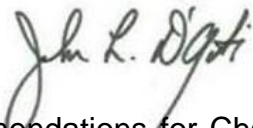





TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: John L. D'Agati 

SUBJECT: Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents

DATE: March 12, 2021

AUTHORIZATION(S): 
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

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

1. **Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys** (full-term five-year renewal and a revision to amend the mission and key design elements of the school's charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls).
2. **Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls** (full-term five-year renewal and a revision to amend the mission and key design elements of the school's charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys).
3. **Discovery Charter School** (short-term three-year renewal).
4. **La Cima Charter School** (short-term four-year renewal and revisions to reduce the authorized enrollment from the currently approved 430 students to 330 students beginning in the 2021-2022 school year; and to amend the school's key design elements).
5. **Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts** (short-term three-year renewal).
6. **School in the Square Public Charter School** (full-term five-year renewal and the following revisions to the school's charter: To expand current grade span to add Grade 1 through Grade 5 to the school's currently approved kindergarten and Grade 6 through Grade 8 configuration; and in the expanding grades, increase authorized enrollment from 424, by adding 100 students for each year of the proposed renewal charter term, up to a maximum of 924 students).

7. **Urban Choice Charter School** (short-term two-year renewal and a revision to add a Comprehensive Management Service Provider, the Center for Educational Innovation).

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 2021 meeting.

Procedural History

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) 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.

Background Information

The Board of Regents and the Department are bound by law, regulation, and Regents-endorsed internal policies regarding the criteria that can be considered in decision-making pertaining to the authorization of new charter schools, charter school renewals, and charter school revisions. Detailed information on these laws, regulations, and Regents-endorsed internal policies can be found in the Appendix.

Several elementary/middle schools in this Regents item have implemented significant academic turnaround/intervention programs during the course of their current short-term renewal. However, as State assessments were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department is not able to include results from that academic year in the analysis of Benchmark 1 of [the Charter School Performance Framework](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/SectionIII/PerformanceFramework.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/SectionIII/PerformanceFramework.html>). Therefore, NYSED's Charter School Office (CSO) has not been able to update the Benchmark 1 ratings of these elementary/middle schools or evaluate the efficacy of turnaround/intervention efforts implemented since their previous renewal.

Related Regents Items:

November 2012: [Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/November2012/1112p12a1.pdf)
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/November2012/1112p12a1.pdf>)

Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys

January 2001 Initial Charter
(Not available on website)

December 2005 [First Renewal](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/December2005/1205emscvesida3.htm>)

April 2008 [Grade-Level Expansion, Reserve Fund Addition, Summer School Addition, and a Kindergarten Reduction Revision](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2008Meetings/April2008/0408emsca1.htm>)

July 2010 [Grade-Level Reduction Revision](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2010Meetings/July2010/0710p12a9.doc>)

December 2010 [Second Renewal](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2010Meetings/December2010/1210p12a1.pdf>)

March 2015 [Third Renewal](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/Mar%202015/315p12a3.pdf>)

April 2016 [Merger Revision](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a4.pdf>)

February 2018 [Fourth Renewal](#)
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a4.pdf>)

Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls

January 2001 Initial Charter
(Not available on website)

December 2005 [First Renewal](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/December2005/1205emscvesida3.htm>)

April 2008 [Grade-Level Expansion, Reserve Fund Addition, Summer School Addition, and a Kindergarten Reduction Revision](#)
(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2008Meetings/April2008/0408emsca1.htm>)

July 2010 [Grade-Level Reduction Revision](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2010Meetings/July2010/0710p12a9.doc>)

December 2010 [Second Renewal](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2010Meetings/December2010/1210p12a1.pdf>)

March 2015 [Third Renewal](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/Mar%202015/315p12a3.pdf>)

April 2016 [Merger Revision](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a4.pdf>)

February 2018 [Fourth Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a4.pdf>)

Discovery Charter School

December 2010 [Initial Charter](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2010Meetings/December2010/1210p12a2.pdf>)

March 2013 [District of Location Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/313brca5.pdf>)

April 2016 [First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a2.pdf>)

April 2019 [Second Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/419p12a1.pdf>)

La Cima Charter School

January 2008 [Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2008Meetings/January2008/0108emsca21.htm>)

December 2012 [First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/113p12a2%5B1%5D.pdf>)

February 2013 [Second Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/213p12a1%5B1%5D.pdf>)

May 2016 [Third Renewal with Enrollment Reduction and a Spanish Language Arts Program Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/516p12a3.pdf>)

Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts

December 2013 [Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1213p12a2%5B1%5D.pdf>)

June 2014 [Relocation Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/614p12a3.pdf>)

March 2019 [First Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/419p12a1.pdf>)

School in the Square Public Charter School

November 2015 [Initial Charter](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1115p12a2.pdf>)

April 2016 [Relocation Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a5.pdf>)

January 2020 [Grade-Level Expansion, Enrollment Expansion, and a Key Design Element Revision](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/120p12a1.pdf>)

Urban Choice Charter School

December 2004 [Initial Charter](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2004Meetings/December2004/1204emscvesida1.htm>)

December 2009 [First Renewal](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009Meetings/December2009/1209emsca8.htm>)

February 2014 [Second Renewal](#)

(http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/214p12a4%5B1%5D_0.pdf)

March 2017 [Third Renewal](#)

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/317p12a4.pdf>)

May 2020 [Fourth Renewal](#)

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/520bra7-REVISED.pdf>)

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys**: (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 **Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2026**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls**: (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 **Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2026**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Discovery 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 **Discovery 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, 2024**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **La Cima 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 **La Cima 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 **Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts**: (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 **Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2024**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **School in the Square Public 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 **School in the Square Public 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, 2026**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Urban Choice 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 **Urban Choice 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, 2023**.

Timetable for Implementation

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

Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department** recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021, and expire on June 30, 2026, and the school would be permitted to revise its charter to amend the mission and key design elements of the school’s charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys
Board Chair	Martha Snyder
District of Location	Albany City School District ¹
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2002
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: January 10, 2001 - January 9, 2006 • First Renewal Term: January 10, 2006 - January 10, 2011 • Second Renewal Term: January 11, 2011 - June 30, 2015 • Third Renewal Term: July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2018 • Fourth Renewal Term: July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 325 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 325 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	116 North Lake Avenue, Albany - Private Space
Mission Statement	<p><i>The mission of the Brighter Choice Charter Schools is to ensure that Brighter Choice Charter School scholars have the same opportunities for future success as scholars attending the best public schools in the region. There are 3 significant components to achieving this mission:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exemplary instruction that prepares scholars to think critically, problem-solve effectively, and to become engaged and responsible learners, successfully prepared for middle school, high school, and college.</i> • <i>Focus on the development of social, behavioral, and organizational skills necessary for future school success.</i> • <i>An education beyond the basics that includes performing arts, visual arts, science, and history.</i>

¹ Nineteen percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-Impact Professional Development for Educators. • Engaging Academic Program. • Integrated Studies. • Data-Driven Instruction. • Focus on Character Development and Problem-Solving Skills. • Parent and Community Partnerships. • More Time on Task.
Recommended Material Revisions	Amend the mission and key design elements of the school’s charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls by specifying the single-gender nature of this academic program and other minor changes.
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/BrighterChoiceCharterSchoolForBoys/FinalBCCSBRENSV2021.pdf

Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys (BCCS-B) is meeting nine out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys**

2015 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Meets
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs: BCCS-B offers all families, regardless of economic status, the opportunity to access single-gender education at the public level. The school provides learning spaces for boys that are designed to promote positive self-image and increased support for student differences. The school has developed a strong single-sex model, including curriculum, instruction, and a school culture designed specifically to engage boys.

Renewal Condition(s):

- BCCS-B shall devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy, in consultation with and with the approval of, NYSED’s CSO for students with disabilities no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between BCCS-B and the school’s district of location before the school’s next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by NYSED’s CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
 - Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any State assessments in authorizing decision making.
 - Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice, and all results shall be reported to NYSED’s CSO no later than March 1.
 - Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to NYSED’s CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2018 to 2019	Year 2 2019 to 2020	Year 3 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Approved Enrollment	325	325	325

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024	Year 4 2024 to 2025	Year 5 2025 to 2026
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Proposed Enrollment	325	325	325	325	325

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, BCCS-B is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

- BCCS-B is a single-sex elementary school for boys that uses heterogeneous classes to deliver instruction.
- The school uses core English language arts (ELA) and math curricula that are modified and integrated with other subjects, such as social studies.
- The school employs an extended day and year to provide additional time for student learning and teacher planning and collaboration.
- The school emphasizes social-emotional development as part of its curriculum and implements a formal character education program.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - BCCS-B uses a direct consultant teacher model to provide push-in and pull-out special education services.
 - The school provides resource room for designated students four to five days per week.
 - The school provides speech and occupational therapy.
 - The school provides mandatory and non-mandatory counseling to students.
- ELLs:
 - The school has a dedicated English as a new language (ENL) teacher who uses NYSESLAT and other assessment results to target student needs.
 - The school uses a tracker to monitor the performance of ELL and former ELL students.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Albany City School District

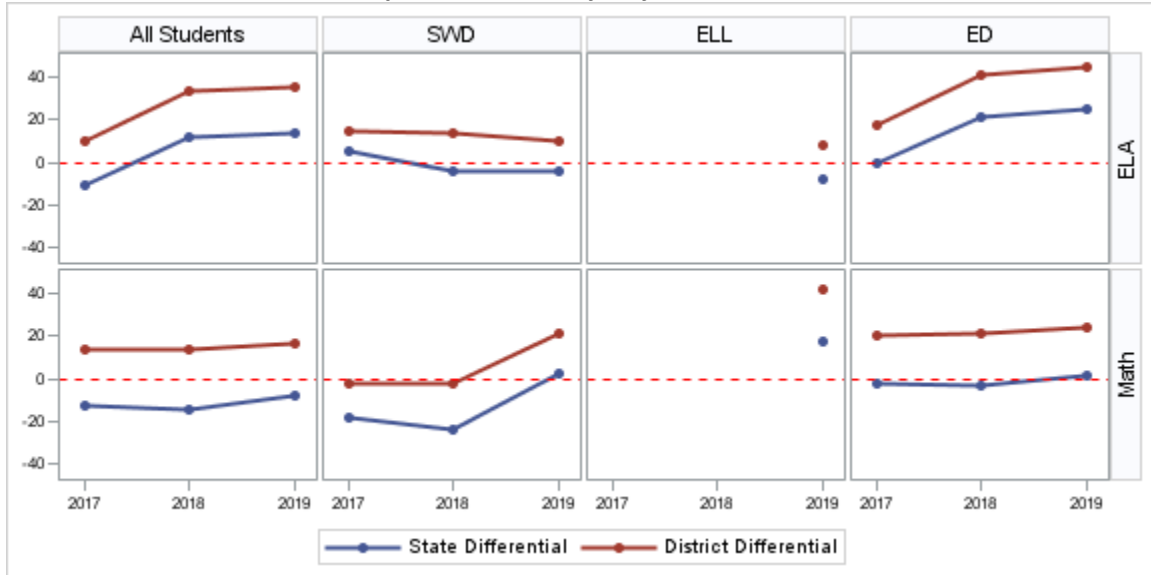


Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2016-2017	29%	19%	+10	40%	-11	32%	18%	+14	45%	-13
	2017-2018	57%	23%	+34	45%	+12	35%	21%	+14	49%	-14
	2018-2019	60%	24%	+36	46%	+14	42%	25%	+17	50%	-8
SWD	2016-2017	17%	2%	+15	12%	+5	0%	2%	-2	18%	-18
	2017-2018	17%	3%	+14	21%	-4	0%	2%	-2	24%	-24
	2018-2019	13%	3%	+10	17%	-4	25%	4%	+21	22%	+3
ELL	2018-2019	25%	17%	+8	33%	-8	57%	15%	+42	39%	+18
ED	2016-2017	29%	11%	+18	29%	0	31%	11%	+20	33%	-2
	2017-2018	56%	15%	+41	35%	+21	35%	14%	+21	38%	-3
	2018-2019	61%	16%	+45	36%	+25	42%	18%	+24	40%	+2

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

BCCS-B is part of the Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools education corporation. The education corporation appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school's independently audited financial statements.

