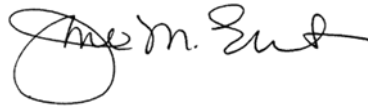





**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Jhone M. Ebert 

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

**DATE:** April 27, 2017

**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. **New Dawn Charter High School** (full term five-year renewal)
2. **Urban Dove Team Charter School** (short-term three-year renewal and a revision to add a charter management organization)

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute.

**Proposed Handling**

This issue will be before the Board of Regents P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at the May 2017 Regents meeting.

**Procedural History**

The New York State Education Department (“the Department”) 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

### Performance Framework<sup>1</sup>

The Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework (the “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/Academic Success; (2) Organizational Soundness; and (3) Faithfulness to Charter and Law. The Framework sets forth ten performance benchmarks in these three areas. The Framework is designed to focus on performance outcomes, to preserve operational autonomy and to facilitate transparent feedback to schools. It aligns with the ongoing accountability and effectiveness work with traditional public schools and balances clear performance measures with Regents’ discretion.

#### New York State Education Department Charter School Performance Framework

Performance Benchmark	
<b>Educational Success</b>	<b>Benchmark 1: Student Performance:</b> 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).
	<b>Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning:</b> 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 NYS 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.
	<b>Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement:</b> 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.
<b>Organizational Soundness</b>	<b>Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:</b> The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.
	<b>Benchmark 5: Financial Management:</b> 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.

<sup>1</sup> As both New Dawn Charter High School and Urban Dove Team Charter School were chartered to serve under aged-over credited students, NYSED has agreed to hold these two charter schools accountable to an alternative accountability agreement for Benchmark 1. Details can be found in the summary for each school.

	<p><b>Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance:</b> 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.</p>
	<p><b>Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity:</b> 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.</p>
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	<p><b>Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:</b> The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p>
	<p><b>Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention:</b> 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.</p>
	<p><b>Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance:</b> The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.</p>

### **Charter School Renewal Applications**

In Article 56 of the Education Law, Section 2852(2) requires the chartering entity (in this case the Board of Regents) to make the following findings when considering a charter renewal application:

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

In addition, Renewal Guidelines contained in the Regulations of the Commissioner (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.

Beyond the requirements to make the findings set forth in the Education Law and consider the factors set forth above, the Charter Schools Act leaves the decision of whether to renew a charter to the sound discretion of the Board of Regents.

### **Related Regents Items**

#### **New Dawn Charter High School**

Initial Charter

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2011Meetings/September2011/911p12a1.pdf>

#### **Urban Dove Team Charter School**

Initial Charter

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

First Revision to Provisional Charter: Name Change

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1013brca4.pdf>

Second Revision to Provisional Charter: Enrollment Expansion

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/316p12a2REVISED.pdf>

### **Recommendations**

#### **The State Education Department Renewal Recommendations**

The attached Renewal Recommendation Reports provide summary information about each of the Renewal Applications that are before the Regents for action today as well as an analysis of the academic and fiscal performance of each school over the charter term.

The Department considers evidence related to the ten Performance Benchmark areas when making recommendations to the Regents concerning charter renewal applications. However, student academic performance is of paramount importance when

evaluating each school. Each of the recommendations below were made after a full due-diligence process over the charter term, including review of the information presented by each school in its Renewal Application, a specific fiscal review, a two-day renewal site visit conducted by a Department team during the fall of 2016, comprehensive analysis of achievement data and consideration of public comment. In the case of the charter schools being recommended for short-term renewal, the renewal findings warrant a renewal term of three years. Over the course of the charter term, the Department will closely monitor these charter schools based on the Monitoring Plan.

### Renewal Recommendations

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **New Dawn Charter High School**: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of the **New Dawn Charter High School** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2022**.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that, the **Urban Dove Team 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 Dove Team 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, 2020**.

## New Dawn Charter High School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy (November 2012), the **New York State Education Department recommends a full-term renewal for a period of five years for New Dawn Charter High School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2017 and expire on June 30, 2022.**

(NDCHS) is meeting the academic performance and other benchmarks set forth in the school’s Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan and Board of Regents Performance Framework. NDCHS is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, enrollment, recruitment, and organizational design as set forth in the charter, and is in good financial condition.

