



TO: P-12 Education Committee
FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*
SUBJECT: Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools Authorized by the New York City Department of Education Chancellor
DATE: February 24, 2020

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Sharon L. Tabor*
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents approve the proposed renewal charters for the following charter schools authorized by the New York City Department of Education Chancellor pursuant to Article 56 of the Education Law (the New York Charter Schools Act):

1. **Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek** (short-term three-year renewal).
2. **Community Roots Charter School** (full-term five-year renewal).
3. **Equality Charter School** (full-term five-year renewal and revision to increase current grade span to include Kindergarten through Grade 3 from the school's current Grade 6 through Grade 12 configuration; and to increase authorized enrollment from 650 to 1,010 by year five of the renewal charter term).
4. **New Heights Academy Charter School** (full-term five-year renewal).

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at its March 2020 meeting.

Procedural History

The New York City Department of Education Chancellor (NYCDOE) made the renewal recommendations being presented to the Board of Regents for approval and issuance as required by Article 56 of the Education Law and 8 NYCRR 119.7.

Charter School Renewal Applications

Section 2852(2) of the Education Law requires the chartering entity (in this case NYCDOE) to make the following findings when considering a charter renewal application:

- (a) The charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in this article and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
- (b) The applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner;
- (c) Granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-one of this article; and
- (d) In a school district where the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in the base year is greater than five percent of the total public school enrollment of the school district in the base year, (i) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school, or (ii) the school district in which the charter school will be located consents to such application.

In addition, Renewal Guidelines contained in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education (8 NYCRR 119.7(d)) were adopted by the Board of Regents and require that the Board further consider the following when evaluating a charter renewal application:

- (a) The information in the charter school's renewal application;
- (b) Any additional material or information submitted by the charter school;
- (c) Any public comments received;
- (d) Any information relating to the site visit and the site visit report;
- (e) The charter school's annual reporting results including, but not limited to, student academic achievement;
- (f) The Department's renewal recommendation and the charter school's written response, if any; and
- (g) Any other information that the board, in its discretion, may deem relevant to its determination whether the charter should be renewed.

Related Regents Items

Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek

[February 2010 Initial Charter](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010Meetings/February2010/0210emsca13.htm)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010Meetings/February2010/0210emsca13.htm>)

[February 2015 First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/215p12a10.pdf>)

[March 2017 Second Renewal & Revision to Expand Grades and Enrollment for 1 Year](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/417p12a6.pdf>)

Community Roots Charter School

[December 2005 Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/December2005/1205emscvesida5.htm>)

[January 2011 First Renewal and Expansion to serve Grades 6-8](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/Jun%202015/615p12a8.pdf>)

[June 2015 Second Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/Jun%202015/615p12a8.pdf>)

[March 2016 Enrollment Expansion Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/316p12a6.pdf>)

Equality Charter School

[January 2009 Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009Meetings/January2009/0109emsca5.htm>)

[December 2013 First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1213p12a3%5B1%5D.pdf>)

[June 2014 Revision to Increase Enrollment](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/614p12a4.pdf>)

[March 2018 Second Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/318p12a3revised.pdf>)

New Heights Academy Charter School

[April 2005 Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/April2005/0405emscvesida1.htm>)

[April 2010 First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010/2010-04-20>)

[February 2015 Second Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/215p12a10.pdf>)

[March 2017 Third Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/317p12a8revised.pdf>)

[February 2018 Revision to Increase Enrollment](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/218p12a2.pdf>)

Recommendations

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek**: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of the **Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2023**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Community Roots Charter School**: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of the **Community Roots Charter School** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2025**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Equality Charter School**: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of the **Equality Charter School** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2025**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **New Heights Academy Charter School**: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of the **New Heights Academy Charter School** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2025**.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for the above-named charter schools will become effective immediately.

Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, **the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education recommends a short-term renewal for a period of three years for Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2020 and expire on June 30, 2023.**

Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek (CAACS) is meeting most benchmarks set forth in the New York City Department of Education Charter School Accountability Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek
Board Chair	Dr. A. R. Bernard, Sr.
District of Location	NYC CSD 18
Opening Date	Fall 2010
Charter Term(s)	July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020
Current Term Authorized Grades/Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 5/280 students (<i>in 2017-18: K – Grade 6/325 students</i>)
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/Proposed Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 5/ 280 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	1400 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn – Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>The mission of Cultural Arts Academy Charter School is to provide an exemplary K-12 college preparatory arts education program that promotes superior scholarship and strong cultural arts proficiency.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collegiate Model • International Baccalaureate Candidate School – Primary Years Programme • The Leader In Me Lighthouse School • The Arts • Technology
Recommended Material Revisions	None

Noteworthy: This is a school where children are actively engaged in the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program, a rigorous academic curriculum that is not common for residents of Brownsville to have access to.

Innovative Programs: International Baccalaureate (IB) World and Franklin Covey Lighthouse School. Core program also includes the Arts. CAACS subscribes to Whole Child Development Model (ASCD).

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2017 to 2018	Year 2 2018 to 2019	Year 3 2019 to 2020
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 6	K – Grade 5	K – Grade 5
Total Approved Enrollment	325	280	280

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2020 to 2021	Year 2 2021 to 2022	Year 3 2022 to 2023
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 5	K – Grade 5	K – Grade 5
Total Proposed Enrollment	280	280	280

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 and Table 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and state average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESSA accountability designations, CAACS is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

CAACS offers curricula and coursework aligned to New York State learning standards in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. In addition, the school offers Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, and Spanish.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) in K, and grades 1 and 3, as well as Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for Students with Disabilities (SWD).