NYSED monitors the school's compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school's annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED's website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools' most recent composite score is 2.22.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	.14
2016-2017	.45
2017-2018	1.12
2018-2019	1.73
2019-2020	2.22

Financial Management

NYSED's CSO reviewed Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools' 2019-2020 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

In 2018, the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) conducted an [audit](#) of Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools (<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits/charter-school>) with the objective of determining whether internal controls were in place to ensure that employee compensation was accurate, supported, and properly authorized. OSC found that the school had effectively designed and implemented procedures to ensure that compensation payments were accurate and properly authorized. Accordingly, OSC made no recommendations as a result of the audit.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Through efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is coming close to but not yet meeting its targets for two of the three special population subgroups – SWDs and ELLs (see Table 5 below).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students.² In October 2018, NYSED approved the school’s admissions policy, which was revised to add a weight for SWDs. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include:

- Employing a certified special education (SPED) coordinator, two student success coordinators, two SPED-certified teachers, one full-time ENL teacher, two school counselors, three RtI teachers, and a parent coordinator;
- Recruiting prospective staff members who are SPED-certified and/or bilingual;
- Promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities at all levels of the organization to convey the school’s commitment to diversity and inclusion;
- Establishing a family mental health clinic to serve the school community and building a relationship with Families Together in New York State;
- Connecting with organizations that are led by and work with people with disabilities;
- Broadening media resources to include stories from parents and students that highlight the services offered for SWDs;
- Sharing a one-page informational document with local districts’ committees on special education and committees on preschool education that highlights BCCS-B’s offerings for SWDs;
- Creating an ELL community liaison position to connect the school with prospective families;
- Providing translated recruitment materials and translation at recruitment events;
- Building a relationship with the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants;
- Attending community meetings and reaching out to local community officials in an effort to disseminate information regarding the school’s ELL services and programming;
- Offering free breakfast, lunch, and dinner to all students;
- Participating in the Albany Police Department’s Handle with Care program to support students struggling with trauma;
- Providing an extended day and school year;
- Offering free uniforms; and
- Implementing an incentivized attendance program for students with low attendance.

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 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	4%	13%	-9	3%	12%	-9	91%	57%	+34
2017-2018	5%	13%	-8	4%	13%	-9	93%	71%	+22
2018-2019	7%	16%	-9	6%	14%	-8	94%	72%	+22
2019-2020	7%	17%	-10	8%	13%	-5	96%	65%	+31

Table 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Albany CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	75%	87%	-12	75%	90%	-15	75%	86%	-11	77%	88%	-11
2017-2018	81%	85%	-4	50%	86%	-36	100%	82%	+18	79%	87%	-8
2018-2019	80%	85%	-5	75%	86%	-11	69%	84%	-15	81%	87%	-6
2019-2020	80%	84%	-4	61%	86%	-25	90%	82%	+8	81%	84%	-3

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

Brighter Choice CS for Boys	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2016-2017	325	311	96%
2017-2018	325	319	98%
2018-2019	325	324	100%
2019-2020	325	305	94%

Legal Compliance

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

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the City School District of Albany on October 1, 2020. There were no attendees, and, as such, there were no speakers either in favor of or opposed to the proposed revision and renewal.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021, and expire on June 30, 2026, and the school would be permitted to revise its charter to amend the mission and key design elements of the school’s charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls
Board Chair	Martha Snyder
District of Location	Albany City School District ³
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2002
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: January 10, 2001 - January 9, 2006 • First Renewal Term: January 10, 2006 - January 10, 2011 • Second Renewal Term: January 11, 2011 - June 30, 2015 • Third Renewal Term: July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2018 • Fourth Renewal Term: July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 325 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 325 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	250 Central Avenue, Albany - Private Space
Mission Statement	<p><i>The mission of the Brighter Choice Charter Schools is to ensure that Brighter Choice Charter School scholars have the same opportunities for future success as scholars attending the best public schools in the region. There are 3 significant components to achieving this mission:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exemplary instruction that ensures competency and mastery in reading, writing and mathematics.</i> • <i>Focus on the development of social, behavioral, and organizational skills necessary for future school success.</i> • <i>An education beyond the basics that includes performing arts, visual arts, science, and history.</i>

³ Nineteen percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An intense and serious focus on academic achievement. • An equally rigorous standard for scholar behavior, with an emphasis on core values. • Single-gender classroom instruction. • An extended school day and extended school year. • Mandatory school uniforms. • A high level of parental/guardian participation in the life of the school. • Frequent standardized testing, beginning in kindergarten.
Recommended Material Revisions	<p>Amend the mission and key design elements of the school's charter to align them with those proposed for the Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys by eliminating the requirement for uniforms, shifting from a culture of testing, and adding an emphasis on high-impact professional development and the use of data to help drive instructional decision making.</p>
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	<p>http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/BrighterChoiceCharterSchoolForGirls/FinalBCCSGRENSV2021.pdf</p>

Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls (BCCS-G) is meeting nine out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

The school is currently implementing a corrective action plan (CAP) requested by NYSED's CSO based on the school's enrollment of students with disabilities. The school outlined specific strategies in the CAP that they are currently enacting. The school provides NYSED's CSO with quarterly progress reports and updates regarding this.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls**

2015 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Meets
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs: BCCS-G offers all families, regardless of economic status, the opportunity to access single-gender education at the public level. The school provides learning spaces for girls that are designed to promote positive self-image and increased support for student differences. The school has developed a strong single-sex model, including curriculum designed specifically to engage girls and a culture that focuses on sisterhood to support growth and achievement.

Renewal Condition(s):

- BCCS-G shall devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy, in consultation with and with the approval of, NYSED’s CSO for students with disabilities no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between BCCS-G and the school’s district of location before the school’s next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
 - Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
 - Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
 - Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2018 to 2019	Year 2 2019 to 2020	Year 3 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Approved Enrollment	325	325	325

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024	Year 4 2024 to 2025	Year 5 2025 to 2026
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Proposed Enrollment	325	325	325	325	325

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, BCCS-G is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School:

- BCCS-G is a single-sex elementary school for girls that uses heterogeneous classes to deliver instruction.
- The school uses core English language arts (ELA) and math curricula that are modified and integrated with other subjects, such as social studies.
- The school employs an extended day and year to provide additional time for student learning and teacher planning and collaboration.
- The school emphasizes social-emotional development as part of its curriculum and implements a formal character education program.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - BCCS-G uses a direct consultant teacher model to provide push-in and pull-out special education (SPED) services.
 - The school implements integrated co-teaching (ICT) classes.
 - The school provides resource room services.
 - The school provides speech and occupational therapy.
 - The school provides mandatory and non-mandatory counseling to students.
- ELLs:
 - The school has a dedicated English as a new language (ENL) teacher who targets support to ELL students and collaborates with teachers on lesson planning.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Albany City School District

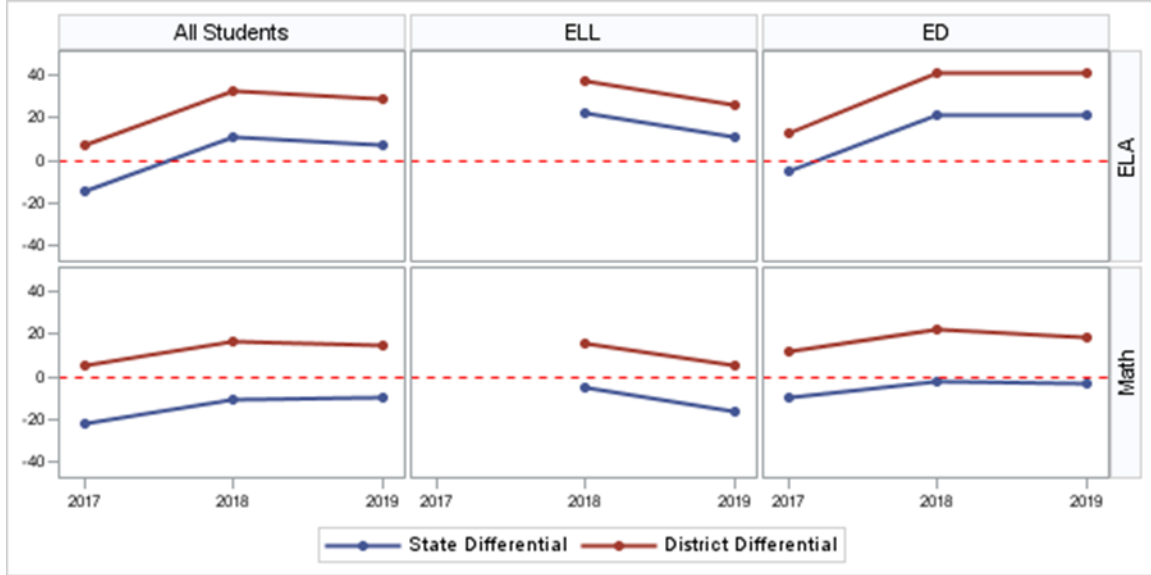


Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2016-2017	26%	19%	+7	40%	-14	23%	18%	+5	45%	-22
	2017-2018	56%	23%	+33	45%	+11	38%	21%	+17	49%	-11
	2018-2019	53%	24%	+29	46%	+7	40%	25%	+15	50%	-10
ELL	2017-2018	50%	13%	+37	28%	+22	29%	13%	+16	34%	-5
	2018-2019	40%	14%	+26	29%	+11	20%	15%	+5	36%	-16
ED	2016-2017	24%	11%	+13	29%	-5	23%	11%	+12	33%	-10
	2017-2018	56%	15%	+41	35%	+21	36%	14%	+22	38%	-2
	2018-2019	57%	16%	+41	36%	+21	37%	18%	+19	40%	-3

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

BCCS-G is part of the Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools education corporation. The education corporation appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools’ most recent composite score is 2.22.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	.14
2016-2017	.45
2017-2018	1.12
2018-2019	1.73
2019-2020	2.22

Financial Management

NYSED’s CSO reviewed Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools’ 2019-2020 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

In 2018, the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) conducted an [audit](https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits/charter-school) of Brighter Choice Elementary Charter Schools (<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits/charter-school>) with the objective of determining whether internal controls were in place to ensure that employee compensation was accurate, supported, and properly authorized. OSC found that the school had effectively designed and implemented procedures to ensure that compensation payments were accurate and properly authorized. Accordingly, OSC made no recommendations as a result of the audit.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Through efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is coming close to but not yet meeting its targets for two of the three special population subgroups – SWDs and ELLs (see Table 5 below).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students.⁴ In October 2018, NYSED approved the school's admissions policy, which was revised to add a weight for SWDs. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include:

- Employing a certified special education (SPED) coordinator who is responsible for overseeing the school's SPED program as well as providing educational assistance and SPED services to students with IEPs;
- Seeking out teachers who are dually certified in Special Education;
- Cultivating a relationship with the College of Saint Rose in order to host student teachers who are enrolled in Special Education courses;
- Continuing to have a student support team that meets regularly to evaluate and monitor the needs of at-risk students;
- Including targeted language and videos on social media platforms to highlight the school's efforts to meet the needs of SWDs;
- Strengthening relationships with service providers and pre-kindergarten programs that serve the needs of SWDs;
- Increasing communication with local districts' committees on special education (CSEs) and enhancing procedures to better align with those of these local districts;
- Adding a co-taught kindergarten classroom to serve the needs of SWDs;
- Disseminating brochures via district CSEs in order to ensure that parents are aware of the full extent of BCCS-G's support services;
- Remaining flexible about its special population support services depending on students' needs;
- Employing a full-time ENL teacher;
- Ensuring that families are aware of the school's ENL program through targeted language in its marketing and enrollment events;
- Joining a consortium with area schools to better serve the school's ELL population;
- Attending community meetings and reaching out to local community officials in an effort to disseminate information regarding the school's services and programming for at-risk students;
- Offering free breakfast, lunch, and dinner to all students;
- Providing an extended day and school year;
- Offering free uniforms; and
- Implementing an incentivized attendance program for students with low attendance.

