



UFT Charter School

School Evaluation Report 2011-2012

Visit Date: December 6-8, 2011

Final Report Issued: April 20, 2012

Charter Schools Institute
State University of New York
41 State Street, Suite 700
Albany, New York 12207
518/433-8277, 518/427-6510 (fax)
<http://www.newyorkcharters.org>

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes four components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. The third section entitled School Evaluation Visit presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks. Finally, the report includes the school's 2010-11 Performance Review and Summaries, which provide an analysis of the attainment of the key academic goals in the school's Accountability Plan. Following these sections, the report includes an appendix containing the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) used during the visit.

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

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

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

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	July 15, 2005
Date Initial Charter Approved by Board of Regents	July 21, 2005
School Opening Date	September, 2005

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2005-06	300 Wyona Street Brooklyn, NY	All	New York City CSD 19
2006-07 to Present	300 Wyona Street Brooklyn, NY 800 Van Siclen Avenue Brooklyn, NY	Elementary Grades Middle Grades	New York City CSD 19

Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Current Partner	United Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, Inc.	Non-profit	2005-present

Renewal

Type of Renewal	Date
Initial Short-Term	March 16, 2010

Current Mission Statement

The UFT Charter School will prepare all students to achieve academic and personal excellence. The Elementary Academy of the UFT Charter School will graduate students fully prepared for a demanding secondary education. The Secondary Academy of the UFT Charter School will graduate students fully prepared for a demanding college education. Both academies will help to prepare students for meaningful lives as full democratic citizens in a free society.

Current Key Design Elements

• High academic expectations;
• rigorous college-prep curriculum that includes English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, physical education and the arts;
• two teachers per classroom in Kindergarten through third grades;
• academic-based after school program run by a community based organization;
• high-quality teachers;
• National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification;
• balancing human resources with curriculum and school culture;
• democratic governance;
• professional development;
• three parent seats on the school's board of trustees;
• family-school partnership;
• CREST core values (community, respect, scholarship, trustworthiness); and
• "Habits for Thought" (Analysis, Breadth of Perspective, Connection, Discourse, and Evidence).

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Charter Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹	Original Chartered Grades	Revised Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2005-06	150	N/A	138	K-1	N/A	K-1	180
2006-07	225	350	355	K-2	K-2, 6	K-2, 6	180
2007-08	300	525	547	K-3	K-3, 6-7	K-3, 6-7	180
2008-09	375	735	715	K-4	K-4, 6-8	K-4, 6-8	180
2009-10	450	860	805	K-5	K-9	K-9	180
2010-11	972	N/A	960	K-5	K-10	K-10	180
2011-12	1,074	N/A	1,038	K-12	N/A	K-11	180

Student Demographics

	2007-08 ²		2008-09 ³		2009-10 ⁴	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 19 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 19 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 19 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	1	0	1	0	1
Black or African American	82	53	84	53	81	53
Hispanic	16	39	14	39	17	40
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	6	2	6	2	6
White	1	1	0	1	0	1
Multiracial	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Populations						
Limited English Proficient	1	13	2	13	1	13
Free/Reduced Price Lunch						
Eligible for Free Lunch	71	80	48	81	66	83
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	17	6	9	6	10	6

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

² Source: 2007-08 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

³ Source: 2008-09 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department

⁴ Source: 2009-10 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department

Current Board of Trustees

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Michael Mulgrew	UFT Trustee
Evelyn DeJesus	UFT Trustee, Chairperson
Kelly Nowlin	Staff Trustee
Justin Davis	Staff Trustee
Michelle Boddin-White	School Leader
Burton Sacks	External Trustee
Cali Cole	External Trustee
Sharan Carter	Parent Trustee
H. DeVore Chapman	External Trustee
Zakiyah Shaakir-Ansari	Parent Trustee
Alexandra Salamon	Staff Trustee
Chester Campbell	Parent Trustee

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2005-06	Rita Danis (Elementary)
2006-07	Rita Danis (Elementary) and Drew Goodman (Secondary)
2007-08	Rita Danis (Elementary) and Drew Goodman (Secondary)
2008-09	Michelle Bodden (Elementary) and Drew Goodman/Mary Butz (Secondary)
2009-10	Michelle Bodden (Elementary) and Danny Wilcox (Secondary)
2010-11	Shelia Evans-Tranumn, Superintendent; Michelle White, Elementary Principal; and Shep Brown, Interim Secondary Principal
2011-12	Shelia Evans-Tranumn, Superintendent; Michelle White, Elementary Principal; and Martin Weinstein, Secondary Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2005-06	First-Year Visit	Institute	March 23, 2006
2006-07	Second-Year Visit	Institute	April 12, 2007
2007-08	Third-Year Visit	External (SchoolWorks)	May 5-6, 2008
2009-10	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	December 8-10, 2009
2010-11	Subsequent Visit	Institute	February 9-10, 2011
2011-12	Subsequent Visit	Institute	December 6-8, 2011

CONDUCT OF VISIT

Specifications

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
December 6-8, 2011	Ron Miller, Ph.D	Vice President for Accountability
	Danielle Keen	Analyst for School Evaluation
	Sean Fitzsimons	Program Analyst
	Lori Clement	Senior Analyst
	Aretha Miller	External Consultant
	Josephine Baker	External Consultant

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle ⁵	
Charter Period	2 nd Year of 2 nd Charter Term
Accountability Period	3 rd Year of 3-Year Accountability Period
Impending Renewal Visit	Fall 2012

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

SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment

UFT elementary academy has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data, and teachers have begun to use it to improve instruction and student learning. The secondary academy is beginning to implement an interim assessment program at the middle school level; while the academy has administered an assessment for high school students, it does not have a high school interim assessment program.

