and grade level but were inconsistently aware of the school's overall targets. Roosevelt lacks a system to ensure alignment of expectations for instruction across the elementary and middle schools, and is still re-establishing schoolwide structures after the previous leadership turnover.
- The school has established instructional support for teachers but the staffing configuration and a lack of deliberately scheduled planning time hinders instructional alignment across Kindergarten – 8th grade. The instructional leadership team consists of a Kindergarten – 4th grade principal, a 5th – 8th grade principal, two mathematics

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

specialists, two ELA specialists, a humanities specialist, and the director of response to intervention (“RTI”). Due to the leaders’ varying preferences, the instructional leaders’ grade assignments are not aligned. For example, one elementary specialist supports the elementary level teachers for ELA, but the other elementary specialist supports the elementary level teachers and 5th grade for mathematics. Due to leaders’ inconsistent grade assignments, specialists for the upper and lower grades do not consistently coordinate their efforts to ensure consistency in coaching and support throughout the school.

- Roosevelt provides opportunities for teachers to plan within grade levels and content areas, but lacks opportunities to plan vertically between elementary level and middle school level teachers. Elementary teachers are responsible for all content areas and have common planning preparation time in their schedules to meet daily in grade teams to lesson plan and discuss instructional strategies and student data. The middle school mathematics teachers formally meet as a content team at least once a week to share strategies, receive lesson planning and instructional support from the mathematics specialist, and to review data. The ELA specialist meets with the middle school ELA 6th – 8th grade teachers individually for lesson planning while with the 5th grade teachers plan as a grade level team weekly. The school lacks systems to ensure consistency and oversight of planning across the elementary and middle school levels, again limiting content and instructional systems alignment.
- Instructional leaders at Roosevelt regularly observe teachers and provide feedback, an improvement from last school year, but coaching is inconsistent across grades and content areas. The principals conduct daily walkthroughs and provide immediate feedback by leaving notes for teachers after each walkthrough. The specialists and director of RTI conduct regular observations and provide verbal or written feedback. However, the leaders’ observation feedback does not consistently build upon previous feedback nor is the feedback from different instructional leaders streamlined. This hinders teachers’ ability to master specific strategies and skills over time. The elementary level teachers meet with the ELA and mathematics specialists weekly to support with instruction, planning, and assessment data analysis. While the middle school ELA specialist provides similar support for the middle school teachers, the middle school mathematics specialist also serves as a dean of students and cannot always provide consistent instructional support. Additionally, at the elementary level, the principal sends a weekly email to teachers identifying elementary schoolwide trends in classroom observations, action steps, and then follows up with teachers in the next round of observations. However, the middle school level lacks a process to monitor teachers’ progress against schoolwide instructional trends. Across Kindergarten – 8th grade, Roosevelt lacks a system to track individual teachers’ mastery of instructional strategies over time, limiting the school’s ability to improve schoolwide instruction and student achievement.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Principals regularly conduct teacher evaluations but evaluations do not hold teachers accountable for student achievement. The principals utilize the Danielson framework for formal observations once per year and informal observations twice per year for most teachers. Roosevelt lacks a schoolwide system to ensure leaders' daily observation feedback influences teacher evaluations. Additionally when a teacher is low performing, leaders will provide additional support or place the teacher on an improvement plan, but the criteria for doing so is unclear. Teachers believe the evaluations are fair and more structured than the previous year. However teachers are unaware of how their overall performance affects their annual employment status.
- The school's professional development program provides tools for teachers to develop general instructional and classroom management skills but it is not sufficiently differentiated based on teacher need. The school holds professional development sessions at least once per month. The principals and board identified improving proficiency rates on the state's exams as the highest priority, with professional development in instruction and lesson planning being one of the means to achieve this goal. School leaders provided schoolwide planning sessions during the pre-service period prior to the start of the school year. During the year, the school provides separate trainings for elementary level and middle school level teachers; principals follow up on trainings with observations and feedback. However, leaders choose professional development topics primarily based on classroom observations and do not systematically use assessment data to inform their choices and differentiate content for teachers.

DOES ROOSEVELT MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

In its fourth charter term, Roosevelt has identified and implemented intervention programs for ELLs and students struggling academically, which were not in place in previous years. Although the school now implements consistent programming for at-risk students, Roosevelt lacks systems to effectively support students with disabilities.

- Roosevelt uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students. The school identifies students struggling academically through a review of students' F&P reading levels, STAR, state assessment results, and other achievement information teachers collect in the classroom. The school implements a multi-tiered RTI program. If a student does not make adequate progress after six weeks, then the RTI team will refer the student to the district Committee on Special Education ("CSE") for evaluation for special education services. The school administers a home language survey to all new students and, if a family indicates a language other than English, assesses students with the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL").