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 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	3%	13%	-10	2%	12%	-10	87%	57%	+30
2017-2018	1%	13%	-12	7%	13%	-6	89%	71%	+18
2018-2019	3%	16%	-13	8%	14%	-6	83%	72%	+11
2019-2020	3%	17%	-14	12%	13%	-1	87%	65%	+22

Table 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District	Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Albany CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	79%	87%	-8	70%	90%	-20	75%	86%	-11	80%	88%	-8
2017-2018	82%	85%	-3	14%	86%	-72	100%	82%	+18	83%	87%	-4
2018-2019	76%	85%	-9	67%	86%	-19	89%	84%	+5	76%	87%	-11
2019-2020	79%	84%	-5	90%	86%	+4	92%	82%	+10	79%	84%	-5

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

Brighter Choice CS for Girls	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2016-2017	325	317	98%
2017-2018	325	338	104%
2018-2019	325	322	99%
2019-2020	325	328	101%

Legal Compliance

BCCS-G generally operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules, and other policies, including the terms of its charter, by-laws, and other school-specific policies. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the City School District of Albany on October 1, 2020. There were no attendees, and, as such, there were no speakers either in favor of or opposed to the renewal and revision.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

Discovery Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a short-term renewal for a period of three years for Discovery Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021 and expire on June 30, 2024.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Discovery Charter School
Board Chair	Sara Varhus
District of Location	Greece Central School District ⁵
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2011
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: August 15, 2011 - June 30, 2016 • First Renewal Term: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2019 • Second Renewal Term: July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 6 / 280 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 6 / 280 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	133 Hoover Drive, Rochester, NY 14613 - Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>Discovery Charter School provides a high-quality education in a safe and supportive learning community for students and families, empowers students with diverse talents, delivers rigorous and culturally relevant instruction, and fosters creativity, inquiry and strong character development.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty preference • Rigorous and highly enriched curriculum • Assessment-guided instruction • Culture of inquiry and enthusiasm • Services designed to mitigate the major negative impacts of poverty • Students’ achieve beyond their peers
Recommended Material Revisions	None
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/DiscoveryCharterSchool/DiscoveryREN21.pdf

⁵ Two percent of all students residing in the Greece Central School district attend charter schools. Twenty percent of all students residing in the Rochester City School District attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

Discovery Charter School (DCS) is located in the Greece Central School District but is chartered to serve students in the Rochester City School District. Over the charter term, the great majority of DCS students reside in Rochester, with only a handful from other local districts. NYSED is required to provide a comparison to the school's district of location, Greece, but because the school is chartered to serve Rochester and the majority of students reside there, we also provide a comparison to Rochester.

DCS is meeting six out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

In February 2019, the school received a Notice of Deficiency from NYSED's CSO based on its enrollment deficiencies with regard to students with disabilities and English language learners. The school was then required by NYSED to provide a corrective action plan (CAP) establishing strategies and measurable outcomes to improve performance. The school is currently implementing the specific strategies outlined in the CAP and provides quarterly progress reports and updates to NYSED's CSO, which continues to closely monitor the school's progress toward this standard.

Subsequent to its last renewal, this school has implemented a significant academic turnaround/intervention program during the course of the school's current charter term. As State assessments were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, academic outcome data reflecting these efforts was not available to include in the school's Benchmark 1 evaluation.

**2019 Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
Discovery Charter School**

2019 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Approaches
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs:

Several of the key design elements of Discovery Charter School (DCS) and other characteristics of its programs and culture distinguish it from the Rochester City School District and the other district schools from which it receives students. These include enhanced instructional time, low class size and student-to-teacher ratio, targeted support for instruction, and student social and emotional needs, provision of

services and programs aimed squarely at mitigating the most serious negative impacts on learning, parental engagement, character development, and a safe and supportive environment.

DCS allocates staff and resources to provide services and supports to ensure families can provide a suitable learning environment for DCS students over and above the academic materials. DCS staff have acquired and distributed computers, desks, learning materials and WiFi hotspots, delivered meals and provided technology training and support.

Renewal Condition(s): Discovery Charter School shall:

- Devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy, in consultation with NYSED’s CSO, for students with disabilities no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between DCS and the Rochester City School District before the school’s next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
 - Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
 - Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
 - Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.
- Develop and implement a multi-step comprehensive process compliant with all State requirements to ensure that all school employees have fingerprint clearance prior to their start date at the school and that the records DCS maintains accurately reflect those clearances. DCS will submit such school board approved policy, including the identification and training of applicable staff members, to NYSED’s CSO for review and approval no later than April 30, 2021 (the school’s current charter term).

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2019 to 2020	Year 2 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6
Total Authorized Enrollment	280	280

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6
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 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, DCS is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

- For K-Grade 6 ELA, the school uses the EL Curriculum (formerly Expeditionary Learning, now EL Education).
- For K- Grade 6 math, DCS implements the Engage NY modules, supplemented with Zearn digital math lessons.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - Three multi-age Integrated Co-Teaching classrooms, Grade 1 and Grade 2, and one for Grades 3 and 4
 - Seven special education staff
 - Related services (Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapy) provided by the sending districts
 - Adaptive physical education
 - ELA and math curriculum align with the same standards as for general education

- ELLs:
 - Two English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers
 - Full-time speech and language pathologist
 - Seven bilingual staff members

Figure 1a: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Rochester City School District

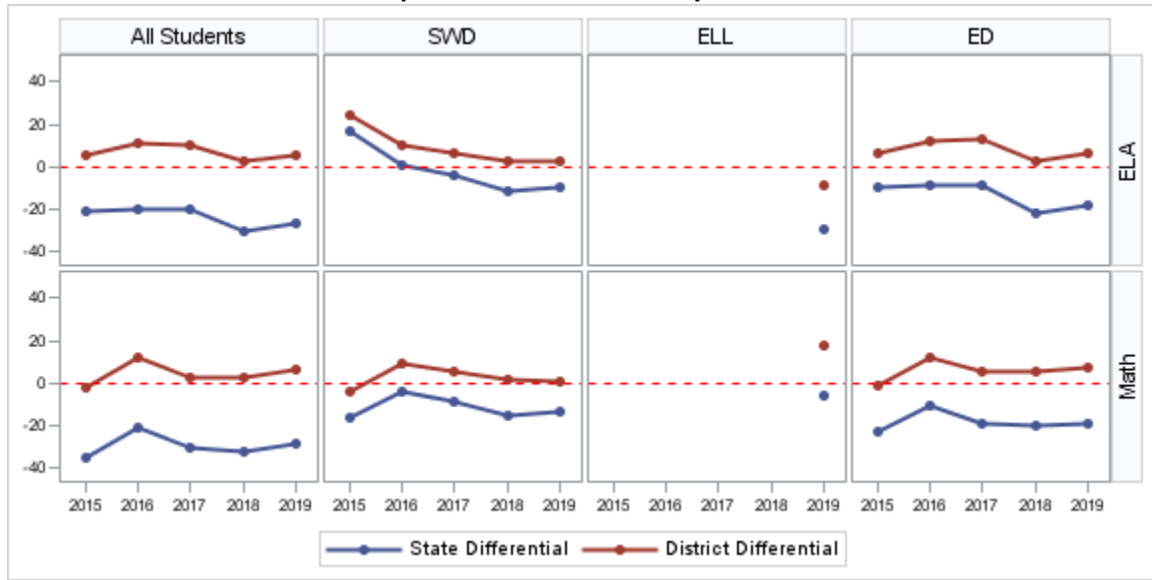


Figure 1b: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Greece Central School District

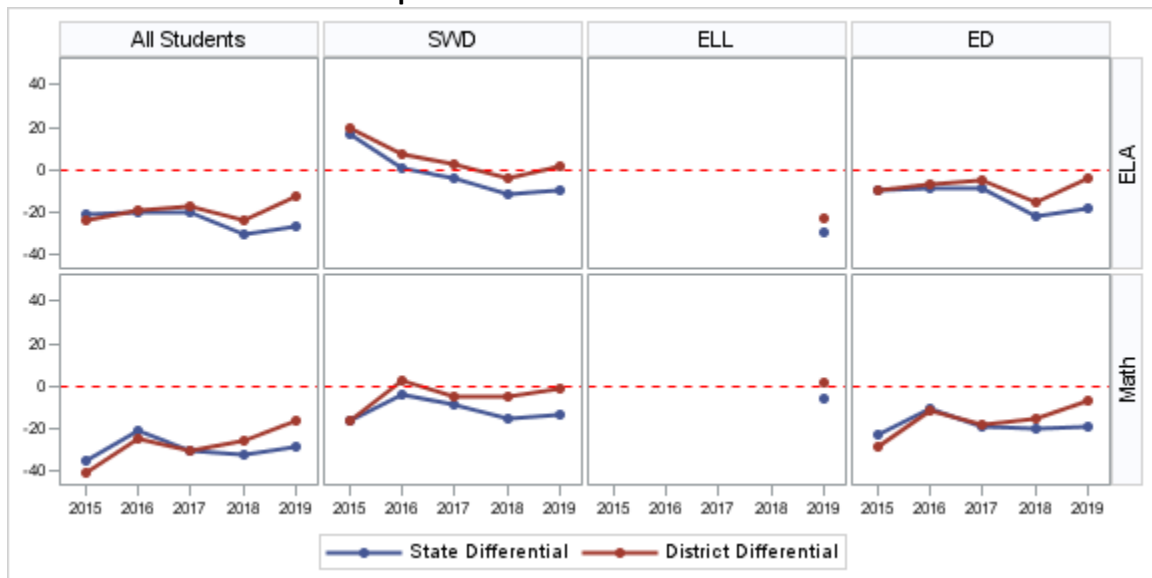


Table 3a: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	10%	5%	+5	31%	-21	8%	10%	-2	43%	-35
	2015-2016	18%	7%	+11	38%	-20	21%	9%	+12	42%	-21
	2016-2017	18%	8%	+10	38%	-20	13%	10%	+3	44%	-31
	2017-2018	15%	12%	+3	46%	-31	16%	13%	+3	48%	-32
	2018-2019	19%	14%	+5	46%	-27	21%	15%	+6	50%	-29
SWD	2014-2015	25%	1%	+24	8%	+17	0%	4%	-4	16%	-16
	2015-2016	11%	1%	+10	10%	+1	11%	2%	+9	15%	-4
	2016-2017	7%	1%	+6	11%	-4	7%	2%	+5	16%	-9
	2017-2018	5%	2%	+3	17%	-12	5%	3%	+2	20%	-15
	2018-2019	6%	3%	+3	16%	-10	6%	5%	+1	20%	-14
ELL	2018-2019	0%	9%	-9	30%	-30	29%	11%	+18	35%	-6
ED	2014-2015	11%	5%	+6	21%	-10	8%	9%	-1	31%	-23
	2015-2016	18%	6%	+12	27%	-9	20%	8%	+12	31%	-11
	2016-2017	19%	6%	+13	28%	-9	13%	8%	+5	32%	-19
	2017-2018	14%	11%	+3	36%	-22	16%	11%	+5	36%	-20
	2018-2019	18%	12%	+6	36%	-18	20%	13%	+7	39%	-19

Table 3b: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	10%	34%	-24	31%	-21	8%	49%	-41	43%	-35
	2015-2016	18%	37%	-19	38%	-20	21%	46%	-25	42%	-21
	2016-2017	18%	35%	-17	38%	-20	13%	44%	-31	44%	-31
	2017-2018	15%	39%	-24	46%	-31	16%	42%	-26	48%	-32
	2018-2019	19%	32%	-13	46%	-27	21%	37%	-16	50%	-29
SWD	2014-2015	25%	5%	+20	8%	+17	0%	16%	-16	16%	-16
	2015-2016	11%	4%	+7	10%	+1	11%	8%	+3	15%	-4
	2016-2017	7%	4%	+3	11%	-4	7%	12%	-5	16%	-9
	2017-2018	5%	9%	-4	17%	-12	5%	10%	-5	20%	-15
	2018-2019	6%	4%	+2	16%	-10	6%	7%	-1	20%	-14
ELL	2018-2019	0%	23%	-23	30%	-30	29%	27%	+2	35%	-6
ED	2014-2015	11%	21%	-10	21%	-10	8%	37%	-29	31%	-23
	2015-2016	18%	25%	-7	27%	-9	20%	32%	-12	31%	-11
	2016-2017	19%	24%	-5	28%	-9	13%	31%	-18	32%	-19
	2017-2018	14%	29%	-15	36%	-22	16%	31%	-15	36%	-20
	2018-2019	18%	22%	-4	36%	-18	20%	27%	-7	39%	-19

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

At the time of the school’s last renewal in 2019, DCS was in good financial health, but academic outcomes were falling far below Performance Framework standards. Therefore, the DCS board made the decision to invest a significant amount of funds, including some funding being held in reserve, to support academic intervention services for its students. As a result, DCS temporarily failed to meet NYSED fiscal performance standards, such as the financial composite score. The financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Discovery Charter School’s most recent composite score is -.17.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.27
2016-2017	1.79
2017-2018	1.42
2018-2019	.89
2019-2020	-.17

The 2019-2020 financial statements report that management will be implementing plans to control operating expenses and maximizing revenue opportunities to restore financially sustainable operating conditions going forward.

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed DCS’s 2019-2020 audited financial statements 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.

Although the school failed to meet some of NYSED’s fiscal standards as outlined above, the school’s board made deliberate fiscal investment in the school’s academic program and have a fiscal plan to achieve compliance regarding NYSED standards in the near-term.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Through efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is coming close to but not yet meeting its targets for all of the special population subgroups – EDs, SWDs, or ELLs (see Table 5 below).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students.⁶ The school instituted a weighted lottery for ELLs in July 2020, and is requesting a weighted lottery for SWDs for the 2021-2022 school year. Other efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include:

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).