The elementary academy regularly administers diagnostic, formative, summative and informal assessments including Achieve 3000, Children's Progress, and New York State practice exams, as well as weekly and unit assessment based on the school's commercial curriculum. The academy's assessment coordinator, who scores the standardized assessments within a week, works with "grade bands" and individual teachers to interpret results and adjust instruction. Teachers administer and score weekly and unit assessments from the academy's commercial curriculum and then analyze the results together at grade band meetings. Teachers report using the data to group students for differentiated instruction in general education classrooms, group students for remediation, refer students to special education services, identify opportunities for re-teaching and track student progress. In comparison to previous years, the elementary academy assessment coordinator works directly with teachers to analyze data in making instructional decisions. Both teachers and school leaders report that teachers are now more proficient at analyzing and using data; however, as this structure is new, the school has not yet validated the approach by demonstrating improved performance on high-stakes exams.

The secondary academy has taken some steps toward implementing a school-wide interim assessment program, but at the time of the December visit, plans were still evolving and interim assessment results had not yet had an impact on instruction. Aside from last year's state assessments, secondary academy teachers have not used school-wide data to systematically improve instruction. The middle school grades currently rely heavily on data from April's state assessment. The academy has used these assessment results to group students into three performance categories for assignment into daily Academic Intervention Strategy (AIS), or "Core", classes, as well as to modify the scope and sequence in order to address general skill deficiencies. Teachers generally report being aware of students' specific skill deficiencies based on the April exam.

In 6th through 8th grade, the school administered a school-wide Kaplan benchmark exam to all students at the end of October. It included an item skills analysis with teachers expected to develop improvement plans by the beginning of January for students who scored at Level 1 and 2 on last year's state exam and are in the remedial AIS class. The school is introducing these plans for the first time. At the time of the visit, some teachers were developing plans based on the Kaplan results and were organizing the assessment data and plans in data binders for easy reference in student support team meetings, responding to parent requests and to aid instruction. The director of faculty plans to meet with teachers once a month starting in January to monitor improvement plan implementation.

School leaders expect teachers to use the assessment data for developing individual improvement plans for all data tiers of middle school students, but teachers report only generating them for the lowest performing students. School leaders did not report on plans for using the data for other purposes. In addition, because of the late administration of the Kaplan exam and the slow implementation of the individual improvement plans, teachers can only use assessment results well into the school year. This delay affects the large number of 6th graders who entered the school for the first time this year and for whom last spring's state assessment results (taken at their prior school) are often not available to UFT.

The academy has scheduled two more middle school-wide assessments later in the year, using state practice exams, which may not align with the nationally administered Kaplan test. The original plan was to administer Kaplan three times, but the school decided against further use because it does not adequately assess the state standards, as well as concerns about the validity of results based on repeated administrations. Nevertheless, it is unclear how the school will assess overall student progress when comparing Kaplan results from October with state practice-exam results later in the year.

Aside from coordinated school-wide assessment administration, middle school teachers report giving their classes state practice exams on their own at the beginning of the year to compare data from the previous year's results and to use as a diagnostic tool. Since the school-wide assessment system is in development, measures of student growth rely mostly on teachers' independent data collection and analysis.

The high school administered the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in November. With about two-thirds of the 9th to 11th grade students taking the test, it has value as a college preparation activity. Nevertheless, it does not serve as a valid interim assessment for evaluating overall student performance to the extent that a notable proportion of the students did not take the November exam. At the time of the visit, the results were not yet available and there are no apparent plans to use them for making instructional decisions. The school currently intends to develop its own in-house PSAT practice exams as a follow-up. Similar to the middle school, the high school teachers develop their own assessments, in this case, as preparation for Regents exams. Some high school teachers receive guidance and support on test development and data analysis from the secondary academy assessment coordinator.

Throughout the secondary academy, there is evidence of a new emphasis on student writing with work products on display throughout the school. While the exhibits reflect a set of teacher expectations, including grading with rubrics, the scoring often does not reflect quality. Nevertheless, the school leaders have a thorough understanding of steps to take in the development of a sound writing program.

1. C Curriculum

UFT Charter School does not have a uniform school-wide curriculum. At the elementary academy, teachers rely on commercial curriculum, which aligns to the state standards, as a framework to guide instruction. While many secondary teachers create units and lesson plans that are generally aligned with the standards, their efforts are not coordinated or aligned to those in the elementary academy.