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Roosevelt is limited in its effectiveness to support students with disabilities. The school contracts with the district CSE for both related and academic special education services, rather than providing the required services with its own special education program or teachers. The school does not have an established system for teachers to communicate with the CSE about student programming and needs, limiting teachers' ability to support students with disabilities in the classroom. The school attempts to set expectations for communication between a special education provider and classroom teachers, but the school is unable to hold outside providers accountable for communicating with Roosevelt teachers. In 2016-17, zero students with disabilities were proficient on the ELA state assessment, only nine percent of students with disabilities were proficient on the mathematics exam, and students with disabilities' mean growth percentiles in both subjects were at least 20 percentile points below the target of 50.
- Roosevelt does not consistently monitor the progress and success of students with disabilities. Some teachers track students' progress toward meeting IEP goals, but most teachers rely on the district service providers for tracking goal progress. Service providers are typically at the school only for the time required to provide services, and therefore coordination between the general and special education teachers remains limited. The school only recently gained permission from the district CSEs to have the providers' progress reports sent directly to the school. Roosevelt has not established a system for teachers to use these reports to regularly communicate with the CSE and to ensure sufficient support for students at the school.
- Roosevelt implements adequate intervention programs for ELLs and students struggling academically. In the summer of 2017, Roosevelt purchased intervention programs to support students struggling academically including Leveled Literacy Intervention for ELA and Number Worlds for mathematics. Additionally, the elementary level suspended its curricular program at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year to implement the Reading Mastery intervention program to every student, as the majority of students were reading below grade level. For ELLs, two English as a Second Language ("ESOL") certified teachers utilize a Cornerstone text program to support English language acquisition strategies.
- The school is developing systems for teachers to coordinate and monitor the progress of ELLs and students struggling academically. The school's RTI team meets regularly with teachers when teachers refer new students and to monitor progress. RTI teachers assigned to grade levels make themselves available to support teachers and meet once a month during grade team meetings. Although teachers and leaders review overall student level data to monitor progress, the school does not specifically monitor the progress of ELLs. The ESOL teachers collect data through the Cornerstone program and meet consistently with grade teams during the year. Although the ESOL teachers shared ELLs' English language proficiency levels during summer professional development, most teachers are not aware of ELLs' English language proficiency levels and therefore cannot effectively target support in class.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 20

DOES THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

Roosevelt is working to re-establish an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. Though the school has restructured the leadership team for the fourth time in four years, staff and leader retention is stabilizing in comparison to the 2016-17 school year.

- The school's staffing structure contributes to unclear lines of accountability and the lack of cohesion in Kindergarten – 8th grade instruction, curriculum, and use of assessment data. The board eliminated the CAO position from 2016-17, and the principal of the middle school level and the principal of the elementary level now share academic leadership. However, the configuration and location of the elementary and middle school grades has led to a disjointed structure amongst the principals and content specialists. For example, the elementary school principal oversees the Kindergarten – 4th grade teachers and students, yet the Kindergarten – 3rd grade students are in one building and the 4th grade students are in a building with the middle school grades. Additionally one elementary level specialist oversees Kindergarten – 4th grade while the other oversees Kindergarten – 5th grade. The 6th – 8th grade mathematics specialist is also a dean of students, and therefore spends significant portions of the day fulfilling student discipline responsibilities and is unable to consistently provide support to teachers.
- Roosevelt has a schoolwide discipline system that leaders and teachers inconsistently apply. In the elementary grades, teachers have autonomy to use a variety of approaches, from online classroom management tools to a tiered monitoring system. In the middle school, leaders expect teachers to use a new online student management system, but teachers do not yet consistently use this system across classrooms. In elementary grades, the social worker and dean visit classrooms monthly with character education and conflict resolution lessons, while the dean of the middle school visits classrooms on an as-needed basis.
- Roosevelt has made efforts to retain high quality staff, and at the time of the Institute's visit posted higher retention rates. The school offers salaries competitive with the district's and a more robust retirement plan. For 2017-18, 82% of the teachers at the end of the previous year returned for the start of the school year and six teachers had left or were terminated. In comparison to the start of the 2016-17 school year, 77% of teachers returned and 11 staff members had left or transitioned out of their roles.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Although the school's adopted budget contains sufficient resources to support the achievement of its goals, the school does not consistently allocate funds to support instructional priorities. The school equips many classrooms with SMART boards and computers for every student. However, while the approved school budget includes the purchase of equipment and materials, the Roosevelt business office does not consistently allow teachers timely access to these materials for specific academic interventions.
- Roosevelt does not meet its enrollment targets for students with disabilities and ELLs. Roosevelt surpasses its enrollment target for students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and has made some progress to retain these students. The school's 2017-18 recruitment protocol presents active means, such as posting flyers and offering support to help families complete the application forms, as well as more passive actions such as posting enrollment policies on the school's website. However, the school could not articulate specific changes made to their recruitment and retention efforts in an attempt to make progress toward the school's enrollment targets.
- The school does not systematically monitor its programs to make effective changes when necessary. The school does not consistently provide a clear pedagogical approach and a comprehensive schoolwide professional development plan. Common practices across Kindergarten – 8th grade may be similar but are not always consistent. For example, both principals are in classrooms frequently and provide immediate feedback via notes, but the elementary level principal monitors and communicates the general trends of feedback to teachers while the middle school level principal does not.

DOES THE SCHOOL BOARD WORK EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE THE SCHOOL'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

Roosevelt's board lacks clear milestones to monitor the school's progress toward achieving its academic goals during the year and does not consistently and effectively hold school leaders accountable. After 18 years in operation, the board recognizes its deficiencies and has hired an external consultant to develop its capacity.

- The board's professional experience should be sufficient to govern the school and ensure academic and organizational success. The six trustees have experience in higher education, teacher education and training, law, youth advocacy, and government and politics. The finance and academic committees meet monthly. Members have served from three to thirteen years. The board does not have plans to add new members, but given the low student achievement on state assessments, recognized a need for

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

additional support. Since the start of the 2017-18 school year the school has been contracting with an external school turnaround consultant to professionally develop the principals and develop the board's internal capacity.