- Established a Benchmark 9 board-level committee;
- Hiring one full-time speech language pathologist;
- The creation of a Social Emotional Learning Team, and
- Instituted three multi-age ICT classrooms.

Table 5a: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	14%	21%	-7	3%	14%	-11	96%	93%	+3
2016-2017	17%	22%	-5	2%	15%	-13	97%	92%	+5
2017-2018	16%	22%	-6	4%	16%	-12	97%	92%	+5
2018-2019	13%	23%	-10	5%	17%	-12	96%	92%	+4
2019-2020	15%	22%	-7	8%	18%	-10	95%	91%	+4

Table 5b: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	14%	13%	+1	3%	5%	-2	96%	53%	+43
2016-2017	17%	14%	+3	2%	5%	-3	97%	55%	+42
2017-2018	16%	14%	+2	4%	7%	-3	97%	61%	+36
2018-2019	13%	15%	-2	5%	7%	-2	96%	60%	+36
2019-2020	15%	15%	0	8%	8%	0	95%	61%	+34

Table 6a: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	88%	87%	+1	88%	91%	-3	75%	86%	-11	88%	87%	+1
2016-2017	81%	87%	-6	82%	90%	-8	100%	87%	+13	83%	87%	-4
2017-2018	81%	87%	-6	74%	90%	-16	71%	87%	-16	80%	88%	-8
2018-2019	74%	87%	-13	70%	91%	-21	92%	85%	+7	75%	87%	-12
2019-2020	82%	87%	-5	76%	90%	-14	100%	86%	+14	82%	87%	-5

Table 6b: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Discovery CS	Greece CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	88%	92%	-4	88%	91%	-3	75%	86%	-11	88%	90%	-2
2016-2017	81%	90%	-9	82%	92%	-10	100%	91%	+9	83%	93%	-10
2017-2018	81%	90%	-9	74%	91%	-17	71%	89%	-18	80%	92%	-12
2018-2019	74%	92%	-18	70%	92%	-22	92%	90%	+2	75%	90%	-15
2019-2020	82%	91%	-9	76%	90%	-14	100%	87%	+13	82%	90%	-8

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

Discovery CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2015-2016	280	293	105%
2016-2017	280	284	101%
2017-2018	280	292	104%
2018-2019	280	276	99%
2019-2020	280	289	103%

Legal Compliance

DCS, to some extent, operates in accordance with applicable requirements of the law, regulations, and its charter. School officials have not been complying with fingerprinting and clearance requirements for staff, a serious safety violation, and/or have not maintained clear and consistent records regarding staff clearances. The school must adopt a multi-step, comprehensive process to ensure that all school employees have fingerprint clearance prior to their start date at the school, and that the records it maintains accurately reflect those clearances. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the Greece Central School District on October 13, 2020. There were no attendees, and, as such, there were no speakers either in favor of or opposed to the proposed renewal.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

La Cima Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a short-term renewal for a period of four years for La Cima Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021, and expire on June 30, 2025, and the school would be permitted to revise its charter to reduce the authorized enrollment from the currently approved 430 students to 330 students beginning in the 2021-2022 school year commencing upon approval by the Board of Regents; and to replace existing key design elements as set forth below.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	La Cima Charter School
Board Chair	Lucy Joffe
District of Location	NYC CSD 16 ⁷
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2008
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: January 15, 2008 - January 14, 2013 • First Renewal Term: January 15, 2013 - June 30, 2016 • Second Renewal Term: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 430 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 5 / 330 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	800 Gates Avenue, 3rd Floor, Brooklyn - Public Space
Mission Statement	<i>The mission of La Cima Elementary Charter School is to prepare our students for academic and life-long success through a rigorous and relevant academic program.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-school design • Data-driven culture • Culturally-responsive teaching with an emphasis on social justice • More time
Recommended Material Revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the authorized enrollment from the currently approved 430 students to 330 students commencing upon approval by the Board of Regents. • Replace existing key design elements: “Small School Design;” “Data-Driven Culture;” “Culturally Responsive Teaching with an Emphasis on Social Justice;” and “More Time” with the following key design elements: “Scholar Centered and Inclusive Learning Environment;” “Social Justice;” and “Constructivist Approach to Math and Balanced Literacy.”
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/LaCimaCharterSchool/documents/LaCimaRenewalReportFINAL2_5_21.pdf

⁷ Thirty-two percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

La Cima Charter School (LCCS) is meeting seven out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
La Cima Charter School**

2015 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Approaches
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs:

“Social Justice” is one of the school’s key design elements, and its founders envisioned the school as a tool of social justice that would offer students faced with systemic disadvantages an education equitable with

their peers across the State. LCCS's population (18 percent homeless,⁸ 18 percent ELL, 18 percent SWD, and 88 percent ED) is composed of some of the most vulnerable populations in New York City that lack access to high-quality educational programs. The entire program responds to students' need for education by constantly elevating teaching and learning. LCCS embeds the concept of social justice in the school in the following ways:

- LCCS offers a rigorous, constructivist curriculum that is aligned to the histories, languages, and experiences of traditionally marginalized voices and elevates those voices.
- Recognizing that each scholar will experience unique factors (including, for example, trauma or an uncertain housing situation) that may impact their access to its academic program, LCCS aims to address the whole child by supporting scholars' social and emotional needs and character development.
- LCCS implements a restorative approach to discipline that is aligned with a focus on character development and social-emotional learning. Using the elements of responsive classroom management and positive behavioral interventions and supports, LCCS maintains a positive classroom environment. Scholars are encouraged to view themselves as participants in a community of responsibility and respect. Recognizing that elementary scholars need support in developing self-regulation, the focus is on building students' understanding of concepts such as cause and effect, community participation, and harm reparation. In instances of behavior that are not aligned with school expectations, with the exception of certain infractions, the school offers opportunities for intervention and reparation and minimizes punishments that would exclude students from the school day.
- Multiple expressions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, ability) are assets for teaching and learning. LCCS staff members get to know their scholars and develop meaningful relationships with scholars while engaging in a shared community.
- LCCS works to develop scholars' abilities to connect across lines of cultural difference.
- LCCS provides staff members with ongoing development around strategies for equitable access to the curriculum. In addition, the school encourages teachers' critical thinking skills and is committed to supporting teachers' own learning as they become experts in the field of teaching.

LCCS's focus on social justice is memorialized by naming each classroom after different "change makers," including Sylvia Mendez, Toni Morrison, Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, Yuri Kochiyama, the Honorable Sonia Sotomayor, Katherine Johnson, and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

Renewal Condition(s):

- LCCS shall devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy or provide evidence that the school's current policy is effective, in consultation with NYSED's CSO, for students with disabilities no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between LCCS and the school's district of location before the school's next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.

⁸ LCCS's renewal application explains the school uses the SIRS definition of homeless, which includes students whose primary nighttime residence is "Doubled-up," Hotels/motels, Shelters, Transitional Housing, or Unsheltered to disaggregate student performance data.

- Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
- Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
- Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2016 to 2017	Year 2 2017 to 2018	Year 3 2018 to 2019	Year 4 2019 to 2020	Year 5 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Authorized Enrollment	430	430	430	430	430

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024	Year 4 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5	K - Grade 5
Total Proposed Enrollment	330	330	330	330

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency regarding 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, LCCS is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School:

- The school engages in continuous improvement efforts to meet its students' needs for high-quality instruction, which school leadership, board members, and staff view as a tool for social justice.
- At all grade levels, LCCS staff utilize a constructivist approach to teaching math, believing that students "must engage in productive struggle with cognitively demanding tasks that allow them to analyze their own and their peers' thinking."
- At all grade levels, LCCS's ELA program is based on a balanced literacy approach, which "integrates the multiple components of modeling, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, word study, writing, and phonics."

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - LCCS serves its SWDs through integrated co-teaching (ICT) classrooms at each grade level in 2020-2021. In each ICT classroom, certified special education teachers work collaboratively with general education teachers to maximize opportunities for individualized attention and differentiation. The school also provides Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) in individual and small group settings in accordance with students' individualized education programs (IEPs).
 - LCCS employs a full-time special populations coordinator, behavior tech, school psychologist, and guidance counselor to provide a comprehensive range of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports for students. The school also utilizes New York City Department of Education staff for speech, physical, and occupational therapy services to meet the requirements in students' IEPs.
 - LCCS staff regularly participate in professional development (PD) workshops with the Collaborative on Inclusive Education (the Collaborative) in addition to in-house training and coaching on effective intervention and differentiation techniques.
- ELLs:
 - LCCS serves ELLs with supports in and outside of the classroom. Classroom teachers receive PD and a school-developed guide on best practices that "outlines differentiation strategies for ELLs, including preparing vocabulary for each lesson, ensuring that lessons include a variety of visual aids and techniques for speaking and gesturing to support student understanding."
 - LCCS employs a full-time English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher who provides small group push-in and pull-out language acquisition support in classrooms. The school provides PD sessions for all teachers regarding supports for ELLs in combination with classroom observations and actionable feedback to teachers from school leadership in this domain. In addition, the school has strategically paired teachers with bilingual co-teachers or teachers in residence wherever possible to support ELL students.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 16

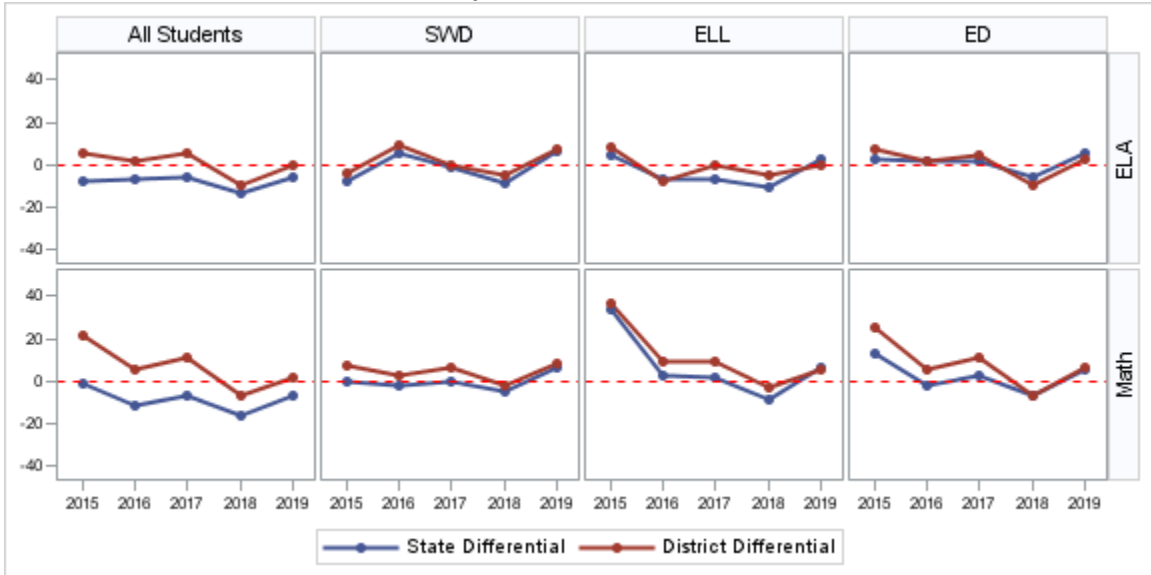


Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	23%	18%	+5	31%	-8	42%	21%	+21	43%	-1
	2015-2016	32%	30%	+2	39%	-7	31%	26%	+5	43%	-12
	2016-2017	34%	29%	+5	40%	-6	38%	27%	+11	45%	-7
	2017-2018	31%	41%	-10	45%	-14	33%	40%	-7	49%	-16
	2018-2019	40%	40%	0	46%	-6	43%	41%	+2	50%	-7
SWD	2014-2015	0%	4%	-4	8%	-8	16%	9%	+7	16%	0
	2015-2016	16%	7%	+9	11%	+5	14%	11%	+3	16%	-2
	2016-2017	11%	11%	0	12%	-1	18%	12%	+6	18%	0
	2017-2018	9%	14%	-5	18%	-9	16%	18%	-2	21%	-5
	2018-2019	23%	16%	+7	17%	+6	28%	20%	+8	22%	+6
ELL/MLL	2014-2015	17%	9%	+8	13%	+4	58%	21%	+37	24%	+34
	2015-2016	9%	17%	-8	16%	-7	27%	18%	+9	24%	+3
	2016-2017	8%	8%	0	15%	-7	25%	16%	+9	23%	+2
	2017-2018	17%	22%	-5	28%	-11	25%	28%	-3	34%	-9
	2018-2019	32%	32%	0	29%	+3	42%	37%	+5	36%	+6
ED	2014-2015	24%	17%	+7	21%	+3	44%	19%	+25	31%	+13
	2015-2016	30%	28%	+2	28%	+2	29%	24%	+5	31%	-2
	2016-2017	31%	27%	+4	29%	+2	36%	25%	+11	33%	+3
	2017-2018	29%	39%	-10	35%	-6	31%	38%	-7	38%	-7
	2018-2019	41%	38%	+3	36%	+5	45%	39%	+6	40%	+5

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

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

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. LCCS’s most recent composite score is 2.33.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

Year	Composite Score
2015-2016	2.73
2016-2017	1.88
2017-2018	2.13
2018-2019	1.94
2019-2020	2.33

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed LCCS’s 2019-2020 audited financial statements 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.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Through efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is coming close to but not yet meeting its targets for SWDs (see Table 5 below).