### Charter School Summary

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	New Dawn Charter High School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Ronald Tabano
<b>District of location</b>	NYC CSD 15
<b>Opening Date</b>	August 27, 2012
<b>Charter Terms</b>	Initial Charter Term: 7/1/2012-6/30/2017
<b>Current and Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/Maximum Authorized Enrollment</b>	Ungraded (high school) 500 students
<b>Educational Partners</b>	Borough of Manhattan Community College - College Now Program
<b>Facilities</b>	242 Hoyt Street, Brooklyn NY (private facility)
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>New Dawn Charter High School will provide over-aged and under-credited students 15 to 21 years of age including those who are English Language Learners and those with special needs, the opportunity to return to school and obtain a high school diploma through a rigorous NYSED standards-based education program. Within the framework of the education program, three programs will be offered: 1) interventions for those with fewer than 11 credits, and for those with 11 or more credits: 2) internships in the community and 3) college enrollment.</i>
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A literacy-rich general education program</li> <li>• An intensive Grade 9 intervention program for students with fewer than eleven credits</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A daily advisory to address social-emotional needs</li> <li>• Balanced instruction integrated into the workshop model</li> <li>• A pre-college program following completion of internships</li> <li>• A longer school year of at least 200 days beginning in Year 2 (214 days)</li> <li>• A daily common planning time and professional development</li> <li>• Regularly embedded professional development in the classroom</li> </ul>
<b>Requested Revisions</b>	None

### Current Grade Levels and Maximum Authorized Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Approved Enrollment	Actual Enrollment
2016-2017	Ungraded (high school)	500	417 <sup>2</sup>
2015-2016	Ungraded (high school)	400	291
2014-2015	Ungraded (high school)	400	280
2013-2014	Ungraded (high school)	250	215
2012-2013	Ungraded (high school)	150	156

### Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Maximum Authorized Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Authorized Enrollment
2017-2018	Ungraded (high school)	500
2018-2019	Ungraded (high school)	500
2019-2020	Ungraded (high school)	500
2020-2021	Ungraded (high school)	500
2021-2022	Ungraded (high school)	500

### Background

The NYSED Board of Regents approved and issued a five-year initial charter for NDCHS on September 13, 2011, to serve over-aged under-credited (OA/UC) students in a high school program modeled after NYCDOE district transfer schools and the NYCDOE-authorized John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School. NDCHS opened in 2012 and offers a standards-based education program and the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma to OA/UC students 15-21 years of age by providing academic interventions, individualized programming, community internships, and college and career support.

<sup>2</sup> Self-reported by New Dawn Charter High School in Renewal Site Visit Workbook

To fully and fairly evaluate the performance of the school, and the OA/UC students it serves, NDCHS was invited to work with NYSED to submit an alternative accountability measurement plan describing its outcomes over the initial charter term in comparison to schools serving similar student populations. The school worked with NYSED and the NYCDOE to develop a framework to review the outcomes for all students who enrolled in the charter school since its opening in 2012.

NDCHS enrolls students within its stated age range who have attempted and failed high school at least once. Students are accepted on a rolling basis throughout each year, with a plan to conduct a lottery should the school receive more applications by April 1 than it can serve. NDCHS has put in place an academic program designed to meet the varied needs of its students. Students have personalized schedules based on their credit and Regents exam needs, including remedial lab classes and intervention programs for those in need of foundational skills and content. It offers full-day instruction as well as opportunities for work-based experiences through internships.

In its Renewal Application, the school describes its total enrollment of 642 OA/UC students over the first four years of the initial charter term. Credit accumulation at time of entry ranged from 0 to 47 credits, and students entered with 0 to eight Regents passed. Of the 642 students that enrolled in NDCHS, 109 students (17%) have transferred to other schools, moved out of state, or to jail or rehabilitation programs. According to the NYSED school report card, 36% of the students enrolled in NDCHS in 2015-2016 were students with disabilities (see Table 4).

### **Summary of Evidence for Renewal**

#### **Key Performance Area: Educational Success**

As per the school's Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan, academic outcome data is presented by charter school enrollment year, by high school entry year cohort, by rate of attendance and level of risk. This section will summarize that information, which was provided by the school as part of the charter Renewal Application.

#### **ESEA Accountability Designation**

In the initial charter application, NDCHS requested a waiver that would base the school's ESEA accountability status calculation on six-year graduation rates (rather than four year rates), due to the unique characteristics of the model and population served. NYSED did not approve and NDCHS was categorized as *Local Assistance Plan Charter School* in 2015-2016, *Focus Charter School* in 2016-2017 and in 2017-2018.

The Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan establishes the six-year Grade 9 entry cohort graduation rate as a measure of graduation outcomes for charter schools which exclusively serve students who have failed high school and are OA/UC. The NYSED Charter School Office also considered six-year charter school entry cohort graduation outcomes in comparison to similar OA/UC district schools for this analysis rather than only the 4-year graduation rate.

#### **Differentiation of Cohorts**

The table below demonstrates the range of high school entry cohorts that are served at NDCHS and the difficulties of applying traditional high school entry cohort-related graduation rate data to this school's population.



## Student Performance – Compared to Similar Schools (Alternative Accountability Plan)

### Student Outcomes

NDCHS reports that of the total 533 students served at NDCHS over the first four years of the charter term, 80.3% either have graduated or are on track to graduate.

### Similar Student Graduation Outcomes

Using the NYCDOE OA/UC Peer Target Graduation Rate, the table below compares NDCHS graduation outcomes to NYC similar school graduation outcomes as of June 2016. The table is based on the charter school entry year to provide context for the length of time the students have been attending NDCHS.

**Table 1: 2016 NDCHS Student Outcomes Compared to similar NYC DOE Student Outcomes (“Peer Target”)**

School Entry SY 2012	Number in Cohort	NYC DOE Peer Target Graduation Rate	NDCHS Graduation Rate	Variance
15-year-old OA/UC	20	30%	70.0%	+40
16-19 year old OA/UC	19	50%	63.2%	+13.2
16–19 Most At Risk OA/UC	64	25%	37.5%	+12.5
Non OA/UC	37	67%	89.2%	+22.2
Total	140			

School Entry SY 2013	Number in Cohort	NYC DOE Peer Target Graduation Rate	NDCHS Graduation Rate	Variance
15-year-old OA/UC	6	30%	50.0%	+20
Collapsed OA/UC	23	50%	70%	+20
Collapsed Most At-Risk	51	25%	27.5%	+2.5
Non OA/UC	25	67%	64%	-3
Total	105			

The NYC DOE 2015-2016 School Quality Report<sup>3</sup> for New Dawn Charter High School presents a graduation rate of 56% and is a more comprehensive measure of the school’s performance. The DOE transfer school graduation rate is “based on whether students graduated within six years of starting high school, or seven years for students who entered this school very far off-track for their age. Other students from prior cohorts who graduated this year are also included.” The Quality Snapshot states that NDCHS has outperformed its similar school comparison group by +9 percentage points.

**Table 2: Cumulative Six-Year Graduation Rate Compiled by NYCDOE**

2016 Cumulative Six-Year Graduation Rate - NDCHS	2016 Cumulative Six-Year Graduation Rate – Comparison Group	Variance
All Students: 56%	All Students: 47%	+9
Most At- Risk Students: 38%	Most At-Risk Students: 33%	+6

<sup>3</sup> The School Quality Report is a data tool and summary compiled by the NYC DOE for all schools, district and charter, in New York City

The [NYS 2015-2016 NDCHS School Report Card](#) provides information about NDCHS' 2010, 2011 and 2012 Grade 9 entry cohort graduate, enrollment and dropout rates.

It is notable that, in each graduating cohort, NDCHS has issued a high proportion of Regents diplomas vs local diplomas. This is noteworthy when considering the high proportion of special education students who are enrolled in NDCHS.

### **Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability**

#### Financial Condition

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

NYSED reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio (current assets to current liabilities) and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school's capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to-asset ratio, are measures of the charter school's capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations<sup>4</sup>.

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department's Office of Audit Services. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. NDCHS's composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.50. The table below shows the school's composite scores from 2012-2013 through 2015-2016.

**Table 3: NDCHS's Composite Scores 2012-2013 to 2014-2015**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	3.0
2014-2015	3.0
2013-2014	3.0
2012-2013	2.6

Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services

#### Financial Management

NYSED CSO reviewed NDCHS' 2015-2016 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor observed that there were un-cleared checks more than six months old on the school's bank reconciliations and recommended that the issue be investigated and resolved. The auditor also noted a 2014-2015 recommendation that the school's board adopt a policy regarding operating reserves that would define and set goals for reserve funds, establish authorization of use of the funds and outline requirements for monitoring and reporting. As of June 30, 2016, such a policy was under the board's review, and its status will be reviewed as part of the 2016-2017 audit.