The elementary and secondary academies take different approaches to curriculum development and planning. At the elementary academy, teachers largely rely on commercial curriculum that, according to consultants from the commercial curriculum provider, aligns to both the New York State and Common Core Standards. Using these curricula as a framework, teachers create pacing-guides and unit plans that they analyze and revise frequently based on student assessment results, teacher observations and input from the school's assessment coordinator. Rather than make large-scale, systematic revisions, teachers make changes week-to-week as lessons roll out. The academy, as a whole, is beginning to analyze the effectiveness of its broader curriculum framework and adjust how teachers are required to implement it over the course of the academic year. Elementary teachers took the first steps toward a coordinated revision during a whole-school planning session during summer professional development. Revisions are, however, currently in the early stages. The elementary academy has had only one professional development session regarding vertical alignment of the curriculum, and teachers report studying the standards for the grades above and below their own when creating pacing guides.

Teachers at the secondary academy create minimal scope and sequence documents to provide a general overview of the topics covered each month throughout the year with suggested pacing and examples of resources and assessments. At each grade level, teachers work with their subject area peers to generate unit plans based on scope and sequences in order to guide specific lesson planning. While each unit plan identifies relevant New York State standards, the school has no guiding document that provides a comprehensive, strategic approach to using the standards as an overarching framework for curriculum planning. While unit plans identify common unit-wide objectives that all students must attain, as well as some indications of pacing, teachers have discretion over how they plan and structure their learning objectives even within grade-level department teams. Each grade level department takes a different approach to co-planning, with some working closely together to ensure alignment of instructional activities and others working as individuals with little consideration of what other teachers of the same class are doing. Additionally, the academy is currently creating curriculum for the 11th grade as the year progresses and has not yet planned next year's 12th grade curriculum; this timing demonstrates a lack of strategic planning and no comprehensive approach to curriculum development.

Throughout the academy, there is little consideration for vertical alignment of the curriculum between grades at weekly secondary department meetings. Nor are there common curriculum expectations, practices or other elements of alignment between the elementary and secondary academies. Finally, neither campus provides regular oversight of lesson plan development, although at the time of the visit, secondary leaders have begun articulating common expectations for lesson plan formatting and use.

1. D Pedagogy

Generally effective instruction is evident in most classrooms in the elementary academy. At the secondary academy, instruction varies from basic, but purposeful, to high quality.

During literacy periods, elementary teachers implement structured lessons consisting of a 15-minute mini lesson and two 15-minute blocks for small group work, during which leveled groups of students focus on specific skills. The elementary academy has begun to use homogenous grouping

during small group work in order to differentiate for the needs of individual students. In some classes, teachers instruct small, leveled groups, using differentiated activities and texts to meet the individual needs of the students within them and use data to inform frequent changes in student grouping; however, in others, teachers teach the same lesson to each small group. Math lessons include a mini-lesson, group work and independent practice, with paraprofessionals working with small groups or individuals on specific skills when needed. All students are engaged and participate in purposeful learning activities.

A limited number of teachers pose higher-order thinking questions, asking students to defend their comments, promoting accountable partner talk and prompting students to answer with full sentences and to incorporate relevant advanced vocabulary. However, in other classrooms, teachers praise students despite low-level or incorrect responses to questions without probing further to elicit evidence for demonstrating understanding. Instructors maximize learning time in some classes with games and procedures to reinforce routines during classroom transitions; however, in other classes, transitions lack urgency and students do not move purposefully from one activity to the next. All teachers clearly articulate the objectives of the lesson to students, though many lessons lack rigor and focus on lower levels objectives.

At the secondary level, high quality instruction is evident in only some classes. All teachers have a clear plan for delivering their lessons, and in every class, at least a majority of students are minimally engaged in learning activities. A limited number of teachers challenge students with engaging activities that require higher order thinking skills, such as using context clues to detect bias in controversial newspaper articles. However, in most classes, lessons lack rigor, are largely teacher driven, and are not sufficiently engaging to capture the attention of all students. Low-level misbehavior, such as constant whispering, is present to some degree in many classes throughout the school, although this is not typically distracting enough to prevent teachers from delivering their lessons. Transitions reflect some sense of urgency; however, teachers often need to prompt students to begin to work at the beginning of each assignment, suggesting that students have not adequately internalized routines. Most teachers demonstrate adequate content knowledge, though a limited number of lessons contain content errors. When special education teachers are present in the classroom, they act as monitors, circulating around the classroom, rather than engaging in instruction.

1. E Instructional Leadership

With continued stable administrative leadership, the elementary academy has been able to take further steps to establish systems and procedures for improving teacher effectiveness and program coherence. At the secondary academy, new, strong instructional leaders have recently joined the staff, but impediments to developing an instructional leadership system remain.

The leadership in the elementary academy has introduced new personnel and procedures for linking assessment with instruction and focusing on student performance. The leaders have fully implemented these systems, but they are still being refined. Newly introduced subject area coaches and the assessment coordinator provide regular instructional support at grade band meetings, while the principal and dean of faculty evaluate teacher performance. Leaders systematically share teacher strengths and weaknesses with the coaches who refocus their grade band activity and individual teacher support accordingly. The academy pairs teachers with a

mentor with whom they meet weekly and some teachers receive regular, individual support from a coach.