- The board sets clear priorities but does not monitor measurable milestones to reach end-of-year goals. In the middle of its fourth charter term, the board's short and long-term priorities continue to be to establish strong schoolwide systems that improve academic performance. The board's external consultant helped each principal set goals for the school year, and the board then approved these goals. However, the board has not created clear targets for which to determine sufficiency of students' progress throughout the school year, limiting the board's ability to oversee student achievement.
- The board does not sufficiently request information to enable sufficient oversight of the academic program. The middle and elementary school principals meet with the academic committee and the full board once per month to provide an academic update. The principals' reports include overly detailed qualitative updates that distract from an understanding of overall schoolwide progress toward achievement goals. Although the principals also report the data from the most recent schoolwide assessment, the reports do not consistently give clear indications of student growth over time. Additionally, in the absence of concrete measurable milestones for achievement during the year, the board is unable to sufficiently measure the school's progress toward meeting its year end goal of increasing proficiency on state assessments.
- The board does not successfully retain key personnel and does not consistently hold school leaders accountable for student achievement. Since 2014-15, the school has had six different school leaders and four different academic leadership structures. The board terminated the CAO at the end of the 2016-17 school year after one year of service and before the New York Department of Education made state assessment scores available. The board also did not complete a formal performance evaluation for the CAO, so it is unclear what specific measures the board used to complete a fair evaluation. The board intends to complete a written evaluation for both principals at the end of this school year and principals are aware of the evaluation criteria. The turnaround consultant supported the board in an internal board evaluation process and retreat, and the board has taken action based on the results.

Roosevelt

Ax

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APPENDIX A: School Overview

ROOSEVELT CHILDREN'S ACADEMY BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR Reginald Tuggle	SECRETARY Toni Burden
VICE CHAIR & TREASURER Denise Washington	TRUSTEES King Cheek Darrell Garner Tyra Washington

SCHOOL LEADERS

PRINCIPAL	
<i>Terry Teconas, Principal (2001-01)</i>	<i>Ruth Peets- Butcher, CEO Elementary (2015-16)</i>
<i>Kevin Coploys, Principal (2001-02 to 2003-04)</i>	<i>Kevin Boston- Hill, CEO Middle (2015-16)</i>
<i>Roxanne Ashley, Principal (2004-05 to 2006-07)</i>	<i>Lorraine Cochran, Chief Academic Officer (2016-17)</i>
<i>Roxanne Ashley, Superintendent (2007-08 to 2010-11)</i>	<i>Desiree Galashaw, Elementary Principal (2017-18 to Present)</i>
<i>Helen Livingston, Superintendent (2011-12)</i>	
<i>Ron Boykins, Superintendent (2012-13 to 2014-15)</i>	<i>Darryl Wilson, Middle School Principal (Jan 2017 to Present)</i>

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	PROPOSED GRADES	ACTUAL GRADES
2000-01	150	143	95%	K-2	K-2
2001-02	200	191	96%	K-3	K-3
2002-03	250	245	98%	K-4	K-4
2003-04	300	300	100%	K-5	K-5
2004-05	300	299	100%	K-6	K-6
2005-06	459	450	98%	K-7	K-7
2006-07	500	502	100%	K-8	K-8
2007-08	550	495	90%	K-8	K-8
2008-09	575	503	87%	K-8	K-8
2009-10	575	529	92%	K-8	K-8
2010-11	634	693	109%	K-8	K-8
2011-12	659	745	113%	K-8	K-8
2012-13	684	682	100%	K-8	K-8
2013-14	734	611	82%	K-8	K-8
2014-15	734	628	86%	K-8	K-8
2015-16	685	639	93%	K-8	K-8
2016-17	700	628	90%	K-8	K-8
2017-18	700	658	94%	K-8	K-8

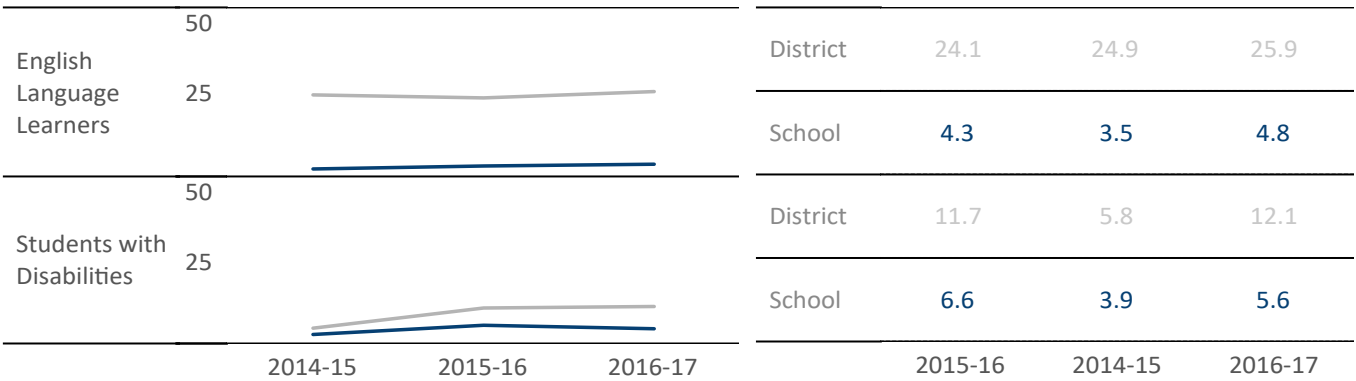
1. Source: The Institute's board records at the time of the visit.