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students⁹ and introduced a lottery weight for SWDs in the spring of 2020. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED and SWD populations include:

- Launch of Teacher-In-Residence program to create a high quality internal teacher pipeline for special educators;
- Establishing an Enrollment Working Group tasked with developing and implementing effective strategies;
- Prioritizing ongoing monitoring of enrollment data and projections to adjust strategies as needed to ensure that the school is meeting its enrollment plan and meeting or making progress toward targets for enrollment of students in at-risk subgroups; and
- Collaborating with the CSE toward offering self-contained special education classes to attract and retain more SWDs to the school.

⁹ 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 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District
2015-2016	20%	27%	-7	7%	6%	+1	80%	84%	-4
2016-2017	19%	26%	-7	8%	6%	+2	75%	84%	-9
2017-2018	19%	27%	-8	8%	7%	+1	87%	87%	0
2018-2019	18%	27%	-9	11%	7%	+4	81%	86%	-5
2019-2020	18%	27%	-9	18%	7%	+11	88%	84%	4

Table 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District	La Cima CS	NYC CSD 16	Differential to District
2015-2016	84%	77%	+7	87%	77%	+10	89%	76%	+13	84%	77%	+7
2016-2017	80%	76%	+4	74%	74%	0	76%	71%	+5	80%	76%	+4
2017-2018	82%	79%	+3	76%	78%	-2	75%	72%	+3	85%	78%	+7
2018-2019	76%	79%	-3	73%	80%	-7	70%	78%	-8	75%	79%	-4
2019-2020	74%	79%	-5	68%	77%	-9	54%	79%	-25	75%	79%	-4

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

La Cima CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2015-2016	480	432	90%
2016-2017	430	380	88%
2017-2018	430	398	93%
2018-2019	430	369	86%
2019-2020	430	337	78%

Legal Compliance

LCCS generally operate(s) in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules and other policies, including the terms of its charter, by-laws, and other school-specific policies. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and the school is currently in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities and the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA).

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on October 27, 2020. 13 people attended, and four spoke. All four spoke in favor of the renewal and revision and none were opposed.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a short-term renewal for a period of three years for Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021 and expire on June 30, 2024.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts
Board Chair	Steven Gordon
District of Location	Greece Central School District ¹⁰
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2014
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: August 25, 2014 - June 30, 2019 • First Renewal Term: July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 6 / 506 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 6 / 506 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	299 Kirk Road, Rochester, NY 14612– Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts provides children an enriched and rigorous education through the humanities and arts integration leading to success in college, careers, and life.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time: Block scheduling, longer days, more days • A Disposition for Learning – Habits of Mind • A Focus on Language and Literacy: Speech • Language Support for All Learners • A Focus on Numeracy and Eight • Mathematical Practices • Arts Instruction and Integration • Character Education • Child and Family Support
Recommended Material Revisions	None
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/RenaissanceAcademyCharterSchooloftheArts/FinalRACSARENSV2021.pdf

¹⁰ Two percent of all students residing in the Greece Central School District attend charter schools. Twenty percent of all students residing in the Rochester City School District attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

Renaissance Academy Charter School for the Arts (RACSA) is located in the Greece Central School District but is chartered to serve students in the Rochester City School District. Over the charter term, the great majority of RACSA students reside in Rochester, with only a handful from other local districts. NYSED is required to provide a comparison to the school's district of location, Greece, but because the school is chartered to serve Rochester and the majority of students reside there, we also provide a comparison to Rochester.

RACSA is meeting seven out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

In February 2019, the school received a Notice of Deficiency from NYSED's CSO based on its ESSA designation as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement School and fiscal deficiencies. In October 2020, the school received a Notice of Deficiency based on enrollment and academic deficiencies. The school was then required by NYSED to provide corrective action plans (CAPs) establishing strategies and measurable outcomes to improve academic and operational performance. The school is currently implementing the specific strategies outlined in the CAPs and provides quarterly progress reports and updates to NYSED's CSO. NYSED's CSO is closely monitoring the CAPs, and the Department will report to the Regents as necessary.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts**

2019 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. . High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs: Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts focuses on literacy and language as one of its key design elements. Historically, the school has found that most students who enroll in kindergarten enter with significant delays in expressive and receptive language. To address and build strengths in these areas, RACSA employs its own certified, full-time speech language

pathologist (SLP) to provide push-in support for all students in areas of speech and language development, regardless of disability classification or lack thereof. Following the receipt of the renewal site visit report in the spring of 2019, the board and school leadership took immediate action to address concerns and issues that were noted in the report. Changes were made to the organizational structure, leadership was supported by specialized development from the National Principals’ Academy Fellowship (RELAY), and the board strengthened its operations and oversight.

Renewal Condition(s): Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts shall:

- Devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy, in consultation with NYSED’s CSO, for students with disabilities and English language learners no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between RACSA and the Rochester City School District before the school’s next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
 - Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
 - Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
 - Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2019 to 2020	Year 2 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6
Total Authorized Enrollment	506	506

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6	K- Grade 6
Total Proposed Enrollment	506	506	506

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency in 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, RACSA is a school in need of *Comprehensive Support and Improvement*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

- At all grade levels, RACSA continues to utilize cross-curricular arts integration, structured literacy instruction aligned to the Daily Five, and a whole brain teaching (WBT) approach.
- The school staffs two teachers in every classroom; team teaching combinations include a lead and assistant teacher, a general education and special education teacher, and/or a general education and arts integration teacher.
- In K-Grade 2 ELA, as well as science and social studies in all grades, the curriculum is taught through thematic units.
- Students participate in a daily “Academic Collaboration and Enrichment (ACE)” block of targeted instruction to meet their individual needs for remediation or acceleration.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - RACSA provides a continuum of services to meet the needs of children with individualized education programs in the least restrictive environment.
 - RACSA employs appropriately certified special educators and offers the following services and supports for SWDs: resource room, consultant teacher services (direct and indirect), integrated co-taught classrooms, a 15:1:1 classroom (for students with intensive academic needs), and occupational therapy, speech language therapy, and individual counseling services.
- ELLs:
 - RACSA provides an inclusive, culturally responsive learning environment for ELL students.
 - RACSA employs two certified English as a New Language (ENL) teachers to provide instruction to ELLs. ENL teachers integrate into regular classrooms and provide pull-out, small group, and/or individual support services.

Figure 1a: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Rochester City School District

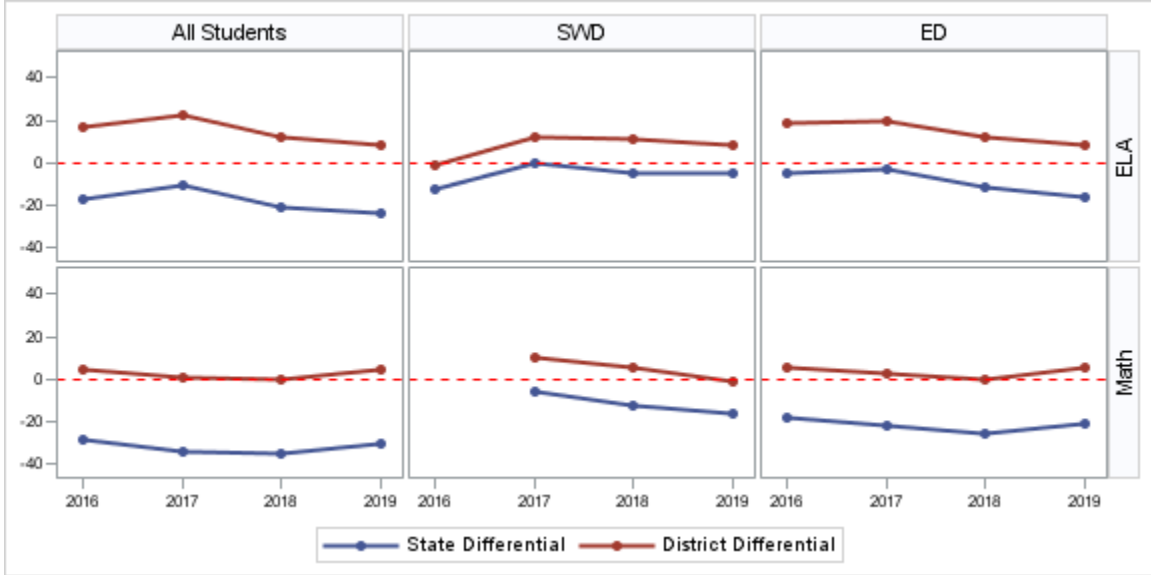


Figure 1b: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Greece Central School District

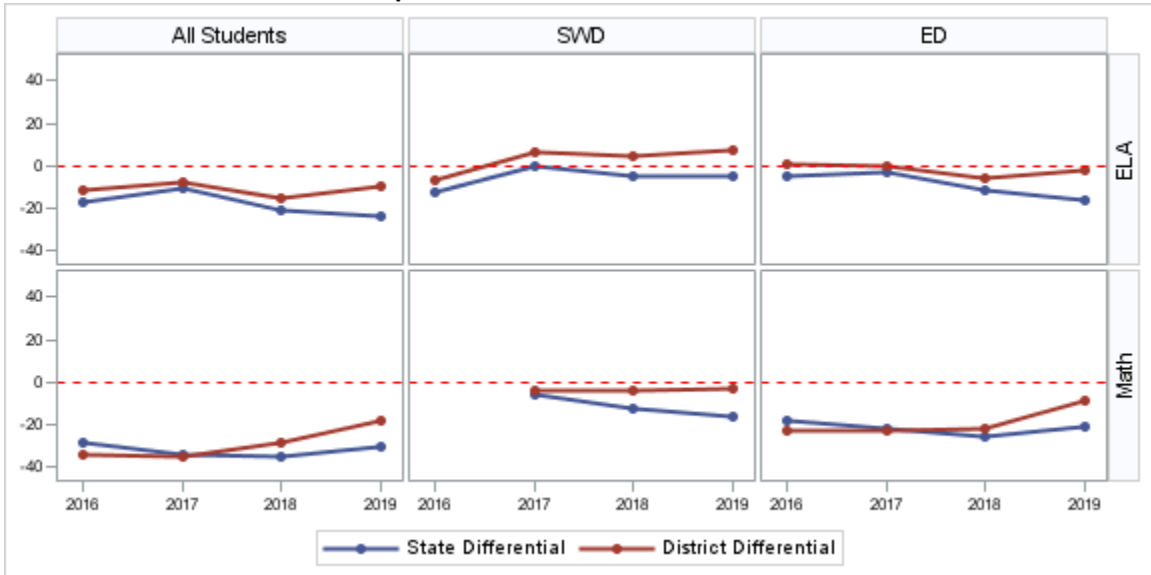


Table 3a: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2015-2016	25%	8%	+17	42%	-17	15%	11%	+4	44%	-29
	2016-2017	31%	9%	+22	42%	-11	12%	11%	+1	46%	-34
	2017-2018	24%	12%	+12	45%	-21	14%	14%	0	49%	-35
	2018-2019	22%	14%	+8	46%	-24	19%	15%	+4	50%	-31
SWD	2015-2016	0%	1%	-1	13%	-13	.	.	.	.	.
	2016-2017	14%	2%	+12	14%	0	13%	3%	+10	19%	-6
	2017-2018	13%	2%	+11	18%	-5	8%	3%	+5	21%	-13
	2018-2019	11%	3%	+8	16%	-5	4%	5%	-1	20%	-16
ED	2015-2016	26%	7%	+19	31%	-5	15%	10%	+5	33%	-18
	2016-2017	28%	8%	+20	31%	-3	12%	9%	+3	34%	-22
	2017-2018	23%	11%	+12	35%	-12	12%	12%	0	38%	-26
	2018-2019	20%	12%	+8	36%	-16	18%	13%	+5	39%	-21

Table 3b: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2015-2016	25%	37%	-12	42%	-17	15%	49%	-34	44%	-29
	2016-2017	31%	39%	-8	42%	-11	12%	47%	-35	46%	-34
	2017-2018	24%	39%	-15	45%	-21	14%	43%	-29	49%	-35
	2018-2019	22%	32%	-10	46%	-24	19%	37%	-18	50%	-31
SWD	2015-2016	0%	7%	-7	13%	-13	.	.	.	.	.
	2016-2017	14%	8%	+6	14%	0	13%	17%	-4	19%	-6
	2017-2018	13%	9%	+4	18%	-5	8%	12%	-4	21%	-13
	2018-2019	11%	4%	+7	16%	-5	4%	7%	-3	20%	-16
ED	2015-2016	26%	25%	+1	31%	-5	15%	38%	-23	33%	-18
	2016-2017	28%	28%	0	31%	-3	12%	35%	-23	34%	-22
	2017-2018	23%	29%	-6	35%	-12	12%	34%	-22	38%	-26
	2018-2019	20%	22%	-2	36%	-16	18%	27%	-9	39%	-21

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

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

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Renaissance Academy Charter School of the Arts’ most recent composite score is 2.17.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.29
2016-2017	1.72
2017-2018	1.02
2018-2019	1.16
2019-2020	2.17

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed RACSA’s 2019-2020 audited financial statements 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.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students (see Tables 5a and 5b below).¹¹ The school is implementing a weighted lottery for SWDs and ELLs as part of its efforts to recruit and retain students in the ELL and SWD populations. Specific efforts include:

- The school has instituted weighted lotteries for SWDs and ELLs;
- The school has employed a full-time family liaison, whose responsibilities include recruitment of these populations; and
- Enrollment data is regularly tracked and reviewed to determine the most effective recruitment strategies for SWDs and ELLs.