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 18

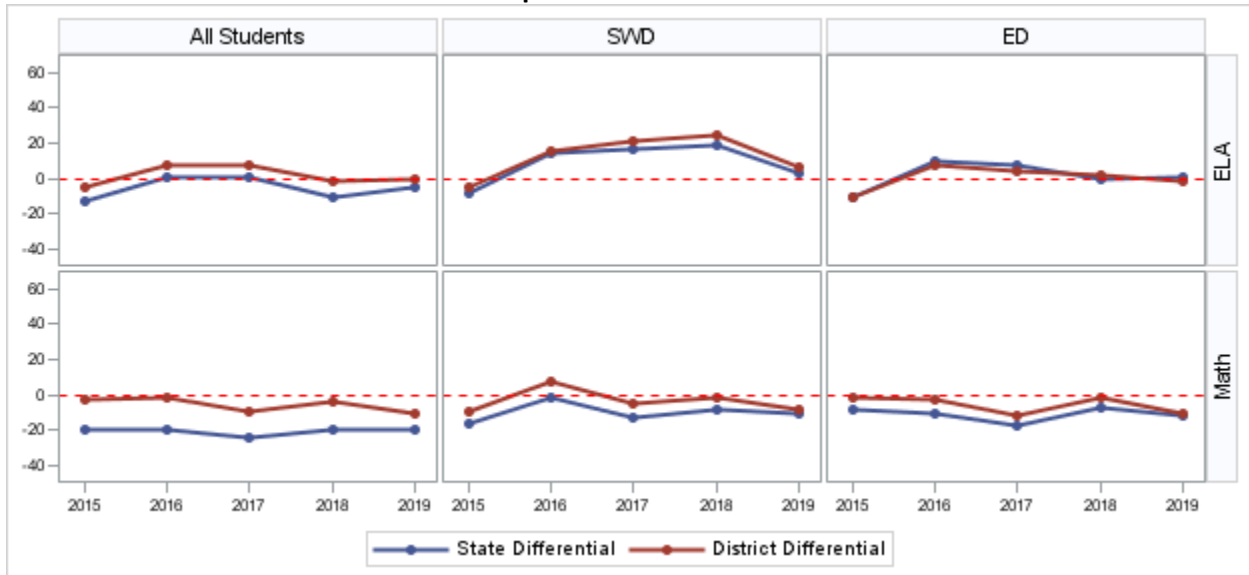


Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Cultural Arts Academy CS At Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Cultural Arts Academy CS At Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	18%	23%	-5	31%	-13	24%	27%	-3	43%	-19
	2015-2016	40%	33%	+7	39%	+1	24%	26%	-2	43%	-19
	2016-2017	41%	33%	+8	40%	+1	21%	30%	-9	45%	-24
	2017-2018	36%	37%	-1	46%	-10	28%	32%	-4	48%	-20
	2018-2019	41%	41%	0	46%	-5	31%	41%	-10	50%	-19
SWD	2014-2015	0%	5%	-5	8%	-8	0%	9%	-9	16%	-16
	2015-2016	25%	9%	+16	11%	+14	15%	8%	+7	16%	-1
	2016-2017	29%	8%	+21	12%	+17	5%	10%	-5	18%	-13
	2017-2018	36%	11%	+25	17%	+19	12%	13%	-1	20%	-8
	2018-2019	20%	14%	+6	17%	+3	11%	19%	-8	22%	-11
ED	2014-2015	10%	21%	-11	21%	-11	23%	25%	-2	31%	-8
	2015-2016	38%	31%	+7	28%	+10	21%	24%	-3	31%	-10
	2016-2017	36%	32%	+4	29%	+7	16%	28%	-12	33%	-17
	2017-2018	36%	34%	+2	36%	0	29%	30%	-1	36%	-7
	2018-2019	37%	39%	-2	36%	+1	28%	38%	-10	40%	-12

Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability

Financial Condition

Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek appears to be in good or sound financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

The NYCDOE reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.¹

¹ These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Financial Management

The NYCDOE reviewed CAACS's audited financial statements from fiscal years (FY) 2018 and 2019 to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. In FY 2019 the auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses. In FY 2018, the auditor did identify one material finding regarding the school being out of compliance with teacher certification requirements. This finding was corrected by the following fiscal year (FY 2019).

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

CAACS backfills students on all grades from its waitlist.

Through efforts towards increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is not yet meeting its targets for economically disadvantaged (ED), students with disabilities (SWDs), or English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual learners (MLLs) (Table 2).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students² and has implemented a lottery preference for ELL/MLL students, as well as ED students. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL/MLL, and SWD populations include:

- Strategically partnering with prominent local cultural organizations that tend to serve lower income families, immigrant families and limited-English speaking families
- Building connections to local programs where eligibility is determined by family income below the federal poverty level

² Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL eligible students and English language learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school, and have done so. Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011, are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school's performance over the charter term. A school's plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school's repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter pursuant to section Education Law §2855(1)(e).