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

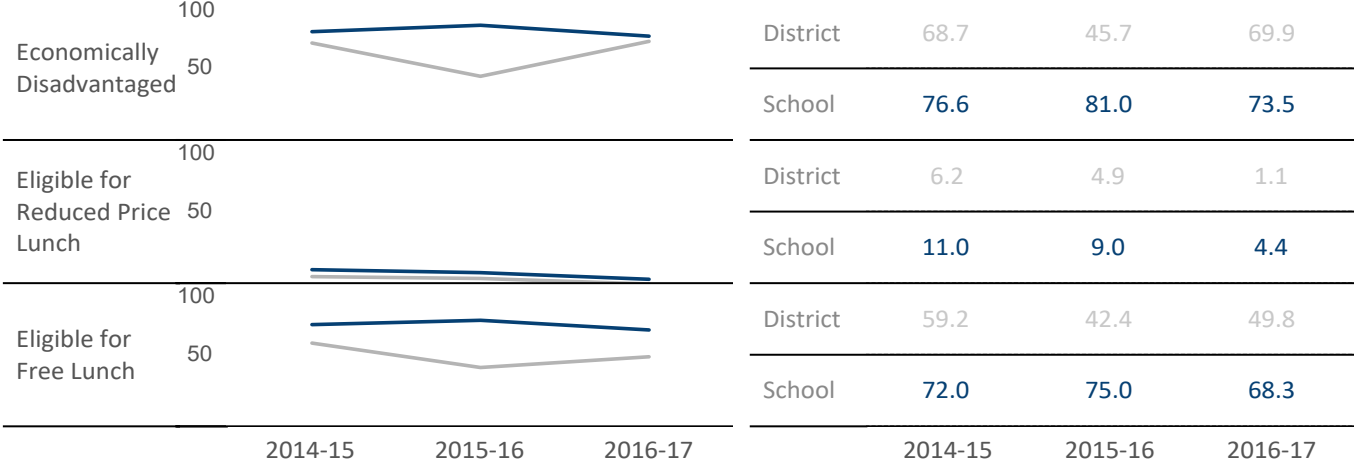
APPENDIX A: School Overview

Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School Roosevelt UFSD

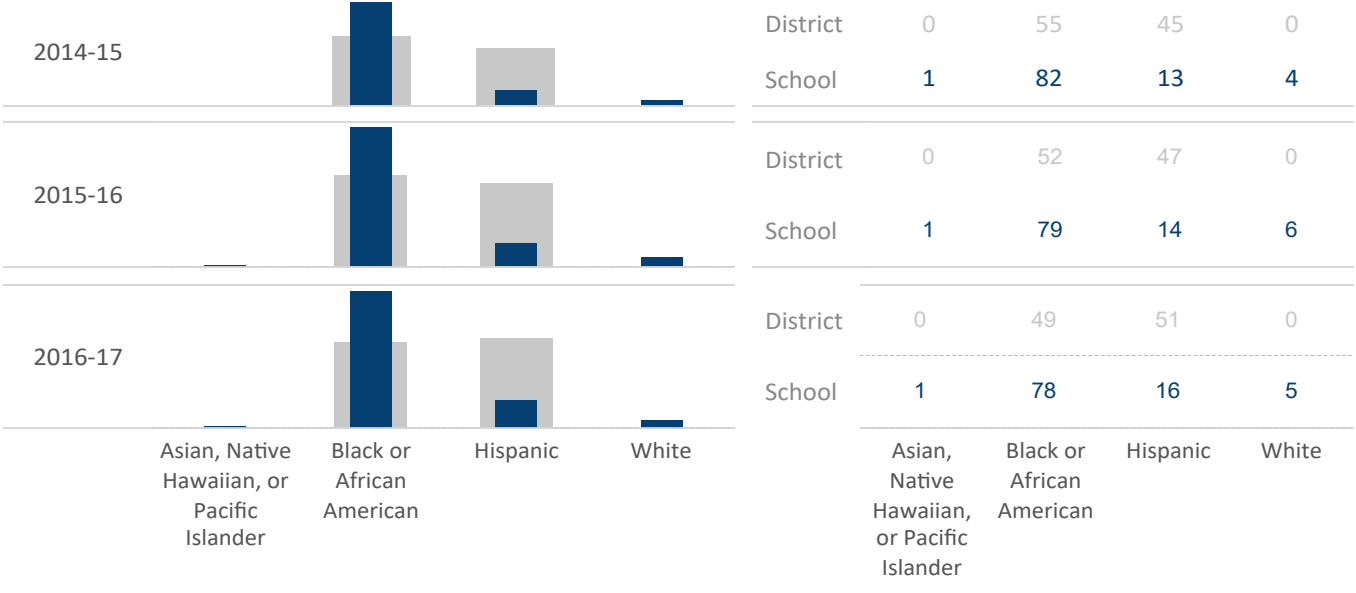
Student Demographics: Special Populations



Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



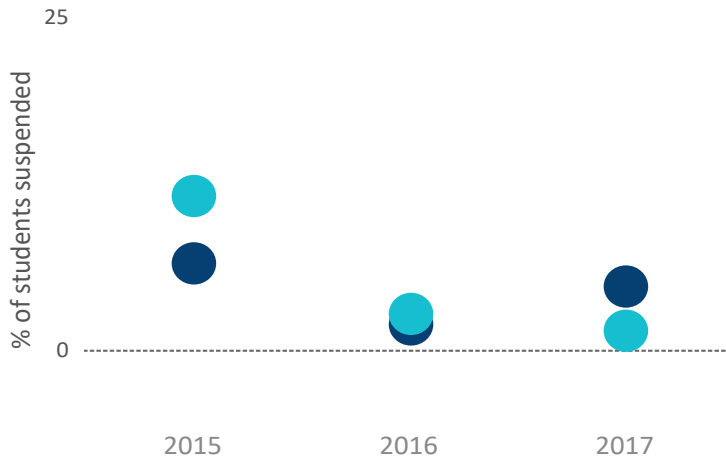
Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



APPENDIX A: School Overview

Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School

Roosevelt UFSD



	School ISS Rate	School OSS Rate
2015	11.2	6.3
2016	2.8	2.0
2017	1.6	4.7

District data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE"): the total the number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

Persistence in Enrollment: The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return



Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the school each year.