Teachers indicate that the academy continually centers its attention on using assessment data to make instructional decisions in order to improve student performance. Teachers report that the supervisory team frequently observes their instruction and that the teachers have a clear understanding of how leaders evaluate them. The academy uses a computerized teacher evaluation tool that tracks the development of their skill competencies. At the time of the visit, the supervisors had already formally evaluated a majority of the elementary academy teachers this school year.

The new principal of the secondary academy, who has been in the position for two months, has a clear sense of instructional priorities and program improvement. In his brief tenure, his impact is manifest in student order and behavioral expectations as well as in a school-wide emphasis on writing. He has a clear sense of quality instruction and uses a variety of modeling techniques to reinforce the pedagogical skills he is focusing on. He has provided a coherent focus on instructional technique at the academy's professional development meetings and through a consistently applied set of items on an informal observation checklist. Aside from the principal, a director of faculty has very recently joined the staff. In assuming the role of an assistant principal, she has concentrated her efforts on curriculum and assessment issues; her direct instructional support for teachers has been limited thus far.

Notwithstanding the principal's leadership strengths, the academy has structural impediments to establishing an integrated instructional leadership structure. The activities of the academy's Teacher Center specialists are not coordinated with those of the school administration. The specialists who report to a Teacher Center supervisor set their own agenda for conducting professional development and supporting individual teachers. Their efforts overlap with those of the leadership at their own discretion. As a result, no one person systematically reinforces professional development workshop topics and current school-wide priorities at the classroom level. Further, with a notable number of new teachers this year, direct, individual support is less effective given the lack of coordination.

Since the executive director started last year, the school has begun to emphasize teacher accountability. In the absence of tying teacher performance to student achievement, consistent and timely professional judgment of teachers' observed pedagogical practice is vital. The secondary academy introduced formal evaluations for the first time last year with a number of different administrators conducting the evaluations. This practice is to continue this year. At the time of the visit, secondary academy administrators had only completed a small number of formal observations. Further, the content and focus of the available evaluations conducted by the respective administrators are incongruent, with some administrators taking an informal approach to teacher evaluation and others adopting a more formalized systematic approach. While the executive director plans to consolidate the various approaches into one framework, secondary teachers report not knowing the academy-wide criteria for determining quality performance.

1. F At-Risk Students

UFT's elementary academy has a defined process for supporting students who are at-risk and those with special needs; however, the process at the secondary academy lacks elements necessary for student success. UFT, as a whole, does not have a defined instructional support framework for working with English Language Learners and has not consistently provided services to them. The school does not demonstrate adequate support of at-risk students, evidenced by low scores on state assessments.

The elementary academy has a structured three-tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) program. Teachers and administrators at the academy report that they have refined the process this year for identifying and supporting struggling learners and students with special needs. The school implemented a pilot RTI program in the 3rd and 4th grades last year that resulted in higher overall scores on the 3rd grade math and 4th grade ELA state assessments. Leaders attribute the growth to this pilot and have since implemented the RTI program school-wide. At the time of the visit, the school had not been through the entire 12-week RTI process and the visiting team only observed Tiers I and II. Tier I consists of responsive teaching in the general education classroom; Tier II consists of pull-out skill-based small group instruction in grades Kindergarten to 2, and a one class period per day set aside for data-driven, skill-based instruction in math and ELA in grades 3-5. All students in grades 3-5 automatically receive Tier II intervention as part of the academy's "RTI block." Teachers, along with the school's RTI coach, use the Children's Progress diagnostic test in Kindergarten to 2nd grade and formative assessment data in 3rd to 5th grade to place students in groups that focus on skills that they did not master on the respective assessments. Teachers reassess students on their focus skills at the end of every three-week period. Students who make progress continue on to another skill; if they have not mastered their focus skill, they continue to focus on it during the RTI block for another three-week cycle. Students who do not meet their goals after six weeks (two three-week cycles) are referred to the Student Support Team (SST). The SST evaluates students for academic as well as social-emotional issues, and at the time of the visit, had only met once this school year. Though not yet implemented, teachers and leaders clearly articulated the proposed model for Tier III interventions. After the SST evaluation, students will receive Tier III interventions, which consist of either one-to-one support or small group, pull-out support provided by the AIS coordinator. Teachers, along with the AIS coordinator will continue to monitor student progress for a final six-week cycle, after which the SST will reconvene to assess the student's success. The SST will refer students who fail to progress with Tier III interventions for special education services.

At the secondary academy, the program for struggling students and those with special needs is less defined and coordinated. Middle school students receive differentiated academic support in a daily class with student placement based on test performance from last spring's state assessment. Aside from this intervention based on dated information, the secondary academy does not have an established RTI process for identifying, placing or monitoring struggling students. Some teachers recently received RTI training, but the academy has not implemented any specific interventions to address the needs of targeted students. Teachers can refer students to the academy's student support team, but it does not conduct its progress monitoring systematically. In the classes providing differentiated academic support, called "Core classes," the curriculum is based on the Kaplan test prep program. Teachers report that administrators expect them to differentiate instruction in their daily class, they independently choose their own Kaplan and

supplementary material, and express concern that they often do not have the skill and knowledge to make the differentiation meaningful and appropriate for their students. They note that they rely on the Teacher Center specialists for support, but they receive little assistance in providing academic support.