Table 2: Student Demographics Comparison to NYC CSD 18

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Cultural Arts Academy CS At Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	Cultural Arts Academy CS At Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	Cultural Arts Academy CS At Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District
2015-2016	15%	19%	-4	0%	5%	-5	56%	77%	-21
2016-2017	13%	19%	-6	0%	6%	-6	62%	77%	-15
2017-2018	14%	21%	-7	1%	8%	-7	65%	80%	-15
2018-2019	11%	22%	-11	1%	9%	-8	71%	78%	-7

Table 3: Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District	Cultural Arts Academy Charter School at Spring Creek	NYC CSD 18	Differential to District
2016-2017	75%	81%	-6	70%	82%	-12	.	.	.	78%	81%	-3
2017-2018	79%	80%	-1	86%	82%	+4	.	.	.	82%	81%	+1
2018-2019	77%	84%	-7	64%	84%	-20	100%	87%	+13	74%	83%	-9

Legal Compliance

CAACS operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules and other policies, including the terms of its charter, its by-laws and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, and the Dignity for All Students Act. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on October 29, 2019. Ninety-three people attended, and fifteen spoke. Fifteen were in favor of the renewal and zero were opposed.

Community Roots Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, the Chancellor of the **New York City Department of Education recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for Community Roots Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2020 and expire on June 30, 2025.**

Community Roots Charter School (CRCS) is meeting most benchmarks set forth in the New York City Department of Education Charter School Accountability Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Community Roots Charter School
Board Chair	Tracey Strauss; Scott Strasser
District of Location	NYC CSD 13
Opening Date	Fall 2006
Charter Term(s)	July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020
Current Term Authorized Grades/Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 8/474 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/Proposed Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 8/474 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	51 Saint Edwards Street, Brooklyn – Public Space 50 Navy Street, Brooklyn – Public Space
Mission Statement	<i>Community Roots Charter School is a rigorous learning community where education is embedded in meaningful real-world contexts and children are deliberately taught to see the connections between school and the world. Community Roots students will meet or exceed the New York State standards and be prepared to excel in the 21st century by becoming independent thinkers and working productively within a diverse group of learners. At Community Roots, students learn to combine curiosity with appropriate application, which leads to deep understanding and the confidence to become who they want to be.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to Diversity & Inclusion • Integrated Co-teaching and Organizational Structure • Anti-Bias Approach • Strong School Culture Rooted in the CRCS Core Values • Rigorous Curriculum Featuring Integrated Studies, Humanities, and Project-Based Learning • Family Engagement
Recommended Material Revisions	N/A

Noteworthy: Community Roots Charter School is an inclusive school, aimed at meeting the needs of a diverse group of students. All classrooms are co-taught and there is a focus on the high impact co-teaching models in order to ensure students have access to the curriculum. The use of co-teaching models and groupings are the first line of differentiation; teachers use the models flexibly and fluently to address learner variability and increase student engagement.

Innovative Programs: CRCS applies an anti-bias approach throughout the school to create and sustain an environment where a diverse student population can thrive. The anti-bias approach prioritizes issues of identity, discrimination, and social justice in the curriculum and professional development. CRCS strives to be a space where all staff, students, and families feel supported, empowered and fully engaged.

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2015 to 2016	Year 2 2016 to 2017	Year 3 2017 to 2018	Year 4 2018 to 2019	Year 5 2019 to 2020
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Approved Enrollment	462	474	474	474	474

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2020 to 2021	Year 2 2021 to 2022	Year 3 2022 to 2023	Year 4 2023 to 2024	Year 5 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Proposed Enrollment	474	474	474	474	474

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 and Table 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and state average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESEA accountability designations, Community Roots Charter School is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

Community Roots Charter School offers curricula and coursework aligned to New York State learning standards in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. In addition, the school offers a robust arts curriculum,

including a partnership with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which provides CRCS with teaching artists in residence and opportunities for students to see the arts performed at the exhibition level.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) on all grade levels, in all classrooms and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for Students with Disabilities (SWD). ELLs/ MLLs are served through an English immersion program and small group instruction.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 13 District