2015	2016	2017
0	0	0

Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2016-17

		District Target	School
Enrollment	Economically disadvantaged	62.3	80.8
	English language learners	24.6	5.9
	Students with disabilities	11.7	5.6
Retention	Economically disadvantaged	95.8	82.1
	English language learners	95.9	91.9
	Students with disabilities	93.0	81.4

APPENDIX A: School Overview

SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2000-01	First Year Visit	June 4, 2001
2002-03	Evaluation Visit	January 12 -14, 2003
2004-05	Initial Renewal	Fall 2004
2006-07	Evaluation Visit	May 23, 2007
2009-10	Subsequent Renewal	November 9, 2009
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	November 7 - 8, 2011
2012-13	Evaluation Visit	February 20 - 21, 2013
2014-15	Subsequent Renewal Visit	November 7-8, 2014
2016-17	Evaluation Visit	June 6-7, 2017
2017-18	Evaluation Visit	April 16-17, 2018

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
April 16-17, 2018	Kerri Rizzolo	School Evaluation Analyst
	Hannah Colestock	School Evaluation Analyst
	Andrew Kile	Director of School Evaluation
	Sonia Park	External Consultant

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	ACCOUNTABILITY PERIOD ³	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Third Year of Fourth Charter Term	Fourth Year of Five-Year Accountability Period	Fall 2019

3. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision in the last year of a charter term, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of that charter term. For schools in initial charter terms, the Accountability Period is the first four years that the school provides instruction. For schools in subsequent charter terms, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous charter term through the next to last year of the current charter term.

APPENDIX A: School Overview

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS:

ELEMENT	EVIDENT?
Ongoing student assessment as part of academic intervention;	+
Infusion of the arts throughout the curriculum with interdisciplinary programs at the middle school level;	-
ELA to enhance student reading, writing, and listening skills;	-
A comprehensive mathematics approach using research-based programs;	+
Use of Core Knowledge as the middle school social studies program, supported by literature presenting multiple perspectives;	-
Strong culture and respect for learning and for others; and,	+
Strong parental involvement.	+

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-8			2015-16 Grades Served: K-8			2016-17 Grades Served: K-8			MET		
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)			
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	18.2 (66)	18.2 (55)	3	38.7 (75)	34.8 (66)	3	52.8 (72)	56.3 (64)	NO		
	4	17.2 (58)	18.5 (54)	4	21.1 (57)	20.8 (48)	4	18.9 (74)	18.6 (70)			
	5	16.0 (50)	17.9 (39)	5	20.8 (48)	25.0 (40)	5	19.2 (52)	18.4 (49)			
	6	15.1 (53)	17.8 (45)	6	15.1 (53)	13.3 (45)	6	10.0 (50)	10.6 (47)			
	7	22.5 (40)	25.0 (36)	7	18.2 (44)	17.5 (40)	7	20.9 (43)	22.5 (40)			
	8	17.4 (23)	19.0 (21)	8	41.5 (41)	39.5 (38)	8	40.5 (37)	42.4 (33)			
	All	17.6 (290)	19.2 (250)	All	26.4 (318)	25.6 (277)	All	27.7 (328)	28.4 (303)			
	COMPARATIVE MEASURES 2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system. 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district. 4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Grades	PLI	AMO	Grades	PLI	AMO	Grades	PLI		AMO	NO
		3-8	76	97	3-8	97	104	3-8	102		111	
		Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District			Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District			Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District				
Grades		School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District			
3-8		19.2	8.9	3-8	25.6	16.3	3-8	28.4	17.6			
% ED		Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted	% ED	Actual	Predicted			
76.1		17.6	22.2	81.7	26.4	27.2	80.0	27.7	29.9			
			-0.33			-0.07			-0.14			
Effect Size			Effect Size			Effect Size						
NO			NO			NO						
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	Grades	School	State	NO		
	4	44.6	50.0	4	37.9	50.0	4	30.5	50.0			
	5	48.2	50.0	5	57.9	50.0	5	55.1	50.0			
	6	48.6	50.0	6	52.0	50.0	6	35.7	50.0			
	7	53.5	50.0	7	42.8	50.0	7	46.7	50.0			
	8	44.0	50.0	8	52.3	50.0	8	60.4	50.0			
	All	47.8	50.0	All	48.4	50.0	All	43.4	50.0			
	NO			NO			NO					