¹¹ 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 5a: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	16%	20%	-4	0%	13%	-13	91%	93%	-2
2016-2017	16%	21%	-5	0%	14%	-14	91%	92%	-1
2017-2018	14%	22%	-8	0%	16%	-16	94%	92%	2
2018-2019	15%	23%	-8	2%	17%	-15	92%	92%	0
2019-2020	14%	22%	-8	3%	18%	-15	91%	91%	0

Table 5b: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	16%	14%	+2	0%	6%	-6	91%	52%	+39
2016-2017	16%	14%	+2	0%	6%	-6	91%	54%	+37
2017-2018	14%	13%	+1	0%	7%	-7	94%	60%	34
2018-2019	15%	15%	0	2%	7%	-5	92%	60%	+32
2019-2020	14%	15%	-1	3%	8%	-5	91%	61%	+30

Table 6a: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	83%	88%	-5	87%	91%	-4	.	.	.	85%	89%	-4
2017-2018	83%	87%	-4	88%	91%	-3	100%	87%	+13	84%	88%	-4
2018-2019	85%	87%	-2	90%	91%	-1	100%	85%	+15	85%	87%	-2
2019-2020	85%	87%	-2	91%	90%	+1	75%	86%	-11	86%	87%	-1

Table 6b: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District	Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Greece CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	83%	90%	-7	87%	92%	-5	.	.	.	85%	92%	-7
2017-2018	83%	91%	-8	88%	91%	-3	100%	90%	+10	84%	92%	-8
2018-2019	85%	92%	-7	90%	92%	-2	100%	90%	+10	85%	90%	-5
2019-2020	85%	91%	-6	91%	90%	+1	75%	87%	-12	86%	90%	-4

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

Renaissance Academy CS of the Arts	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2015-2016	250	240	96%
2016-2017	300	327	109%
2017-2018	400	370	93%
2018-2019	506	437	86%
2019-2020	506	483	95%

Legal Compliance

RACSA generally operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules, and other policies, including the terms of its charter, by-laws, and other school-specific policies. NYSED's CSO records show that RACSA has demonstrated some improvement in complying with the law and the provisions of its charter. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the Greece Central School District on October 13, 2020. One person attended, and one spoke in favor of the renewal. None were opposed.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

School in the Square Public Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for School in the Square Public Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021, and expire on June 30, 2026, and the school would be permitted to revise its charter in the following manner: In 2020, the Board of Regents approved a two-way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion program elementary school program for this school. The current revision is a continuation of that approval and will allow the students currently enrolled in the school’s elementary school to continue in that program by adding Grades 1 through Grade 5 to the school’s current kindergarten and Grade 6 through Grade 8 configuration and gradually increasing authorized enrollment from 424 students up to a maximum of 924 students, by adding 100 students each year of the proposed renewal charter term.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	School in the Square Public Charter School
Board Chair	Scott Levenson
District of Location	NYC CSD 6 ¹²
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2016
Charter Term(s)	Initial Term: July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades/Authorized Enrollment	K, Grades 6-8 / 424 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K—Grade 8 / 924 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle School: 120 Wadsworth Avenue, Manhattan - Private Space • Kindergarten: 108 Cooper Street, Manhattan - Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>“School in the Square (S2) engages, educates and empowers adolescents in Washington Heights to respond mindfully and creatively to life’s opportunities and challenges. S2 draws its name from the concept of the public square, where communities come together to solve problems and celebrate successes. We envision S2 as a place where students, families, and educators are seen, heard and inspired, and where students build the academic foundations, emotional intelligence and leadership skills necessary to excel in college and professional life. In line with our commitment to equity and diversity, S2 is dedicated to serving all students by providing a differentiated and inclusive learning environment.”</i>

¹² Twenty-one percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

<p>Key Design Elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous Curriculum (Partnerships and personalized learning) • Collaborative Professional Culture • Compassionate Community (Social Emotional Supports) • Dual language program beginning in kindergarten
<p>Recommended Material Revisions</p>	<p>In 2020, the Board of Regents approved a two-way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion elementary school program for this school. The current revision is a continuation of that approval and will allow the students currently enrolled in the school’s elementary school to continue in that program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expand current grade span to add Grade 1 through Grade 5 to the school’s current kindergarten and Grade 6 through Grade 8 configuration. • To allow for the continuation of the program by increasing authorized enrollment from 424, by gradually adding 100 students for each year of the proposed renewal charter term, up to a maximum of 924 students.
<p>Link to Charter School Renewal Report</p>	<p>http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/SchoolintheSquarePublicCharterSchool/S2PCSRENRP21.pdf</p>

School in the Square Public Charter School (S2PCS) is meeting nine out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
School in the Square Public Charter School**

2015 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Meets
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students’ well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs:

- Dual Language English/Spanish program, implementing the 50/50 two-way immersion model - S2PCS was authorized by the Board of Regents to open “Dos Amigos,” a dual language immersion elementary classroom in August 2020. Although the COVID-19 pandemic limited the school’s in person outreach, the school received well over 200 applications and continues to receive applications and inquiries from families wishing to enroll for the current school year.
- During the pandemic, through a partnership with parents and a local healthcare provider, the school has deployed a robust COVID testing program that allows them to test every student and staff member weekly. As a result, students receive in-person instruction four full days per week,

including early morning drop off and a robust after school program. On Fridays, children log in for remote classes, with teachers receiving professional development in the afternoon. The school has had only two occasions where it had to pivot to fully remote instruction this school year. School leadership has shared an analysis of collected local assessment data and teacher observations to demonstrate student academic and social-emotional progress that is developmentally appropriate for this time in the school year. Students are building their numeracy skills and math vocabulary in both Spanish and English and beginning to manipulate numbers to ten. Readers have started building their understanding of letters, sounds, and words in both languages, as well as their sight word bank and how to navigate fiction and nonfiction texts. Through in-class and small group instruction, many of the students are beginning to read beginning level books. As writers, students are using their reading skills to write stories and sentences independently at their own level. Using the strategies that they are learning, some writers are telling stories through pictures, some labeling their pictures, some adding familiar sight words, and some using their letter knowledge to stretch and sound out words. As students learn and grow together, they are also growing friendships. They are learning how to build relationships, take turns, share, and work together, which is at the forefront of their work in kindergarten.

- **Alumni Program:** S2PCS takes great pride in building relationships with its students and families. This includes keeping in touch with S2PCS alumni. The school is in year two of a five-year program partnership with Michelle Fine from the CUNY Graduate Center to understand and support S2PCS alumni as they move through high school. Elements of the program include emails sent to all alumni families in English and Spanish inviting them to participate in the food pantry and other ongoing supports, visiting students (pre-COVID-19) in their new schools and making connections with high school counselors to ensure continuation of care, and the training of 14 students to be oral historians and student researchers. To date, they have completed over 90 interviews and worked to analyze the data, which the school is using to inform how to best support the graduates and adapt the current 8th grade experience. Graduating classes have moved on to 60 different high schools across New York City, New York State, and New Jersey. Some of the high schools S2PCS alumni matriculated to are Facing History High School, Bard Early College, Central Park East, Bronx High School of Science, Brooklyn Latin High School, High School for Environmental Studies, and the Urban Assembly School for the Performing Arts.
- **Community Partnerships—Food Pantry:** For the past 10 months the school has operated a food pantry in partnership with community-based organizations. Twice a month, families of S2PCS students, alumni, and the community are provided with various necessities such as food, cleaning supplies, masks, sanitizer, formula, diapers, personal care items, and coats. They have donated over 10 tons of food and over 20,000 masks to the community. They have partnered with two other local schools to provide them with essential items for over 150 families. The school has also joined forces with stakeholders to advocate and support community initiatives including 2020 Census Count, Clean Streets for Washington Heights, Uptown Black Lives Matter March, and community murals. Partnerships with NYC Health and Hospitals and New York Presbyterian support the health and emotional needs of students, families, and staff. S2PCS has developed a strong partnership with the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights to provide supports to parents, provide immigration workshops and resources, and even support mentorship and staff pipeline initiatives.

Renewal Condition(s): The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:

- Subjects: At least ELA and math.
- Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
- Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
- Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
- Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2016 to 2017	Year 2 2017 to 2018	Year 3 2018 to 2019	Year 4 2019 to 2020	Year 5 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	Grade 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8	Kindergarten, Grades 6-8
Total Approved Enrollment	108	216	324	324	424

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024	Year 4 2024 to 2025	Year 5 2025 to 2026
Grade Configuration	K - Grade 1, Grades 6-8	K - Grade 2, Grades 6-8	K - Grade 3, Grades 6-8	K - Grade 4, Grades 6-8	K - Grade 8
Total Proposed Enrollment	524	624	724	824	924

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency in 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, S2PCS is *In Good Standing*.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

- ES:
 - S2PCS currently serves kindergarten in Dos Amigos.
 - S2PCS provides a dual language English/Spanish program, implementing the 50/50 two-way immersion model.
- MS:
 - S2PCS currently serves Grades 6 through 8.
 - S2PCS identifies their school as being standards-based, small group instruction, and co-teaching model.
 - S2PCS has an extended day and an extended school year.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - S2PCS utilizes Integrated Co-Teaching to support SWDs enrolled in the school. The school also provides Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), with push in and pull out supports. During the 2019-2020 school year, S2CS employed four reading specialists and six special education teachers.
- ELLs:
 - In addition to the school’s two-way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion elementary school program, S2PCS utilizes a Structured English Immersion (SEI) program to support ELLs enrolled in the school. ELL teachers provide both push in and pull out English language supports. Ninety percent of Dos Amigos staff are bilingual.