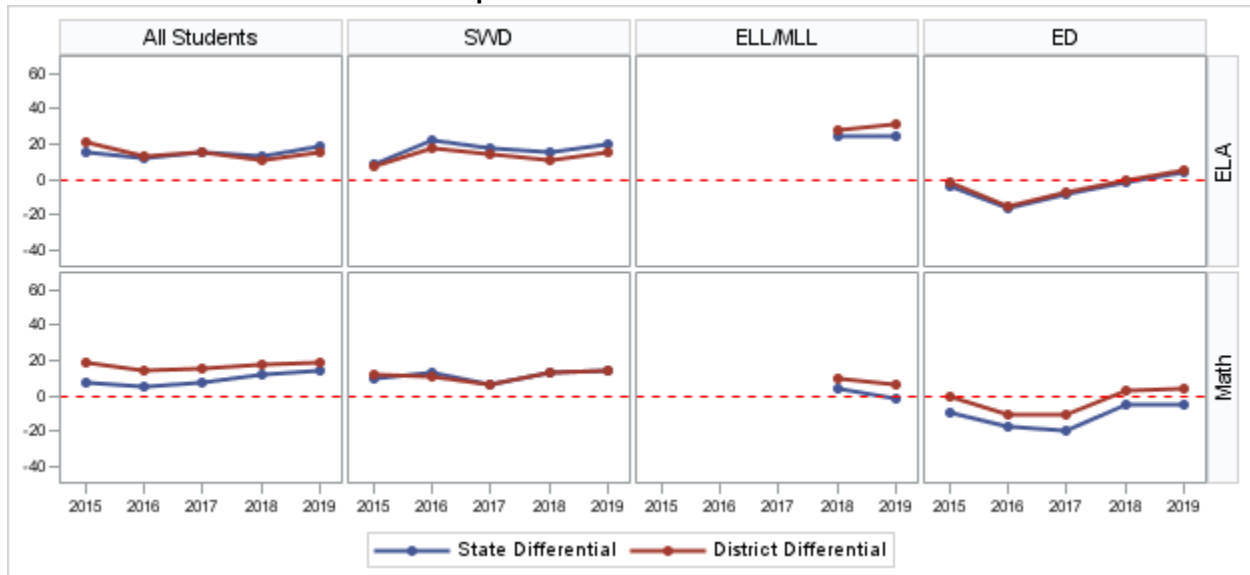


Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Community Roots CS	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Community Roots CS	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	46%	25%	+21	31%	+15	45%	26%	+19	38%	+7
	2015-2016	50%	37%	+13	38%	+12	44%	30%	+14	39%	+5
	2016-2017	56%	40%	+16	40%	+16	47%	32%	+15	40%	+7
	2017-2018	58%	47%	+11	45%	+13	57%	39%	+18	45%	+12
	2018-2019	64%	48%	+16	45%	+19	61%	42%	+19	47%	+14
SWD	2014-2015	16%	8%	+8	7%	+9	22%	10%	+12	12%	+10
	2015-2016	31%	13%	+18	9%	+22	25%	14%	+11	12%	+13
	2016-2017	29%	15%	+14	11%	+18	20%	14%	+6	14%	+6
	2017-2018	32%	21%	+11	16%	+16	30%	17%	+13	17%	+13
	2018-2019	35%	19%	+16	15%	+20	32%	18%	+14	18%	+14
ELL/MLL	2017-2018	50%	22%	+28	25%	+25	33%	23%	+10	29%	+4
	2018-2019	50%	19%	+31	25%	+25	29%	23%	+6	30%	-1
ED	2014-2015	17%	18%	-1	21%	-4	18%	18%	0	27%	-9
	2015-2016	11%	26%	-15	27%	-16	11%	21%	-10	28%	-17
	2016-2017	21%	28%	-7	29%	-8	10%	21%	-11	29%	-19
	2017-2018	35%	35%	0	36%	-1	29%	26%	+3	34%	-5
	2018-2019	40%	35%	+5	36%	+4	32%	28%	+4	37%	-5

Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability

Financial Condition

Community Roots Charter School appears to be in good or sound financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

The NYCDOE reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.³

³ These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Financial Management

The NYCDOE reviewed CRCS's audited financial statements from fiscal years (FY) 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses in any of those years.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

Community Roots Charter School backfills students on all grades from its waitlist.

Through efforts towards increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is exceeding targets for students with disabilities (SWDs), and within 5 percentage points of its targets for English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual learners (MLLs). The school is not yet meeting its target for economically disadvantaged (ED) students (Table 2). The school has increased the percentages of ED and SWDs over the course of the charter term.

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students⁴. The school will adjust its current lottery preference, which sets aside 40% of its seats for Kindergarten students who are identified as FRPL, to include students at all grade levels. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL/MLL, and SWD populations include:

- Inviting leaders and directors of Community Centers and Head Start programs to visit the school in order to be best equipped to share about the school and recruit for the school
- Hosting an event (Carnival) in partnership with Fidelis Health Services for members of the community as an effort to connect with families in the community and share with them about Community Roots academic and social emotional school community

⁴ Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL eligible students and English language learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school, and have done so. Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011, are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school's performance over the charter term. A school's plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school's repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter pursuant to section Education Law §2855(1)(e).

Table 2: Student Demographics Comparison to District of Location

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Community Roots CS	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Community Roots CS	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Community Roots CS	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District
2015-2016	28%	22%	+6	3%	7%	-4	26%	64%	-38
2016-2017	27%	23%	+4	3%	6%	-3	26%	62%	-36
2017-2018	26%	23%	+3	2%	7%	-5	29%	63%	-34
2018-2019	25%	23%	+2	2%	7%	-5	31%	60%	-29

Table 3: Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Community Roots Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Community Roots Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Community Roots Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Community Roots Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District
2016-2017	91%	82%	+9	89%	82%	+7	83%	80%	+3	86%	82%	+4
2017-2018	88%	82%	+6	87%	82%	+5	57%	82%	-25	90%	82%	+8
2018-2019	91%	82%	+9	93%	83%	+10	90%	75%	+15	88%	83%	+5

Legal Compliance

Community Roots Charter School operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules and other policies, including the terms of its charter, its by-laws and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, and the Dignity for All Students Act. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on January 8, 2020. One hundred and thirty-one people attended, and thirty spoke. Thirty were in favor of the renewal and zero were opposed.

Equality Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for Equality Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2020 and expire on June 30, 2025 and the school would be permitted to revise its charter to increase the current grade space to include Kindergarten through Grades 3 and expand enrollment from 650 students to 1010 students by 2024-25.