The school has 85 students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 42 in the elementary and 43 in the secondary academy. In the elementary academy, teachers and leaders report that students receive the services outlined in their IEPs. The academy uses a collaborative team teaching approach to provide instructional support to students in 3rd and 4th grades; whereas, in the other grades a teacher pushes in to work with the special education students. The academy also provides SETTS services to those students whose IEPs require it. The middle school also provides SETTS services, and employs a collaborative team teaching model. At the high school level, students with IEPs receive pull out support in the resource room. They are also classes that use a collaborative team teaching model. The special education coordinator reports that no students have been decertified.

The school's summer institute included some special education training on annual reviews, interpreting IEP goals and teacher collaboration. To the extent that the academies have collaborative team teaching, the special education teachers keep the general education teachers informed about special education issues, but the school has not provided ongoing professional development for general education teachers.

At both academies, English Language Learner (ELL) support is limited and *ad hoc*. The school administers the Home Language Survey and when applicable the LAB-R but does not provide a coherent follow-up method to ensure that students are accurately and clearly identified as being in need of ELL services. Currently, UFT has identified ten students, two in the elementary and eight in the secondary academy, as ELLs. At the elementary academy, students receive English-as-a-second-language (ESL) support before and after school. School leaders report that a certified bilingual teacher provides this support; nevertheless, the services provided are in violation of federal law which, at minimum, mandates that the school provide an ELL program that (i) is based on a sound educational theory, (ii) is adequately supported with effective staff and resources such that the program has a realistic chance of success, and (iii) is periodically evaluated and revised as appropriate.

At the time of the visit, the secondary academy had just hired an ESL provider, but no formal program for ELL students was in place. While students have received limited ESL support in the past, the academy does not currently have an ELL program: staff and instructional materials are not available to address the specific needs of the eight students. Furthermore, the Institute found little evidence that school leaders are currently monitoring student progress towards English language proficiency.

1. G Student Order and Discipline

The school is safe and orderly with a school culture that is purposeful at both academies.

UFT Charter School has recently revised its school-wide discipline policy in order to align discipline practices at the two academies. At the elementary academy, a studious culture is prevalent

throughout the school. There is little evidence of misbehavior, and teachers quickly correct students if they whisper to one another during a lesson or move from their seats without permission. At the secondary academy, hallways and classrooms are well monitored and safe. While transitions between some classes are loud and take slightly longer than the allocated passing time, they are, for the most part, orderly and there is a sense of urgency on the part of the staff toward ensuring that students are in their classrooms. The academy has provided training to teachers on implementing a consistent approach to discipline; and teachers are able to articulate this approach, which starts with giving students a verbal warning, moves to giving students a written warning, calling home, and referring a student to administrators for further disciplinary action. Teachers report that students are beginning to understand the consequences of their actions, which is confirmed by only low levels of student misbehavior. The school has two disciplinary deans who are present throughout the school, including in classrooms.

1. H Professional Development

The elementary academy has recently put in place staff and systems for delivering sustained professional development through a coaching program which assists teachers in meeting student academic needs. The secondary academy provides a variety of uncoordinated professional development opportunities, which, as a result, limits their effectiveness.

At the elementary academy, school administrators or coaches lead bi-weekly professional development sessions. The administration chooses the topics for these sessions based on both teacher need and interest surveys. Teachers also meet with the literacy, math and RTI coaches as grade band teams on a rotating weekly basis, when the coaches provide targeted professional development. New teachers work with mentors, who meet with them during two periods weekly for one period of observation, followed by a period to discuss the observed lesson.

In contrast to the elementary academy, the secondary academy does not implement a coherent professional development program. The two Teacher Center specialists, who report to a Teacher Center supervisor, plan their program independent of the school's professional development agenda. The specialists led the school's summer institute program, which took place before the principal joined the staff. They also work with a caseload of first-year teachers to develop their pedagogical skills; however, the focus of this work does not align with school plans or priorities. The specialists report that teachers are uncomfortable receiving professional development from the academy's administration. An administrator reports letting the specialists know when a specific teacher is to receive a formal observation, but not knowing how and how much the specialists may have worked with the teacher.

The principal reports that current professional development priority includes workshop model lesson planning, the structure of Do-Now lesson activities and conferencing with students. At the most recent professional development day, the agenda included the following break-out sessions: the focus for pre-observations, an introduction to portfolios and the writing process, use of exit tickets and lesson planning. The administration and the specialists have not provided any systematic follow up to these topics. Because of the lack of coordination, teacher professional skill and competency are much less readily developed and reinforced.

2. C Organizational Capacity

The leadership continues to institute practices to enable the two academies to coalesce into one school, but the two academies remain distinct. The school and its executive director have focused on strengthening school-wide leadership, significantly at the secondary level. With an improvement in staff morale, the school has created a positive learning environment. Notwithstanding these developments, aspects of the organizational structure still inhibit the development of an effective instructional program.

The executive director has continued to focus on establishing a one-school concept by instituting a common set of policies, integrating parent activities and merging the administration of the two academies into a single executive team; nevertheless, except for operations and special education, the administrative positions continue to be separate. Most importantly, the two academies remain disconnected to the extent that only about 20 out of 125 current 6th graders attended the elementary academy.