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics Roosevelt Children's Academy Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-8				2015-16 Grades Served: K-8				2016-17 Grades Served: K-8				MET		
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	AMO	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	AMO	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	AMO	MET		
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	42.4 (66)	38.9 (54)		3	24.7 (73)	25.0 (64)		3	47.2 (72)	48.4 (64)		NO		
	4	36.4 (55)	35.3 (51)		4	32.7 (52)	33.3 (42)		4	22.1 (68)	21.9 (64)				
	5	29.8 (47)	33.3 (39)		5	20.0 (50)	23.8 (42)		5	28.9 (45)	25.6 (43)				
	6	19.2 (52)	22.7 (44)		6	18.2 (44)	19.4 (36)		6	13.6 (44)	15.0 (40)				
	7	51.3 (39)	50.0 (36)		7	18.9 (37)	17.6 (34)		7	17.6 (34)	18.8 (32)				
	All	35.7 (277)	36.3 (240)		All	22.0 (296)	22.7 (255)		All	27.9 (287)	27.8 (266)		NO		
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO				
	3-8	114	94	YES	3-8	88	101	NO	3-8	97	109	NO	NO		
	Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District				Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District				Comparison: Roosevelt Union Free School District						
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3-8	36.3	13.1	YES	3-8	22.7	14.6	YES	3-8	27.8	18.8	YES	YES		
	% ED Actual Predicted Effect Size				% ED Actual Predicted Effect Size				% ED Actual Predicted Effect Size						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	76.2	35.7	29.3	0.32	YES	81.8	22.0	27.0	-0.24	NO	80.0	27.9	30.5	-0.13	NO
	Grades				Grades				Grades						
	School State				School State				School State						
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	4	27.6			4	31.8			4	36.9					
	5	48.8			5	36.8			5	51.4					
	6	46.0			6	37.2			6	41.3					
	7	54.1			7	42.2			7	46.3					
	8	58.0			8	25.2			8	53.2					
	All	44.2	50.0	NO	All	34.6	50.0	NO	All	44.1	50.0	NO	NO		

VERSION 5.0, MAY 2012

Introduction

The State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks¹ (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) serve two primary functions at renewal:

- They provide a framework for the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) to gather and evaluate evidence to determine whether a school has made an adequate case for renewal. In turn, this evidence assists the Institute in deciding if it can make the required legal and other findings in order to reach a positive recommendation for renewal. For example, the various benchmarks that the Institute uses to determine whether the school has had fiscally responsible practices in place during the last charter period allow the Institute to determine with greater precision whether the school will operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter period, a finding that the New York Charter Schools Act requires the SUNY Trustees to make.
- At the same time that the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks provide a framework for the Institute to collect and review evidence, they also provide the school with a guide to understanding the Institute’s evaluative criteria. As the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks (or some subset of them) as the framework for conducting its ongoing school evaluation visits, school leaders should be fully aware of the content of the Benchmarks at the time of renewal.

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks are organized into four inter-connected renewal questions that each school must answer when submitting a renewal application. The benchmarks further reflect the interwoven nature of schools from an academic, organizational, fiscal and/or legal perspective. For example, the Institute could reasonably place many of the academic benchmarks under the heading of organizational effectiveness. More generally, some redundancy exists because the Institute looks at the same issue from different perspectives.

Precisely how the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, during both the renewal process and throughout the charter period, is explained in greater detail in the Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University of New York (the “SUNY Renewal Practices”), available on the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal/>. Responses to frequently asked questions about the Institute’s use of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks appear below:

- The Institute does not have a point system for recommending renewal. A school cannot simply tally up the number of positive benchmark statements in order to determine the Institute’s recommendation
 - Some benchmarks are weighed more heavily than others. In particular, the Institute gives the greatest weight to how well the school has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.

1. Research on public school reform, known as the effective schools movement, has embraced the premise that, given certain organizing and cultural characteristics, schools can teach all children the intended curriculum and hold them to high academic standards. Over the decades, the accumulated research into effective schools has yielded a set of common characteristics that all effective schools share.

These characteristics are so consistently prevalent among successful schools that they have come to be known as the Correlates of Effective Schools.

The Renewal Benchmarks adapt and elaborate on these correlates.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- Despite the fact that the Accountability Plan comprises only a single benchmark, a school’s performance on that benchmark is critical. In fact, it is so important that while the Institute may recommend non-renewal for fiscal and organizational failures (if sufficiently serious), excellence in these areas will not excuse poor academic performance.
- The Institute does not use every benchmark during every kind of renewal review, and how the benchmarks are used differs depending on a school’s circumstances. For example, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (Benchmarks 1B-1F, 2C and 2D) are given far less weight in making a renewal decision on schools that the Institute has previously renewed. Similarly, less weight is accorded to these benchmarks during an initial renewal review where a school has consistently met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
 - The Institute also may not consider every indicator subsumed under a benchmark when determining if a school has met that benchmark, given the school’s stage of development or its previous track record.
- Aside from Benchmark 1A on academic Accountability Plan goals (which is singular in its importance), no school should fear that a failure to meet every element of every benchmark means that it is not in a position to make a case for renewal. To the contrary, the Institute has yet to see a school that performs perfectly in every respect. The Institute appreciates that the benchmarks set a very high standard collectively. While the Institute certainly hopes and expects that schools aim high, it is understood that a school’s reach will necessarily exceed its grasp in at least some aspects.

In this fifth edition of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, the Institute has made some revisions to the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks, namely those benchmarks used for ongoing school evaluation visits, to streamline the collection of evidence. For example, the Institute has incorporated Student Order and Discipline into Pedagogy, and Professional Development into Instructional Leadership. The Institute has rewritten some of the overarching benchmark statements to capture the most salient aspects of school effectiveness, organizational viability, legal compliance, and fiscal soundness. Some of the bulleted indicators within benchmarks have been recast or eliminated. Finally, the Institute has added some indicators to align the benchmarks with changes in the Charter Schools Act (e.g., provisions in meeting enrollment and retention targets when assigned and abiding by the General Municipal Law).