Equality Charter School (ECS) is meeting most benchmarks set forth in the New York City Department of Education Charter School Accountability Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Equality Charter School
Board Chair	Ed Hubbard
District of location	NYC CSDs 11, 8
Opening Date	Fall 2009
Charter Term(s)	July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2020
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	Grade 6 – Grade 12/ 650 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 3, Grade 6 – Grade 12 / 1010 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	4140 Hutchinson River Parkway East, Bronx – Public Space 2141 Seward Avenue, Bronx – Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>Equality Charter School provides a high level of academic rigor in a nurturing learning community that will prepare scholars to be career-ready in college.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous Standards-Based Curriculum • Full Inclusion Model • Career Focus • Nurturing School Environment • Proactive and Positive Behavioral Model • Growth Priority • Parents and Partners
Recommended Material Revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand to serve K through Grade 3 • Expand enrollment from 650 to 1010

Noteworthy: Equality Charter School is committed to delivering equal access education by providing a seamless seven year, 6-12th grade education. Equality accomplishes this by reinforcing the foundation for rigorous college, post-secondary education, and career planning guidance and preparation impelling scholars’ high academic achievement through a New York State learning standards aligned curriculum.

Equality nurtures a safe, positive, and proactive learning environment, both academically and socio-emotionally, for scholars, staff, and parents.

Innovative Programs: Equality Charter School serves all scholars, regardless of their prior academic performance or needs, and provides an engaging, academically rigorous, fully inclusive learning environment to help each achieve success. The school’s holistic programming focuses on career exploration and preparation for life after Equality; extensive athletics and after school programming; and robust art, health, physical education, theater, and music programming.

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2018 to 2019	Year 2 2019 to 2020
Grade Configuration	Grade 6 – Grade 8	Grade 6 – Grade 8
Total Approved Enrollment	650	650

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2020 to 2021	Year 2 2021 to 2022	Year 3 2022 to 2023	Year 4 2023 to 2024	Year 5 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	Grade 6 – Grade 12	Grade 6 – Grade 12	K – Grade 1, Grade 6 – Grade 12	K – Grade 2, Grade 6 – Grade 12	K – Grade 3, Grade 6 – Grade 12
Total Proposed Enrollment	650	650	830	920	1010

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 and Table 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and state average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESEA accountability designations, Equality Charter School is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

Equality Charter School offers curricula and coursework aligned to New York State learning standards in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. In addition, the school offers Art modeled after the New York State and National Art Standards.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) on all grade levels. Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) is provided throughout the school day. At the middle school, students receive math and ELA SETSS instruction as per IEP mandate. The school serves English Language Learners using a Sheltered Language Instruction model and employs multiple ELL teachers to work with ELL/MLL students.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 11