In benefiting from stable leadership, the elementary academy has instituted a variety of systems to enhance the delivery of instruction over the course of the last few years. By contrast, the secondary academy, with five principals in six years, has lacked continuity and generally been without a functional reporting structure that supports distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. In the absence of a coherent structure, the school fills the leadership vacuum through a network of informal connections to the board and UFT headquarters.

The executive director has taken steps to establish a more functional organization; despite the departure of one principal in February 2011 and an acting, care-taker principal in place through September 2011, the current principal is charged with putting in place a variety of instructional systems that have generally been absent during the prior six years. With the newly established positions of director of faculty and director of curriculum, the principal is responsible for analyzing data, ensuring the implementation of the charter's key design elements, improving school climate, reviewing roles and responsibilities of out-of-class staff positions, systematizing classroom observations, etc.

While the executive director focuses on consolidating key functions, a number of operational responsibilities are only loosely connected to the school administration and have not been well coordinated. With a school focus on equalizing the resources for the two academies, the secondary academy has added instructional leadership positions, as well as two Teacher Center specialists dedicated exclusively to the academy; nevertheless, as indicated above, the school does not effectively deploy the specialists. Despite the effort to ensure adequate resources, teachers report that materials and equipment are not available in a timely manner, indicating that the school budgeting and purchasing process may not function well. At the time of the visit, teachers stated, for example, that smart boards and a copy machine arrived well into the school year, trade books had not been available when needed, some science classrooms still did not have lab materials and student trips had been cancelled. From another perspective on operations, the high school student program schedule has reportedly been changed a number of times because of unequal distribution of enrollment by class, students with an inadequate number of credit-bearing

classes and teachers assigned to classes outside of their expertise.

At the end of the last school year, about 30 teachers left the secondary academy by mutual agreement with the executive director. In finding their replacements, the hiring process has reportedly changed with a strengthened teacher hiring committee that emphasizes demonstration lessons and demonstrated productive interaction with students in the classroom. The executive director reports that new teachers are supportive of one another and dedicated to the school's success and open to providing rigorous instruction. Yet, while the school can now supposedly concentrate on rigor, questioning techniques and classroom routines, it remains questionable how much can be accomplished when there are so many new teachers and the instructional leadership is not tightly coordinated.

2. D Board Oversight

With the continued input of the executive director, the UFT board of trustees is focusing on the school's mission and providing oversight to the educational program.

While the board continues to have the skill set to carry out its responsibilities, it has not historically done so effectively. It is now meeting regularly, playing an oversight role in providing advice to the executive director and monitoring her program implementation activity. The board is aware of the academic Accountability Plan goals and the requirements for renewal.

The board has been instrumental in establishing the school's College Now program in partnership with Kingsborough Community College. Students who passed at least three Regents by the end of the 10th grade are eligible to attend the program, which will begin in the spring. Its ability to instill a college prep focus and a culture of learning, as well as its effectiveness in enabling students to gain college credits is yet to be determined.

Rather than indirectly managing many aspects of the school's program, the board is now less involved in the day-to-day operations of the school. The locus of authority is more directly under the school leadership; however, the United Federation of Teachers continues to carry out business, operations and various support functions. As indicated above, this division of responsibilities between school and partner organization affects the development of coherent systems for the delivery of instruction.

As noted in last year's report, the board and head of school are developing a more viable organization, but the UFT Charter School has limited time to demonstrate that it has met or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals, the criterion for renewal. In fact, while there were some positive signs at the time of the last evaluation visit, the school's performance declined in English language arts and remained about the same in mathematics in last spring's state assessments, which succeeded the visit.

Also noted in last year's report, the school had been operating in violation of its own bylaws and had failed, on numerous occasions, to conduct board meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law (Article 7 of the Public Officers Law). At that time, the Institute agreed to forego issuing a formal violation letter in exchange for the school board's commitment to expeditiously rectifying all identified compliance issues. While a representative of the school's partner

organization has been in regular contact with the Institute regarding the school's bylaws, the school board has yet to act formally to rectify noted deficiencies (including sending amended by-laws to the Institute) and remains out of compliance. In addition, although a cursory review of the school board minutes subsequent to last year's visit reveals progress in addressing noted Open Meetings Law violations, numerous subsequent violations remain present. Notably, the school board continues to enter impermissibly into executive session and to deliberate on matters in executive session, which the law requires addressing in public.

The Qualitative Educational Benchmark evaluation presented in this report suggests that the school still faces multiple hurdles in consolidating various organizational functions, in developing a valid assessment system aligned to state performance standards for reliably tracking student progress, and in developing an effective program for at-risk students and those with special needs. In particular, the school's board has not effectively overseen the implementation of programs for ELLs in compliance with federal law. While the academies have provided some ELL services, they have delivered them inconsistently and have not fully integrated them into the educational program.

UFT Charter School 2010-11 Performance Review

Performance Summary

In 2010-11, the second year of UFT Charter School's three-year Accountability Period, the school is not meeting its English language arts or mathematics goals. UFT's ELA performance has remained the same as the previous year with the school again not meeting any of its five measures in ELA. In math, the school has shown progress in all measures, but is still not meeting its goal. Results for the school's 2010-11 science goal are not yet available. The school met its NCLB goal.