It is important that the entire school community understand the renewal process. All members of a school’s leadership team and board should carefully review both the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks and the SUNY Renewal Practices. Note that a renewal overview document for parents, teacher and community members is also available on the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal/>. Please do not hesitate to contact the Institute with any questions.

RENEWAL QUESTION 1

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1A

OVER THE ACCOUNTABILITY PERIOD, THE SCHOOL HAS MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

The Institute determines the extent to which the school has met the Accountability Plan goals in the following areas:

- English language arts;
- mathematics;
- science;
- social studies (high school only);
- NCLB;
- high school graduation and college preparation (if applicable); and
- optional academic goals included by the school.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1B

THE SCHOOL HAS AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school's curriculum and state performance standards;
- the school has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing assessments;
- the school makes assessment data accessible to teachers, school leaders and board members;
- teachers use assessment results to meet students' needs by adjusting classroom instruction, grouping students and/or identifying students for special intervention;
- school leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development and coaching strategies; and
- the school regularly communicates to parents/guardians about their students' progress and growth.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1C

THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM SUPPORTS TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school has a curriculum framework with student performance expectations that provides a fixed, underlying structure, aligned to state standards and across grades;
- in addition to the framework, the school has supporting tools (i.e., curriculum maps or scope and sequence documents) that provide a bridge between the curriculum framework and lesson plans;
- teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on these documents;
- the school has a process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents and its resources for delivering the curriculum; and
- teachers plan purposeful and focused lessons.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION IS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

The following elements are generally present:

- teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school's curriculum;
- teachers regularly and effectively use techniques to check for student understanding;
- teachers include opportunities in their lessons to challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher-order thinking and problem solving skills;
- teachers maximize learning time (e.g., appropriate pacing, on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students); transitions are efficient; and
- teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1E

THE SCHOOL HAS STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge and pedagogical skills) and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed;
- the instructional leadership is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff;
- instructional leaders provide sustained, systemic and effective coaching and supervision that improves teachers' instructional effectiveness;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- instructional leaders provide opportunities and guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels;
- instructional leaders implement a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers;
- professional development activities are interrelated with classroom practice;
- instructional leaders regularly conduct teacher evaluations with clear criteria that accurately identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses; and
- instructional leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement.

THE SCHOOL MEETS THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1F

The following elements are generally present:

- the school uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities, English language learners and those struggling academically;
- the school has adequate intervention programs to meet the needs of at-risk students;
- general education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the general education program;
- the school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students;
- teachers are aware of their students' progress toward meeting IEP goals, achieving English proficiency or school-based goals for struggling students;
- the school provides adequate training and professional development to identify at-risk students and to help teachers meet students' needs; and
- the school provides opportunities for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff including the school nurse, if applicable.

RENEWAL QUESTION 2

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2A

THE SCHOOL IS FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION AND HAS IMPLEMENTED THE KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN ITS CHARTER.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school faithfully follows its mission; and
- the school has implemented its key design elements.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2B

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school regularly communicates each child's academic performance results to families;
- families are satisfied with the school; and
- parents keep their children enrolled year-to-year.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2C

THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTS THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program;
- the organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities;
- the school has a clear student discipline system in place at the administrative level that is consistently applied;
- the school retains quality staff;
- the school has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals;
- the school maintains adequate student enrollment;
- the school has procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly; and
- the school regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs and makes changes if necessary.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2D

THE SCHOOL BOARD WORKS EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE THE SCHOOL'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

The following elements are generally present:

- board members possess adequate skills and have put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school and oversee management of day-to-day operations in order to ensure the school's future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization;
- the board requests and receives sufficient information to provide rigorous oversight of the school's program and finances;
- it establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals, (including Accountability Plan, fiscal, facilities and fundraising), and has in place benchmarks for tracking progress as well as a process for their regular review and revision;
- the board successfully recruits, hires and retains key personnel, and provides them with sufficient resources to function effectively;
- the board regularly evaluates its own performance and that of the school leaders and the management company (if applicable), holding them accountable for student achievement; and
- the board effectively communicates with the school community including school leadership, staff, parents/guardians and students.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2E

THE BOARD IMPLEMENTS, MAINTAINS AND ABIDES BY APPROPRIATE POLICIES, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES.

The following elements are generally present:

- the board effectively communicates with its partner or management organizations as well as key contractors such as back-office service providers and ensures that it receives value in exchange for contracts and relationships it enters into and effectively monitors such relationships;
- the board takes effective action when there are organizational, leadership, management, facilities or fiscal deficiencies; or where the management or partner organization fails to meet expectations; to correct those deficiencies and puts in place benchmarks for determining if the partner organization corrects them in a timely fashion;
- the board regularly reviews and updates board and school policies as needed and has in place an orientation process for new members;
- the board effectively recruits and selects new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- the board implements a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with that set forth in the charter and with the General Municipal Law—and consistently abides by them throughout the term of the charter;
- the board generally avoids conflicts of interest; where not possible, the board manages those conflicts in a clear and transparent manner;
- the board implements a process for dealing with complaints consistent with that set forth in the charter, makes the complaint policy clear to all stakeholders, and follows the policy including acting on complaints in a timely fashion;
- the board abides by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee election and the removal and filling of vacancies; and
- the board holds all meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and records minutes for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings.