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

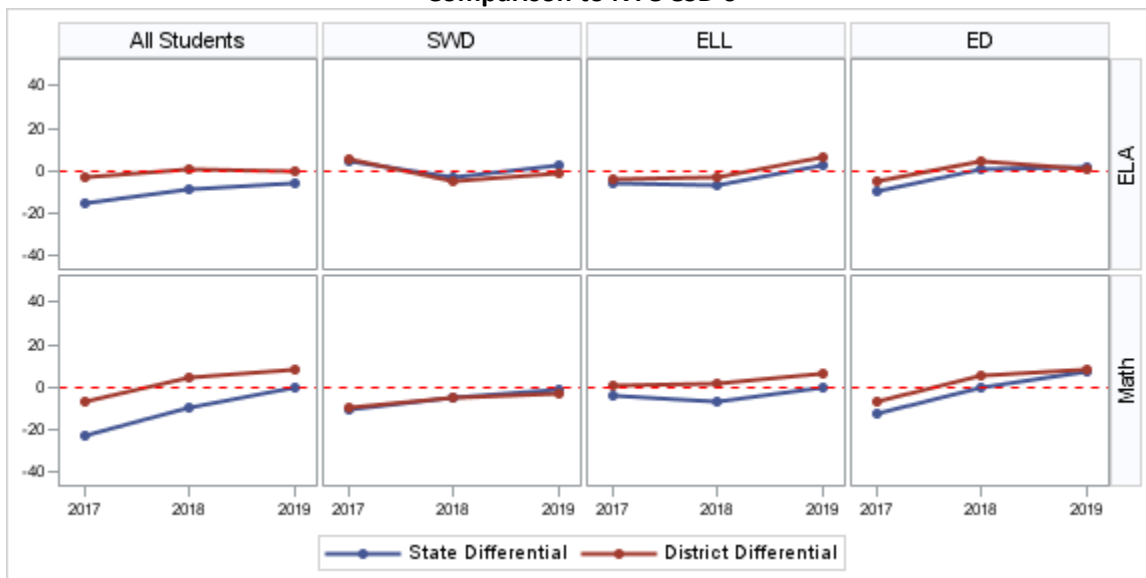


Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		School in the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	School in the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2016-2017	17%	20%	-3	32%	-15	17%	24%	-7	40%	-23
	2017-2018	36%	35%	+1	45%	-9	33%	29%	+4	43%	-10
	2018-2019	39%	39%	0	45%	-6	42%	34%	+8	42%	0
SWD	2016-2017	11%	6%	+5	7%	+4	0%	10%	-10	11%	-11
	2017-2018	11%	16%	-5	14%	-3	8%	13%	-5	13%	-5
	2018-2019	16%	17%	-1	13%	+3	12%	15%	-3	13%	-1
ELL	2016-2017	0%	4%	-4	6%	-6	11%	10%	+1	15%	-4
	2017-2018	13%	16%	-3	20%	-7	15%	13%	+2	22%	-7
	2018-2019	22%	16%	+6	19%	+3	23%	17%	+6	23%	0
ED	2016-2017	13%	18%	-5	23%	-10	15%	22%	-7	28%	-13
	2017-2018	36%	32%	+4	35%	+1	31%	26%	+5	31%	0
	2018-2019	37%	36%	+1	35%	+2	40%	32%	+8	33%	+7

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

S2PCS appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. S2PCS’s most recent composite score is 2.18.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2016-2017 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2016-2017	1.76
2017-2018	.03
2018-2019	2.30
2019-2020	2.18

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed S2PCS’s 2019-2020 audited financial statements 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.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students (See Table 5 Below).¹³ The school added a preference for ELL students in 2020 and a dual language English/Spanish immersion program beginning with kindergarten for the fall of 2021. Other efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include:

- A partnership with the City College of New York and Lehman College to connect the school with dual language experts and resources as well as connections to other dual language programs in New York City;
- Hiring a bilingual (Spanish and English) Director of Community Engagement (DCE) in 2019 to strengthen capacity to implement community-wide student marketing and recruitment efforts;
- Community-wide recruitment events, community advisory meetings, mailings and materials for all students is conducted in both English and Spanish; and
- Engaging the school’s Family Council and the Parent Ambassadors to support outreach efforts, including descriptions of the academic, intervention, and enrichment programs offered at the school supporting all learners.

¹³ 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 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2016-2017	17%	23%	-6	18%	33%	-15	86%	86%	0
2017-2018	19%	24%	-5	24%	39%	-15	85%	90%	-5
2018-2019	24%	23%	+1	22%	38%	-16	79%	88%	-9
2019-2020	25%	23%	+2	22%	38%	-16	84%	87%	-3

***Note:** With the implementation of the school’s Dual Language English/Spanish program in kindergarten in the 2019-2020 school year, 15 percent of the school’s kindergarten students are ELLs, compared to 12 percent of students in NYC CSD 6, the district of location (+3).

Table 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2017-2018	94%	92%	+2	94%	89%	5	84%	90%	-6	93%	92%	+1
2018-2019	93%	91%	+2	89%	90%	-1	94%	89%	+5	92%	91%	+1
2019-2020	96%	92%	+4	91%	91%	0	94%	91%	+3	96%	92%	+4

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

School in the Square Public CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2016-2017	108	105	97%
2017-2018	216	204	94%
2018-2019	324	301	93%
2019-2020	324	304	94%

Legal Compliance

S2PCS generally 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. The school continues to work with NYSED's CSO to update its policies and procedures. It generally complies 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, 2020. 72 people attended, and eight spoke. All 8 were in favor of the renewal and revisions. None were opposed.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process. In addition to many parents and students, letters of support were received from the school's U.S. Congress Member, State Assembly Member, State Senator, the Manhattan Borough President, City Council Member, and the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights.

Urban Choice Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy, the **New York State Education Department recommends a short-term renewal for a period of two years for Urban Choice Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021, and expire on June 30, 2023, and the school would be permitted to revise its charter to add a Comprehensive Management Service Provider, the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI) commencing upon approval by the Board of Regents.**

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Urban Choice Charter School
Board Chair	Mubarak Bashir
District of Location	Rochester City School District ¹⁴
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2005
Charter Term(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Term: January 11, 2005-January 10, 2010 • First Renewal Term: January 12, 2010-June 30, 2014 • Second Renewal Term: July 1, 2014-June 30, 2017 • Third Renewal Term: July 1, 2017-June 30, 2020 • Fourth Renewal Term: July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021
Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 8 / 400 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment	K - Grade 8 / 400 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	1020 Maple Street, Rochester NY 14611 - Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>To provide Rochester students with a safe, supportive and intellectually challenging environment. The central philosophy is that strong student-teacher relationships are essential to student motivation, engagement and achievement. This philosophy, in combination with authentic efforts at family involvement, and the effective teaching of a rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum will enable students to build a strong foundation for college and career readiness, exceed state achievement standards and defy the demographic challenges of poverty.</i>

¹⁴ Twenty percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools. As the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in this district is greater than 5 percent of the total public school enrollment, pursuant to Education Law Section 2852(2)(d), NYSED notes that granting this renewal application provides a significant educational benefit to the students attending and expected to attend this charter school.

Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum aligned to NYS Common Core • Extended learning opportunities • Authentic family involvement • Data-informed instruction • Focused professional development • School culture
Recommended Material Revisions	To add a Comprehensive Management Service Provider, the Center for Educational Innovation (CEI), commencing upon approval by the Board of Regents.
Link to Charter School Renewal Report	http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/UrbanChoiceCharterSchool/FinalUCCSRENSV2021.pdf

Urban Choice Charter School (UCCS) is meeting four out of the 10 benchmarks set forth in the Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

In February 2019, the school received a Notice of Deficiency from NYSED’s CSO based on its enrollment and academic deficiencies. The school was then required by NYSED to provide a corrective action plan (CAP) establishing strategies and measurable outcomes to improve its academic and operational performance. The school is currently implementing the specific strategies outlined in the CAP and provides quarterly progress reports and updates to NYSED’s CSO. NYSED’s CSO is closely monitoring the CAP, and the Department will report to the Regents as necessary.

Subsequent to its last renewal, this school has implemented a significant academic turnaround/intervention program during the course of the school’s current charter term. As State assessments were not administered in the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, academic outcome data reflecting these efforts was not available to include in the school’s Benchmark 1 evaluation.

**Charter School Performance Framework Benchmark Ratings
Urban Choice Charter School**

2019 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Approaches
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Approaches
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. . High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs:

When the school transitioned to remote learning in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UCCS provided all students with computers to ensure all students could access the academic program. Where necessary, UCCS arranged for internet access for households without that resource. After the school's last renewal, as required by the renewal conditions, it began the process of engaging in robust

turnaround efforts. These efforts are ongoing, and the school has made a number of key changes in terms of board governance; supports provided to leadership, staff and families; and the academic program.

UCCS started the new 2020-2021 school year in a state-of-the-art facility. The new building, which is ADA compliant, provides valuable green space and a playground, which it did not have at its former facilities. UCCS was well prepared for the shift to remote learning, as its students have all had individual Chromebooks for several years. The students were able to use those Chromebooks at home, ensuring sufficient learning devices for all. Moreover, the school provided every student with a WiFi hotspot to ensure connectivity.

The school has a strong relationship with the Center for Youth Partnership, which helps provide its Alternative-to-Suspension program, Crisis Intervention and Help Zone. The University of Rochester Smile Mobile comes to the school twice a year to provide free dental care for the students. Through ROC Kids Connect, they partner with the Pittsford Mendon/Sutherland High Schools to provide the middle school students with enrichment activities and tutors.

In addition to the overall emphasis on positive behavioral interventions, developing emotional intelligence, and handling crises and conflict through restorative justice techniques, UCCS works with community partners to provide unique support to students. For example, the Association for the Blind brings guide dogs to UCCS weekly to listen to students read aloud and provide comfort to frustrated students. The in-house therapy dog passed away last month, but the Student Support Services Coordinator is planning to train her dog as a therapy dog once training centers re-open after COVID.

Renewal Condition(s): Urban Choice Charter School shall:

- Devise and implement an updated weighted lottery policy, in consultation with NYSED’s CSO, for students with disabilities and English language learners no later than the 2021-2022 school year. This school shall also implement other enrollment, recruitment, and retention efforts for this subgroup so as to reduce the enrollment gap between UCCS and the Rochester City School District before the school’s next renewal.
- The school must administer the assessments detailed in the school's charter, and/or other interim and/or summative assessments approved by the NYSED CSO, to evaluate students' academic achievement, progress, and growth, as follows:
 - Subjects: At least ELA and math.
 - Grades: Every grade in which students are enrolled.
 - Uses: The outcomes of such assessments will be used by the school to help inform academic intervention services and school-level improvement/turnaround initiatives and decision making. These assessments will supplement the use of any state assessments in authorizing decision making.
 - Schedule: The school will administer such assessments pursuant to the assessment schedule set forth in the school’s charter, but no less than once in the spring of 2021 (during the current charter term) and at least twice per academic year thereafter during the school’s proposed next charter term; provided, however, that in the academic year in which the school is next up for renewal, the assessments shall be administered at least twice and all results shall be reported to the CSO no later than March 1.
 - Reporting of results: The school will report the school-level aggregate results of such interim and/or summative assessments to the NYSED CSO, disaggregated by grade and

subgroup (SWDs, ELLs, and ED students), no later than one month after administration, or as otherwise required.

- Develop and implement a multi-step comprehensive process compliant with all State requirements to ensure that all school employees have fingerprint clearance prior to their start date at the school, and that the records UCCS maintains accurately reflect those clearances. UCCS will submit such school board approved policy, including the identification and training of applicable staff members, to NYSED's CSO for review and approval no later than April 30, 2021 (the school's current charter term).

Renewal Conditions the School was Required to Meet from Its Last Renewal: In the spring of 2020, UCCS received a one-year renewal term with renewal conditions. The two major factors in determining the original recommendation for nonrenewal were the school's poor academic performance and the lack of effective governance and leadership. UCCS has spent the last year working closely with NYSED's CSE and educational stakeholders in Rochester and beyond to implement a robust academic turnaround/intervention program and to implement the school's renewal conditions. UCCS has generally met these renewal conditions which were:

1. By June 1, 2020: The school will identify a Comprehensive Management Service Provider (CMSP), and the school's board must vote on a resolution signifying approval. UCCS will submit all relevant supporting information for a revision to partner with the CMSP based on NYSED revision guidelines posted on the [Charter School website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/charrevguide.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/charrevguide.html>), including the proposed management agreement contract. Board of Regents action to consider approval of the CMSP may occur thereafter.

Status: UCCS identified CEI as the CMSP and is requesting to add them beginning in the 2021-2022 school year.

2. By June 1, 2020: UCCS will submit a new one-year budget, reflecting a positive financial disposition, the new school site identified by UCCS, and the school's partnership with the CMSP. UCCS will submit all relevant supporting information for a revision to relocate the school within the same school district based on [NYSED revision guidelines](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/charrevguide.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/charrevguide.html>).

Status: UCCS submitted the budget which was approved by NYSED's CSO.

3. By August 15, 2020: As part of the school's renewal application, if the other conditions are met, UCCS will work with the CMSP to replace at least 60 percent of UCCS's existing board members, following [NYSED guidelines for the approval of new board members](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/addbotmember.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/policy/addbotmember.html>). All current board officers will need to step down from their positions as officers, and no current board members will be able to serve as officers. New officers shall be selected from among the new board members selected in partnership with the CMSP and in compliance with the school's charter agreement.

Status: UCCS replaced BoT members and officers.

4. UCCS shall devise and implement a weighted lottery, in consultation with NYSED's CSO, for students with disabilities and English language learners no later than the 2020-2021 school year.

Status: UCCS submitted an updated enrollment policy, to be implemented no later than the 2020-2021 school year.

Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment

	Year 1 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 8
Total Authorized Enrollment	400

Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023
Grade Configuration	K- Grade 8	K- Grade 8
Total Proposed Enrollment	400	400

Summary of Evidence for Renewal

Key Performance Area: Educational Success

Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency in 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average which serve as key indicators in Benchmark One of the Charter School Performance Framework. **According to the 2020-2021 ESEA accountability designation, UCCS is a school in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement.**

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:

- ES:
 - K-Grade 2 ELA Success for All (SFA)
 - Grade 3-5 ELA – SFA (2019-2020); *Wit and Wisdom* (2020-2021)
 - K-Grade 2 – iReady math (2019-2020); *Eureka Math* (2020-2021)
 - Grade 3-5 Math – *Zearn* and iReady (2019-2020); *Eureka Math* (2020-2021)
 - K-Grade 5 Science – teacher created curriculum using resources embedded in the ELA materials and BOCES kits
 - K-Grade 5 Social Studies – teacher developed lessons embedded in the ELA curriculum materials

- MS:
 - Grades 6-8 ELA – SFA and iReady (2019-2020); *Wit and Wisdom* (2020-2021)
 - Grades 6-8 – *Zearn* and iReady Math (2019-2020); *Eureka* math (2020-2021)
 - Grades 6-8 Science – *Dimensions* and materials integrated into reading components of ELA materials
 - Grades 6-8 Social Studies – *American Journey* (McGraw Hill); embedded in ELA curriculum materials

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):

- SWDs:
 - Curriculum: For ELA, SFA (K-2); *Wit and Wisdom* (3-8); for math, *Eureka* (K-8).
 - Instruction: Four special education consultant teachers push into classrooms online and in-person; provide small group instruction and one-on-one additional support.
- ELLs:
 - Instruction: ENL teacher pushes in to remote and in-person classrooms, reviews lesson plans to recommend strategies to support language acquisition and development.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Rochester City School District

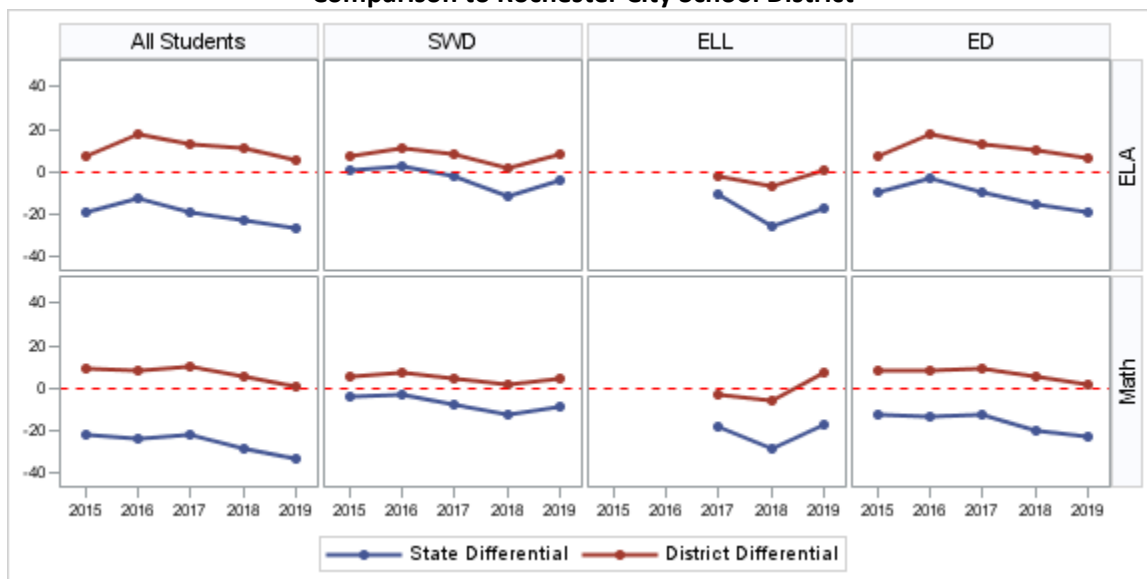


Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS

		ELA					Math				
		Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	12%	5%	+7	31%	-19	16%	7%	+9	38%	-22
	2015-2016	25%	7%	+18	38%	-13	15%	7%	+8	39%	-24
	2016-2017	21%	8%	+13	40%	-19	18%	8%	+10	40%	-22
	2017-2018	22%	11%	+11	45%	-23	16%	11%	+5	45%	-29
	2018-2019	18%	13%	+5	45%	-27	14%	13%	+1	47%	-33
SWD	2014-2015	8%	1%	+7	7%	+1	8%	3%	+5	12%	-4
	2015-2016	12%	1%	+11	9%	+3	9%	2%	+7	12%	-3
	2016-2017	9%	1%	+8	11%	-2	6%	2%	+4	14%	-8
	2017-2018	4%	2%	+2	16%	-12	4%	2%	+2	17%	-13
	2018-2019	11%	3%	+8	15%	-4	8%	4%	+4	17%	-9
ELL	2016-2017	0%	2%	-2	11%	-11	0%	3%	-3	18%	-18
	2017-2018	0%	7%	-7	26%	-26	0%	6%	-6	29%	-29
	2018-2019	8%	7%	+1	25%	-17	15%	8%	+7	32%	-17
ED	2014-2015	11%	4%	+7	21%	-10	14%	6%	+8	27%	-13
	2015-2016	24%	6%	+18	27%	-3	14%	6%	+8	28%	-14
	2016-2017	19%	6%	+13	29%	-10	16%	7%	+9	29%	-13
	2017-2018	20%	10%	+10	35%	-15	14%	9%	+5	34%	-20
	2018-2019	17%	11%	+6	36%	-19	13%	11%	+2	36%	-23

Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness

Financial Condition

UCCS appears to be in very good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

NYSED monitors the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework, which includes its near- and long-term financial condition. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements, which are publicly available on [NYSED’s website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>).

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Urban Choice Charter School’s most recent composite score is 2.73.

**Table 4: Composite Scores
2015-2016 to 2019-2020**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.38
2016-2017	2.69
2017-2018	2.59
2018-2019	2.79
2019-2020	2.73

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed UCCS’s 2019-2020 audited financial statements 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 2019, the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) conducted an [audit](https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/schools/2019/urban-choice-charter-2019-192.htm) (https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/schools/2019/urban-choice-charter-2019-192.htm) of the school with the objective of determining whether school officials ensured credit card purchases were adequately supported and for appropriate purposes. OSC found that internal controls regarding credit card use were not always followed and that 40 percent of credit card purchases were not adequately supported. OSC recommended that all credit card users follow the school’s internal control policies, including preapproval of all purchases, and that all credit card claims be adequately supported prior to payment. The school’s leadership agreed with the findings and took corrective action.

Additionally, in 2019, OSC conducted an [audit](https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits/charter-school/2020/06/12/urban-choice-charter-school-information-technology-2019m-240) of the school (https://www.osc.state.ny.us/local-government/audits/charter-school/2020/06/12/urban-choice-charter-school-information-technology-2019m-240) with the objective of determining whether leadership ensured that information technology (IT) assets were safeguarded. OSC found that a former employee’s user account was used to process 510 financial transactions after her departure from the school; leadership did not adopt IT policies; and IT users were not provided with IT security awareness training. OSC recommended that the school immediately disable user accounts of former employees and ensure all IT users have and use their own user accounts; adopt comprehensive IT policies and procedures; and provide employees with IT security awareness training. The school’s leadership agreed with the findings and took corrective action.

Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Despite efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is still not meeting its targets for two of the special population subgroups – SWDs and ELLs (see Table 5 below).¹⁵ The school is implementing weighted lotteries for SWDs and ELLs. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ELL and SWD populations include:

- The school’s website describes in broad terms the services it offers for SWDs;
- The school contacts area agencies and day care centers for recruitment; and
- The school participates in recruitment fairs in the region.

Table 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	14%	21%	-7	2%	15%	-13	79%	92%	-13
2016-2017	14%	22%	-8	5%	16%	-11	92%	91%	+1
2017-2018	12%	22%	-10	5%	17%	-12	91%	92%	-1
2018-2019	12%	23%	-11	4%	17%	-13	90%	91%	-1
2019-2020	13%	23%	-10	5%	17%	-12	99%	91%	8

¹⁵ 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 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	84%	86%	-2	82%	89%	-7	100%	86%	+14	87%	87%	0
2016-2017	82%	86%	-4	84%	89%	-5	100%	86%	+14	82%	86%	-4
2017-2018	86%	87%	-1	87%	90%	-3	94%	87%	+7	87%	87%	0
2018-2019	90%	86%	+4	88%	89%	-1	83%	85%	-2	91%	86%	+5
2019-2020	85%	87%	-2	93%	90%	+3	100%	86%	+14	86%	87%	-1

Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted (Target = 100%)

Urban Choice CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2015-2016	400	398	100%
2016-2017	400	397	99%
2017-2018	400	400	100%
2018-2019	400	396	99%
2019-2020	400	392	98%

Legal Compliance

UCCS to some extent operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rules, and other policies, including the terms of its charter, by-laws, and other school-specific policies. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. Some of the school’s policies require revision to be fully legally compliant. School officials have not been complying with fingerprinting and clearance requirements for staff, a serious safety violation. The school must adopt a multi-step, comprehensive process to ensure that all school employees have fingerprint clearance prior to their start date at the school.

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the Rochester City School District on September 24, 2020. There were no attendees and, as such, no speakers either in favor of or opposed to the proposed renewal.

As required by the NYSED Charter School Renewal Application, the school also conducted additional extensive community outreach as part of the renewal process.

APPENDIX

Laws, Regulations, and Regents-endorsed internal policies Applicable to Board of Regents-authorized Charter School Renewals

Statutory requirements pertaining to Board of Regents charter school decision making are enumerated in Article 56 of the Education Law. This section of the law sets forth the purpose of charter schools to:

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

Criteria regarding the evaluation of charter schools, including for renewal decisions, are set forth in Section 2852(2) of the Education Law:

- (a) Does the charter school described in the application meet the requirements set out in applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- (b) Does the charter school demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner;
- (c) Will approving the charter school action make it likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the law; 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) would granting the application have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school or (ii) did the school district in which the charter school will be located consent 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.

[The Board of Regents Renewal Policy](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/November2012/1112p12a1.pdf) (https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/November2012/1112p12a1.pdf) sets forth the following renewal options and standards upon which the Department's recommendation is based:

Full-Term Renewal: A school's charter may be renewed for the maximum term of five years. In order for a school to be eligible for a full term renewal, the school must have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or exceeding Benchmark 1 during the current charter term and, at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

Short-Term Renewal: A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. The Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal, which is consistent with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short term renewal, a school must either: (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1 but, at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework, which will likely result in the school's being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short term renewal permits, or (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1 but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

Nonrenewal: A school's charter will not be renewed if the school does not apply for renewal or the school fails to meet the benchmark standards for either full term or short term renewal. In the case of nonrenewal, a school's charter will be terminated upon its expiration, and the school will be required to comply with [the Department's Closing Procedures](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/sectioni-iv/ClosingProceduresChecklist0220.pdf) (http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/sectioni-iv/ClosingProceduresChecklist0220.pdf) to ensure an orderly closure by the end of the school year.

To operationalize these statutory and regulatory requirements, the Board of Regents endorsed the Charter School Performance Framework. This document, and the ten academic, organizational, and legal domains contained within it, were created based on the limited criteria that can be considered when making decisions pertaining to the authorization of new charter schools, charter school renewals, and charter school revisions as set forth in Section 2852(2) of the Education Law. Comprehensive data for these benchmark standards is included in the charter school Regents item, summary documents, and Regents meeting presentations.

Performance Framework

The Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework, which is part of the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy and the Oversight Plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school, outlines three key areas of charter school performance: (1) Educational Success; (2) Organizational Soundness; and (3) Faithfulness to Charter and Law. The Charter School Performance Framework sets forth ten performance benchmarks in these three areas. The Charter School Performance Framework is designed to focus on performance outcomes, preserve operational autonomy, and facilitate transparent feedback to schools. It aligns with the Department's ongoing accountability and effectiveness work under

the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and holds charter schools accountable to standards set forth in the Education Law, while providing the Regents with discretion. Generally, charter schools are required to demonstrate performance outcomes that exceed those of traditional public schools.

The Department considers evidence related to all ten performance benchmark areas of the Charter School Performance Framework when making recommendations to the Regents concerning charter renewal applications. However, student academic performance is of paramount importance when evaluating each school (See [§ 8 NYCRR 119.7](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/aboutcharterschools/Financing/Regulations/csreg119.7.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/aboutcharterschools/Financing/Regulations/csreg119.7.html>)). The recommendations in this document were made after a full due-diligence process over the charter term as set forth in [the NYSED Charter School Monitoring Plan](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/SectionIIMonitoringPlan.html) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/regentsoversightplan/SectionIIMonitoringPlan.html>), including review of the information presented by the schools in its Renewal Applications; specific fiscal reviews; a renewal site visit of up to two days conducted by a Department team for each school; comprehensive analysis of achievement data; and consideration of public comment.