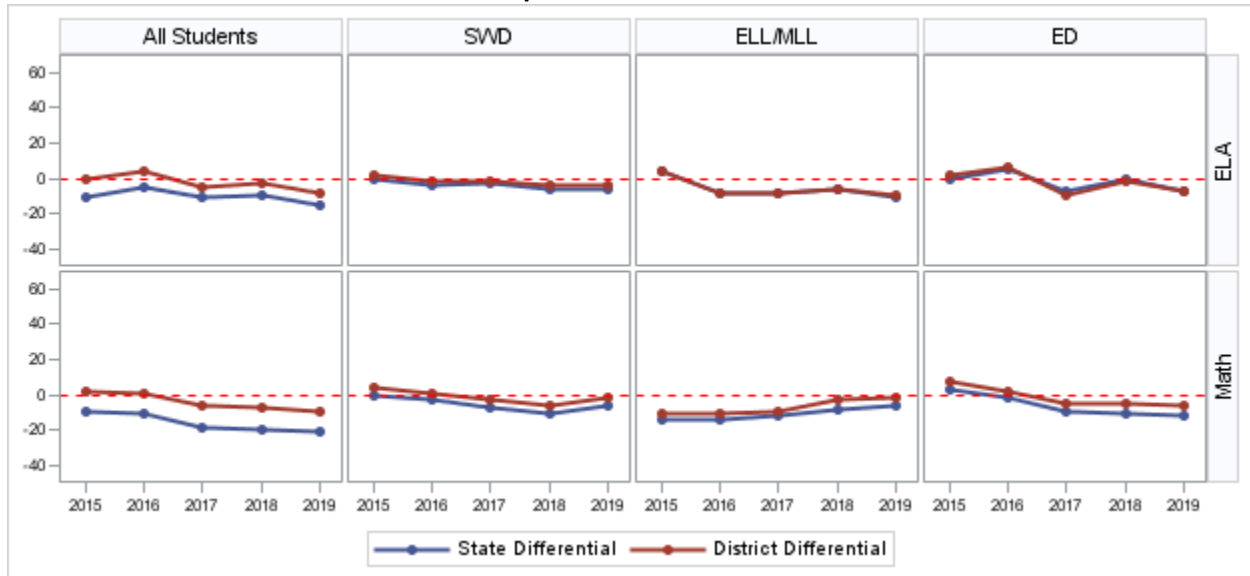


Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Equality CS	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Equality CS	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	21%	21%	0	31%	-10	24%	22%	+2	33%	-9
	2015-2016	32%	28%	+4	37%	-5	23%	22%	+1	34%	-11
	2016-2017	29%	34%	-5	40%	-11	16%	22%	-6	34%	-18
	2017-2018	37%	40%	-3	46%	-9	20%	27%	-7	40%	-20
	2018-2019	30%	38%	-8	45%	-15	21%	30%	-9	42%	-21
SWD	2014-2015	6%	4%	+2	6%	0	8%	4%	+4	8%	0
	2015-2016	4%	6%	-2	8%	-4	5%	4%	+1	8%	-3
	2016-2017	7%	9%	-2	10%	-3	2%	5%	-3	9%	-7
	2017-2018	8%	12%	-4	14%	-6	2%	8%	-6	12%	-10
	2018-2019	7%	11%	-4	13%	-6	7%	8%	-1	13%	-6
ELL/MLL	2014-2015	10%	6%	+4	6%	+4	0%	11%	-11	14%	-14
	2015-2016	0%	8%	-8	8%	-8	0%	10%	-10	14%	-14
	2016-2017	0%	8%	-8	8%	-8	0%	9%	-9	12%	-12
	2017-2018	14%	20%	-6	20%	-6	13%	16%	-3	21%	-8
	2018-2019	9%	18%	-9	19%	-10	17%	18%	-1	23%	-6
ED	2014-2015	21%	19%	+2	21%	0	26%	19%	+7	23%	+3
	2015-2016	32%	26%	+6	27%	+5	22%	20%	+2	24%	-2
	2016-2017	23%	32%	-9	30%	-7	15%	20%	-5	24%	-9
	2017-2018	36%	38%	-2	36%	0	20%	25%	-5	30%	-10
	2018-2019	28%	35%	-7	35%	-7	21%	27%	-6	33%	-12

Student Performance – High School Outcomes

The school’s graduation outcomes have been above the state average including graduation rates for special populations.

Academic Program for the High School

The school offers courses that lead to Regents exams in Common Core Algebra and Algebra II, Geometry, Chemistry, Physics, US History, ELA, Earth Science, Living Environment, and Global History. In addition, the school offers 37 AP courses and exams across 22 subject areas, including US History, English Literature, Spanish, and Biology.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) on all grade levels. Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) is provided throughout the school day. At the high school, students receive SETSS instruction through grade level resource room as per IEP mandate. The school serves English Language Learners using a Sheltered Language Instruction model and employs multiple ELL teachers to work with ELL/MLL students.

Table 2: High School -Graduation Rates

		All Students				SWD				ED			
		Charter Total Cohort	Equality CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential	Charter Total Cohort	Equality CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential	Charter Total Cohort	Equality CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential
2014 Cohort	4 Year	90	84%	83%	+1	21	67%	60%	+7	73	86%	76%	+10
	5 Year	91	92%	86%	+6	22	75%	66%	+9	78	91%	81%	+10
2015 Cohort	4 Year	95	89%	83%	+6	15	80%	62%	+18	69	86%	77%	+9

Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability

Financial Condition

Equality Charter School appears to be in good or sound financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

The NYCDOE reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.⁵

Financial Management

The NYCDOE reviewed Equality Charter School’s audited financial statements from fiscal year (FY) 2019 to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. In that year, the auditor did identify one material finding regarding being out of compliance with teacher certification requirements.

⁵ These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

Equality Charter School backfills students on all grades from its waitlist.

Through efforts towards increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is exceeding its targets for students with disabilities (SWDs) and economically disadvantaged (ED) students, and not yet meeting its targets for English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual learners (MLLs) (Table 3). The school has increased the percentages of all three groups (ED, SWDs and ELL/MLLs) in each year of the charter term.

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students⁶. The school has added the following lottery set-asides: 25% SWD, 85% FRPL, and 10% ELL. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL/MLL, and SWD populations include:

- Holding a successful Community Outreach weeklong recruitment launch where staff canvassed the Hunts Point Section of the Bronx
- Running a 12-week bus ad in the Hunts Point Section of the Bronx, the school’s target neighborhood, inviting families to an Open House and online application portal
- Making connections with the local Welcome Center- relationship building with those employees and distribution of promotional material through the center with follow-up visits/check-ins

Table 3: Student Demographics Comparison to District of Location

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Equality CS	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	Equality CS	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	Equality CS	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District
2015-2016	21%	24%	-3	4%	14%	-10	80%	73%	+7
2016-2017	23%	24%	-1	4%	13%	-9	45%	74%	-29
2017-2018	23%	24%	-1	5%	17%	-12	80%	80%	0
2018-2019	26%	23%	+3	8%	17%	-9	81%	79%	+2

⁶ Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL eligible students and English language learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school, and have done so. Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011, are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school’s performance over the charter term. A school’s plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school’s repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter pursuant to section Education Law §2855(1)(e).

Table 4: Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Equality Charter School	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	Equality Charter School	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	Equality Charter School	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District	Equality Charter School	NYC CSD 11	Differential to District
2016-2017	83%	74%	+9	88%	75%	+13	94%	75%	+19	83%	75%	+8
2017-2018	84%	76%	+8	79%	77%	+2	84%	79%	+5	83%	77%	+6
2018-2019	82%	76%	+6	87%	75%	+12	85%	79%	+6	82%	76%	+6

Legal Compliance

Equality Charter School operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules and other policies, including the terms of its charter, its by-laws and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, and the Dignity for All Students Act. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on December 16, 2019. Ninety-six people attended, and twenty-five spoke. Twenty-five were in favor of the renewal and zero were opposed.

New Heights Academy Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, **the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for New Heights Academy Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2020 and expire on June 30, 2025.**

New Heights Academy Charter School (NHACS) is meeting most benchmarks set forth in the New York City Department of Education Charter School Accountability Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	New Heights Academy Charter School
Board Chair	Dylan Hogarty
District of location	NYC CSD 6
Opening Date	Fall 2006
Charter Term(s)	July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2020
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	Grade 5 – Grade 12/ 765 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment	Grade 5 – Grade 12/ 765 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	1818 Amsterdam Avenue, Manhattan – Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>The Mission of New Heights Academy Charter School is to graduate students who are prepared to succeed in college and life.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.R.I.D.E Pillars • Learning Culture Based on Efficacy • Professional Learning Community • Literacy Everywhere
Recommended Material Revisions	None

Noteworthy: New Heights scholars are engaged in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum which emphasizes critical thinking, curiosity, competence, confidence, and control. The school culture is characterized by transparent communication, trust in community members, and an appreciation for diversity of perspectives.