THE SCHOOL SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIES WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND THE PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school compiles 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; the school substantially complies with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- the school abides by the terms of its monitoring plan;
- the school implements effective systems and controls to ensure that it meets legal and charter requirements;
- the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel who reviews and makes recommendations on relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and who also handles other legal matters as needed; and
- the school manages any litigation appropriately and provides litigation papers to insurers and the Institute in a timely manner.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2F

RENEWAL QUESTION 3

IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3A

THE SCHOOL OPERATES PURSUANT TO A LONG-RANGE FINANCIAL PLAN IN WHICH IT CREATES REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures;
- board members, school management and staff contribute to the budget process, as appropriate;
- the school frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions;
- the school routinely analyzes budget variances; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions; and
- actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3B

THE SCHOOL MAINTAINS APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school follows a set of comprehensive written fiscal policies and procedures;
- the school accurately records and appropriately documents transactions in accordance with management's direction, laws, regulations, grants and contracts;
- the school safeguards its assets;
- the school identifies/analyzes risks and takes mitigating actions;
- the school has controls in place to ensure that management decisions are properly carried out and monitors and assesses controls to ensure their adequacy;
- the school's trustees and employees adhere to a code of ethics;
- the school ensures duties are appropriately segregated, or institutes compensating controls;
- the school ensures that employees performing financial functions are appropriately qualified and adequately trained;
- the school has systems in place to provide the appropriate information needed by staff and the board to make sound financial decisions and to fulfill compliance requirements;
- a staff member of the school reviews grant agreements and restrictive gifts and monitors compliance with all stated conditions;
- the school prepares payroll according to appropriate state and federal regulations and school policy;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- the school ensures that employees, trustees and volunteers who handle cash and investments are bonded to help assure the safeguarding of assets; and
- the school takes corrective action in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, the Institute, and/or the State Education Department or the Comptroller, if needed.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3C

THE SCHOOL HAS COMPLIED WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS BY PROVIDING THE SUNY TRUSTEES AND THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WITH REQUIRED FINANCIAL REPORTS THAT ARE ON TIME, COMPLETE AND FOLLOW GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES.

The following reports have generally been filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner:

- annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable;
- annual budgets and cash flow statements;
- un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment;
- bi-monthly enrollment reports to the district and, if applicable, to the State Education Department including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students; and
- grant expenditure reports.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3D

THE SCHOOL MAINTAINS ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS. CRITICAL FINANCIAL NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL ARE NOT DEPENDENT ON VARIABLE INCOME (GRANTS, DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING).

The following elements are generally present:

- the school maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly;
- the school maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally three months);
- the school prepares and monitors cash flow projections;
- If the school includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis;
- If necessary, the school pursues district state aid intercepts with the state education department to ensure adequate per pupil funding; and
- the school accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

RENEWAL QUESTION 4

IF THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER IS RENEWED, WHAT ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE TERM OF THE NEXT CHARTER PERIOD, AND ARE THEY REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4A

KEY STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE SCHOOL, AS DEFINED IN THE EXHIBITS OF THE APPLICATION FOR CHARTER RENEWAL, ARE REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- the school is likely to fulfill its mission in the next charter period;
- the school has an enrollment plan that can support the school program;
- the school calendar and daily schedules clearly provide sufficient instructional time to meet all legal requirements, allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals and abide by its proposed budget;
- key design elements are consistent with the mission statement and are feasible given the school's budget and staffing;
- a curriculum framework for added grades aligns with the state's performance standards; and
- plans in the other required Exhibits indicate that the school's structure is likely to support the educational program.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4B

THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ALLOW IT TO MEET ITS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- for those grades served during the last charter period, the school has plans for sustaining and (where possible) improving upon the student outcomes it has compiled during the last charter period including any adjustments or additions to the school's educational program;
- for a school that is seeking to add grades, the school is likely to meet its Accountability Plan goals and the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks at the new grade levels; and
- where the school will provide secondary school instruction, it has presented a set of requirements for graduation that students are likely to meet and that are consistent with the graduation standards set by the Board of Regents.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4C

THE SCHOOL PROVIDES A REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE PLAN FOR BOARD OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- school trustees are likely to possess a range of experience, skills, and abilities sufficient to oversee the academic, organizational and fiscal performance of the school;
- plans by the school board to orient new trustees to their roles and responsibilities, and, if appropriate, to participate in ongoing board training are likely to sustain the board's ability to carry out its responsibilities;
- if the school plans to change an association with a partner or management organization in the term of a future charter, it has provided a clear rationale for the disassociation and an outline indicating how it will manage the functions previously associated with that partnering organization; and
- if the school is either moving from self-management to a management structure or vice-versa, or is changing its charter management organization/educational service provider, its plans indicate that it will be managed in an effective, sound and viable manner including appropriate oversight of the academic and fiscal performance of the school or the management organization.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4D

THE SCHOOL PROVIDES A REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE FISCAL PLAN INCLUDING PLANS FOR AN ADEQUATE FACILITY.

Based on the elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- the school's budgets adequately support staffing, enrollment and facility projections;
- fiscal plans are based on the sound use of financial resources to support academic program needs;
- fiscal plans are clear, accurate, complete and based on reasonable assumptions;
- information on enrollment demand provides clear evidence for the reasonableness of projected enrollment; and
- facility plans are likely to meet educational program needs.