These results are based only on elementary and middle school measures. As the high school only served students in 9th and 10th grade in 2010-11, only a limited number of high school measures apply. Results for these measures are not yet available.

English Language Arts

Based on results of the five elementary and middle school measures in its Accountability Plan, UFT Charter School is not meeting its English language arts goal. During the second year of the Accountability Period, the school did not come close to meeting its absolute target of 75 percent of students scoring proficient, with only 58.4 percent of students achieving proficiency.⁶ This result was little changed from the previous year. The school did not meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set by the state in 2010-11 and again performed worse than the local community school district. In comparison to demographically similar schools, the school did not meet its target this year, performing worse than expected and identically to the previous year. In terms of cohort growth, comparing the same students from year to year, UFT's students performed at the same low level, with no cohorts meeting their individual growth target.

Mathematics

Based on results of the five elementary and middle school measures in its Accountability Plan, UFT Charter School has made progress in meeting the individual measures in its math goal, but is not meeting the goal, because it is performing lower than predicted in comparison to similar schools statewide. The school exceeded the absolute target with 87 percent proficiency, representing a level of performance comparable to that of two years ago, the last year of the previous Accountability Period.⁷ Similarly, UFT outperformed the local community school district as it had in the last year of the previous Accountability Period. The school continued to exceed the state's AMO as in previous years. In terms of year-to-year cohort growth, the school's overall performance

⁶ For the purpose of evaluating the goals' absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" ELA cut-offs for 2010-11 as it had in 2009-10. The other four measures utilize the current, revised ELA cut-off scores. As such, the cut-offs for the Annual Measurable Objective and cohort growth are different from last year when the "time-adjusted cut-off was used instead.

⁷ For the purpose of evaluating the goals' absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" math cut-offs for 2010-11 as it had in 2009-10. The other four measures utilize the current, revised math cut-off scores. As such, the cut-offs for the Annual Measurable Objective and cohort growth are different from last year when the "time-adjusted cut-off was used instead.

improved slightly, but no grade cohort met its individual growth target. In comparison to demographically similar schools state-wide, the school did not meet its target and again performed worse than expected after having met the target in the last year of the previous Accountability Period.

Science

UFT Charter School's science results are not yet available.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

UFT Charter School



	2008-09 Grades Served: K-4, 6-8				2009-10 Grades Served: K-5, 6-8				2010-11 Grades Served: K-12						
	All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students				
	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)			
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)	3	48.4 (62)	50.8 (59)	59.2 (71)	59.4 (69)	3	59.5 (79)	56.1 (41)	3	59.5 (79)	56.1 (41)				
	4	75.5 (57)	75.0 (56)	57.6 (59)	56.9 (58)	4	89.2 (74)	88.1 (59)	4	89.2 (74)	88.1 (59)				
	5	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	5	75.9 (54)	75.5 (40)	5	75.9 (54)	75.5 (40)				
	6	75.0 (104)	50.0 (2)	46.2 (78)	22.2 (9)	6	50.4 (125)	41.2 (14)	6	50.4 (125)	41.2 (14)				
	7	76.2 (118)	78.4 (102)	57.9 (95)	57.5 (94)	7	56.3 (87)	56.3 (36)	7	56.3 (87)	56.3 (36)				
	8	58.9 (107)	58.8 (102)	36.8 (106)	36.8 (106)	8	22.2 (90)	35.0 (29)	8	22.2 (90)	35.0 (29)				
	All	67.9 (448)	65.4 (321)	54.1 (462)	54.6 (388)	All	56.2 (509)	58.4 (375)	All	56.2 (509)	58.4 (375)				
		Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO					
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)	3-4, 6-8	168	144	3-5, 6-8	154	155	3-8	117	122						
	YES			NO			NO		NO						
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Brooklyn District 19				Comparison: Brooklyn District 19				Comparison: Brooklyn District 19						
	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District						
	3-4, 7-8	65.4	55.7	3-5, 7-8	29.7	30.0	3-8	28.5	32.1						
	YES			NO			NO		NO						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at or above Level 3 on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size						
	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Size			
	66.9	67.9	66.1	0.10	65.8	28.4	39.3	-0.65	68.2	28.7	39.2	-0.65			
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result
	4	56	82.1	82.2	75.0	4	58	51.7	63.4	56.9	4	68	45.6	60.3	55.9
	5					5	53	75.5	75.6	83.0 *	5	53	26.4	50.7	37.7
	6	2	0.0		50.0	6	32	18.8	46.9	21.9	6	32	18.8	46.9	21.9
	7	102	62.7	68.9	78.4 *	7	94	76.6	76.7	58.5	7	69	18.8	46.9	10.1
	8	101	64.4	69.7	59.4	8	105	76.2	76.3	37.1	8	84	21.4	48.2	11.9
	All	262	66.8		70.2	All	310	71.6		55.2	All	308	26.2		26.6

(§) SED's "time adjusted cut scores" are used in the 2009-10 and 2010-11 results for #1 and in the 2009-10 results for #2 and #5. SED's publicly reported cut scores are used for the other results. Data Sources: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