Innovative Programs: To reach rigorous standards of proficiency, NHACS works to instill the Efficacy “Mindset” throughout the community. The model encompasses three main areas: the use of data to drive decisions, employing effective effort in executing data driven strategies and a positive mindset. Following the Efficacy model, NHACS uses data teams that include teachers, students, and leaders and uses a framework for intervention designed to ensure that all learners have an opportunity to address their deficits and build upon their strengths.

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2017 to 2018	Year 2 2018 to 2019	Year 3 2019 to 2020
Grade Configuration	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12
Total Approved Enrollment	750	765	765

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2020 to 2021	Year 2 2021 to 2022	Year 3 2022 to 2023	Year 4 2023 to 2024	Year 5 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12	Grade 5 – Grade 12
Total Proposed Enrollment	765	765	765	765	765

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 and Table 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and state average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESEA accountability designations, New Heights Academy Charter School is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

NHACS offers curricula and coursework aligned to New York State learning standards in ELA, Math, Social Studies and Science. In addition, the school offers Art, Music, Dance, Languages Other Than English (LOTE) and Physical Education classes starting in grade five.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) on all grade levels and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for Students with Disabilities (SWD). The school employs multiple ELL teachers to work with ELL/MLL students.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 6

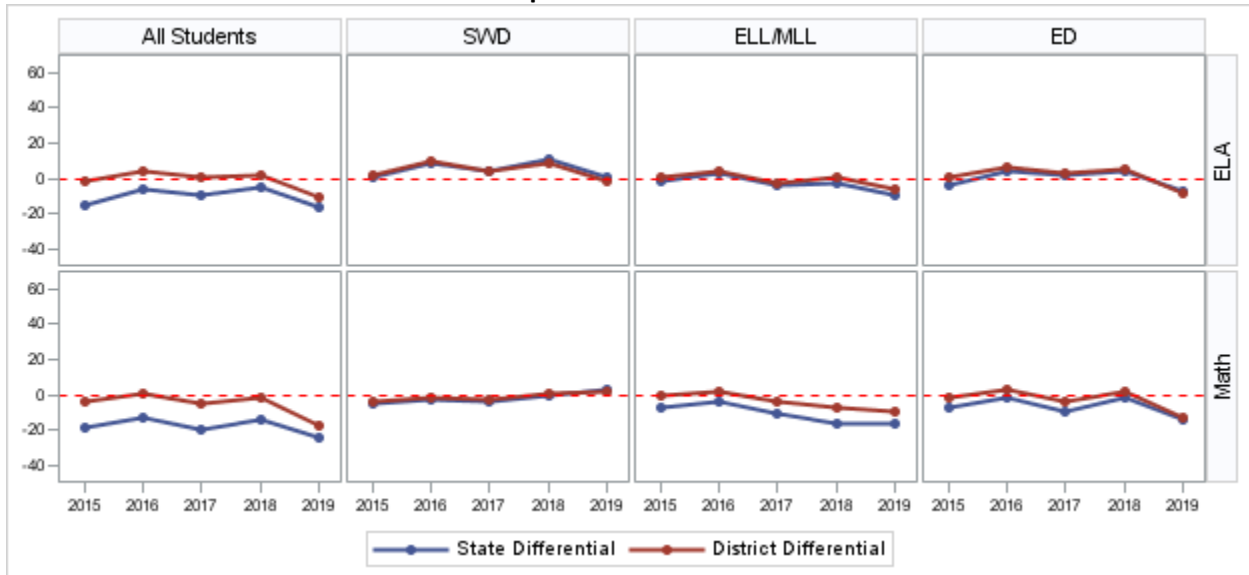


Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		New Heights Academy CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	New Heights Academy CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	16%	18%	-2	31%	-15	18%	22%	-4	36%	-18
	2015-2016	30%	26%	+4	36%	-6	23%	22%	+1	36%	-13
	2016-2017	30%	29%	+1	39%	-9	18%	23%	-5	37%	-19
	2017-2018	38%	36%	+2	43%	-5	27%	29%	-2	41%	-14
	2018-2019	27%	37%	-10	43%	-16	19%	36%	-17	43%	-24
SWD	2014-2015	7%	5%	+2	6%	+1	4%	8%	-4	9%	-5
	2015-2016	17%	7%	+10	8%	+9	7%	8%	-1	10%	-3
	2016-2017	14%	10%	+4	10%	+4	6%	9%	-3	10%	-4
	2017-2018	25%	16%	+9	14%	+11	13%	12%	+1	13%	0
	2018-2019	14%	15%	-1	13%	+1	17%	15%	+2	14%	+3
ELL/MLL	2014-2015	6%	5%	+1	7%	-1	9%	9%	0	16%	-7
	2015-2016	11%	7%	+4	8%	+3	11%	9%	+2	15%	-4
	2016-2017	4%	7%	-3	8%	-4	4%	8%	-4	14%	-10
	2017-2018	17%	16%	+1	20%	-3	7%	14%	-7	23%	-16
	2018-2019	10%	16%	-6	19%	-9	9%	18%	-9	25%	-16
ED	2014-2015	17%	16%	+1	21%	-4	18%	20%	-2	25%	-7
	2015-2016	30%	24%	+6	26%	+4	23%	20%	+3	25%	-2
	2016-2017	30%	27%	+3	28%	+2	17%	21%	-4	26%	-9
	2017-2018	38%	33%	+5	34%	+4	28%	26%	+2	30%	-2
	2018-2019	26%	34%	-8	33%	-7	19%	32%	-13	33%	-14

Student Performance – High School Outcomes

The school’s graduation outcomes have been above the state average including graduation rates for special populations.