UFT Charter School



	2008-09 Grades Served: K-4, 6-8				2009-10 Grades Served: K-5, 6-8				2010-11 Grades Served: K-12						
	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)				
	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)			
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)	3	95.1 (61)	94.9 (59)	98.6 (71)	98.6 (70)	100.0 (81)	100.0 (74)	3	100.0 (81)	100.0 (74)	3	100.0 (81)			
	4	93.0 (57)	92.9 (56)	84.7 (59)	84.5 (58)	94.7 (75)	80.3 (68)	4	94.7 (75)	80.3 (68)	4	94.7 (75)			
	5	(0)	(0)	83.0 (53)	82.7 (52)	81.8 (55)	81.5 (54)	5	81.8 (55)	81.5 (54)	5	81.8 (55)			
	6	69.3 (104)	50.0 (2)	58.0 (81)	25.0 (8)	86.5 (126)	91.2 (34)	6	86.5 (126)	91.2 (34)	6	86.5 (126)			
	7	82.4 (119)	84.5 (103)	74.7 (95)	74.5 (94)	69.0 (87)	70.3 (64)	7	69.0 (87)	70.3 (64)	7	69.0 (87)			
	8	79.3 (106)	79.2 (101)	55.7 (106)	55.7 (106)	83.3 (90)	85.7 (84)	8	83.3 (90)	85.7 (84)	8	83.3 (90)			
	All	81.7 (447)	86.0 (321)	73.3 (465)	75.3 (388)	85.8 (514)	87.3 (378)	All	85.8 (514)	87.3 (378)	All	85.8 (514)			
	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO						
3-4, 6-8	181	119	3-5, 6-8	171	135	3-8	142	137							
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)	YES				YES				YES						
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 19				Comparison: Brooklyn District 19				Comparison: Brooklyn District 19						
	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District						
3-4, 7-8	86.0	74.7	3-5, 7-8	34.5	41.1	3-8	48.1	42.5							
3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	66.9				65.8				68.2						
	81.7				34.2				47.3						
	77.9				48.2				50.9						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted level of students at or above Level 3 on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	0.31				-0.64				-0.14						
	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size						
	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size						
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result
	3	1	0.0	100.0	100.0	3	2	0.0	100.0	100.0	3	2	0.0	100.0	100.0
	4	56	100.0	100.0	92.9	4	58	94.8	94.9	84.5	4	69	59.4	67.2	60.9
	5	2	0.0	50.0	50.0	5	53	94.3	94.4	83.0	5	54	44.4	59.7	51.9
	6	105	64.8	69.9	83.8 *	6	95	71.6	73.3	74.7 *	6	34	20.6	47.8	47.1
	7	103	68.9	72.0	79.6 *	7	106	82.1	82.3	55.7	7	70	27.1	51.1	25.7
	8	267	73.0	83.9	83.9	8	84	35.7	55.4	40.5	8	84	35.7	55.4	40.5
	All	267	73.0	83.9	83.9	All	312	83.3	71.5	44.7	All	313	38.7	44.7	44.7

(§) SED's "time adjusted cut scores" are used in the 2009-10 and 2010-11 results for #1 and in the 2009-10 results for #2 and #5. SED's publicly reported cut scores are used for the other results. Data Sources: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

APPENDIX A: RENEWAL BENCHMARKS USED DURING THE VISIT

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

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

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

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

<p>Instructional Leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school’s instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school’s instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school’s leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school’s instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual teachers; • the school’s leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and • the school’s leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school’s academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p>	<p>The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students’ needs; • all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; • the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; • the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; • all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students’ Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; • the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and • the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1G</p> <p>Student Order & Discipline</p>	<p>The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; • classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; • low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed

	<p>to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1H</p> <p>Professional Development</p>	<p>The school’s professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers’ pedagogical skills and content knowledge.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program; the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school’s mission, curriculum, and instructional programs; annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests; professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school’s Accountability Plan goals; teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities; the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers’ varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities; the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.

	<p>Renewal Question 2</p> <p>Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</p>
Evidence Category	State University Renewal Benchmarks
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2A</p> <p>Mission & Key Design Elements</p>	<p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders are aware of the mission; the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2B</p>	<p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school;

<p>Parents & Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; • few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; • a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; • parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and • the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2C</p> <p>Organizational Capacity</p>	<p>The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; • staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school’s mission; • the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision; • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school’s leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school’s management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school’s management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p>	<p>The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school’s mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school; • the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight; • the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school’s management and leaders; • the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity; • the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school’s management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management

	<p>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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school’s academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion; • the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and • the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school’s goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities; • the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity; • the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter; • the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner; • the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints; • the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies; • the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and • the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p>	<p>The school has substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during its charter period, the school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL, and Open Meetings Law;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• at the time of renewal, the school is in substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations;• over the charter period, the school has abided by the terms of its monitoring plan;• the school has designed and put in place effective systems and controls to ensure that legal and charter requirements were and are met; and• the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and makes recommendations and handles other legal matters as needed.
--	---