Academic Program for the High School

The school offers courses that lead to Regents exams in Common Core Algebra and Algebra II, Geometry, Chemistry, Physics, US History, ELA, Earth Science, Living Environment, and Global History. In addition, the school offers students the opportunity to take college-level courses in English and Psychology via the College Now Program.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs):

The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) on all grade levels and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for Students with Disabilities (SWD). The school employs multiple ELL teachers to work with ELL/MLL students.

Table 2: High School -Graduation Rates

		All Students				SWD				ELL/MLL				ED			
		Charter Total Cohort	New Heights Academy CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential	Charter Total Cohort	New Heights Academy CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential	Charter Total Cohort	New Heights Academy CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential	Charter Total Cohort	New Heights Academy CS	NYS Graduation Rate	NYS Differential
2011 Cohort	4 Year	63	90%	80%	+10	8	100%	54%	+46	6	83%	48%	+35	60	90%	73%	+17
	5 Year	63	94%	84%	+10	8	100%	60%	+40	6	83%	57%	+26	58	93%	79%	+14
	6 Year	63	94%	85%	+9	8	100%	62%	+38	6	83%	60%	+23	58	93%	81%	+12
2012 Cohort	4 Year	88	95%	82%	+13	6	100%	57%	+43	10	100%	49%	+51	76	96%	75%	+21
	5 Year	88	98%	85%	+13	6	100%	62%	+38	10	100%	56%	+44	75	99%	80%	+19
	6 Year	88	98%	86%	+12	6	100%	64%	+36	10	100%	58%	+42	74	99%	82%	+17
2013 Cohort	4 Year	69	93%	82%	+11	7	86%	58%	+28	7	86%	42%	+44	56	91%	76%	+15
	5 Year	69	96%	85%	+11	7	86%	64%	+22	9	78%	50%	+28	56	95%	80%	+15
	6 Year	69	99%	86%	+13	7	100%	66%	+34	8	100%	53%	+47	56	98%	82%	+16
2014 Cohort	4 Year	92	92%	83%	+9	13	100%	60%	+40	15	73%	54%	+19	89	92%	76%	+16
	5 Year	94	96%	86%	+10	13	100%	66%	+34	16	79%	62%	+17	90	95%	81%	+14
2015 Cohort	4 Year	85	86%	83%	+3	7	100%	62%	+38	9	56%	58%	-2	80	86%	77%	+9

Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability

Financial Condition

New Heights Academy Charter School appears to be in good or sound financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

The NYCDOE reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.⁷

Financial Management

The NYCDOE reviewed NHACS’s audited financial statements from fiscal years (FY) 2018 and 2019 to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. In both of those years, the auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

⁷ These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

New Heights Academy Charter School backfills students on all grades from its waitlist.

Through efforts towards increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school exceeding its targets for economically disadvantaged (ED) students. The school is approaching but not yet meeting its targets for students with disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual learners (MLLs) (Table 3).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students⁸ and has implemented a lottery preference for ELL/MLL students. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL/MLL, and SWD populations include:

- Reaching out to organizations that cater to Spanish speakers and English Language Learners, such as Esperanza Center, ACDP, Alianza Dominicana, Sinergia, the Association of Progressive Dominicans as well as the local CSE
- Sending information packets that include applications and general information about NHACS to The Children's Aid Society, YAI, Seen Beyond Disabilities, Harlem Dowling Westside Center, Center for Children's Initiatives, and Resources for Children with Special Needs
- Placing ads on MTA bus shelters in the neighborhood

⁸ Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL eligible students and English language learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school, and have done so. Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011, are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school's performance over the charter term. A school's plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school's repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter pursuant to section Education Law §2855(1)(e).

Table 3: Student Demographics Comparison to District of Location

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	New Heights Academy CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	New Heights Academy CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	New Heights Academy CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2015-2016	14%	19%	-5	23%	35%	-12	92%	85%	+7
2016-2017	15%	19%	-4	15%	32%	-17	93%	85%	+8
2017-2018	16%	20%	-4	26%	40%	-14	94%	89%	+5
2018-2019	15%	20%	-5	23%	38%	-15	94%	89%	+5

Table 4: Retention – Aggregate and Subgroups

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	New Heights Academy Charter School	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	New Heights Academy Charter School	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	New Heights Academy Charter School	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	New Heights Academy Charter School	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2016-2017	93%	78%	+15	94%	75%	+19	94%	78%	+16	93%	78%	+15
2017-2018	95%	77%	+18	93%	76%	+17	95%	77%	+18	95%	77%	+18
2018-2019	94%	78%	+16	94%	76%	+18	96%	79%	+17	94%	78%	+16

Legal Compliance

NHACS operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules and other policies, including the terms of its charter, its by-laws and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, and the Dignity for All Students Act. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on December 12, 2019. Forty-six people attended, and forty-two spoke. Thirty-nine were in favor of the renewal and three were opposed.