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<sup>4</sup> These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

## Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law

### Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

NDCHS serves OA/UC students, which is considered an at-risk category. For the 2016-2017 school year, the school reports that 66% of its students are economically disadvantaged (ED) and 38% are students with a disability (SWD). In 2015-2016, 96% of the students enrolled in NDCHS were Black/African-American or Hispanic/Latino students, according to the NYSED School Report Card. See Table 5, below, for more information.

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students<sup>5</sup>. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include reaching out to district and other charter school principals and deans of schools in the district of location and other Brooklyn districts, mail and telephone outreach campaigns to long-term absentees, meetings with neighborhood-based representatives and high school guidance counselors, translation of recruitment materials, and the hiring of a special education director to serve the needs of special education students. The school has recently focused its outreach to target Spanish and Chinese speaking high school students predominantly in the Sunset Park area. Recruitment efforts for this population include reaching out to schools in the community, community centers, group homes, businesses, parents, and any number of places where target student populations or their families congregate. School representatives who speak Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese support outreach meetings and visits, and materials have been published in English, Spanish, Cantonese, a Chinese regional dialect, and Arabic.

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<sup>5</sup> Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL eligible students and English Language Learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school, and have done so. Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011, are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school's performance over the charter term. A school's plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school's repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter pursuant to section Education Law §2855(1)(e).

**Table 4: Student Demographics – New Dawn Charter High School Compared to District of Location (CSD 15)**

	2014-2015 Percent of Enrollment			2015-2016 Percent of Enrollment			2016-2017 Percent of Enrollment <sup>6</sup>
	School	CSD#15	Variance	School	CSD#15	Variance	School
<b>Enrollment of Special Populations</b>							
Economically Disadvantaged	67%	58%	+9	64%	56%	+8	66%
English Language Learners	5%	19%	-14	4%	17%	-13	3%
Students with Disabilities	38%	20%	+18	36%	21%	+15	38%

#### Student Retention

The NYCDOE School Quality Report for New Dawn Charter School compares student persistence to similar schools. The School Quality Report reports a 70% High School Persistence rate at NDCHS, which is a measure of students graduated, earned a High School equivalency, earned an alternative commencement credential or remained enrolled and attending the school. The NYCDOE reports that the High School Persistence rate for similar schools is 55%.

The NDCHS 2015-2016 School Report Card reports a dropout rate of 15% of students who did not complete high school that year. Drop outs are defined by NYSED as students in grades 7-12 and ungraded secondary students whose last enrollment record indicated they dropped out of school. The number of enrolled students used as the denominator for determining the percentage of students who dropped out is the number of students in grades 9-12 and ungraded secondary-level students age 14 or older. NYSED does not have a comparative dropout rate for schools that serve OA/UC students.

#### **Legal Compliance**

NDCHS operates in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of its charter, including its bylaws and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities, and NYS DASA regulations. The board holds meetings in compliance with Open Meetings Law.

#### **Public Hearing Information**

The required public hearing was held on October 13, 2016 at NDCHS. Five people were present. There was one speaker, who spoke in support of the school’s renewal.

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<sup>6</sup> Enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year is preliminary and therefore cannot be compared to the district. The enrollment figures provided for the school year have been reported by the school.

## Urban Dove Team Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), Commissioners Regulation 119.7, and the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy (November 2012), the **New York State Education Department recommends a short-term renewal for a period of three years for Urban Dove Team Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2017 and expire on June 30, 2020.**

Urban Dove Team Charter School (UDTCS) is a promising model that is making progress toward meeting the academic performance and other benchmarks set forth in the school’s Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan and the Board of Regents Performance Framework. Since the school is in its fifth year of operation, NYSED has data for only four years of operation. The school has graduated 61 students to date and additional time and data are needed to demonstrate the efficacy of the academic program and to provide NYSED with sufficient outcome data to fully evaluate the school. UDTCS is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, enrollment, recruitment, and organizational design as set forth in the charter, and is in good financial condition.

### Charter School Summary

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Urban Dove Team Charter School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Michael Grandis
<b>District of location</b>	NYC CSD 13
<b>Opening Date</b>	August 27, 2012
<b>Charter Terms</b>	Initial Charter Term: 7/1/2012-6/30/2017
<b>Current and Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/Maximum Authorized Enrollment</b>	Ungraded (high school) 265 students
<b>Educational Partners</b>	Urban Dove, Inc.
<b>Facilities</b>	600 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11216
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>Urban Dove Team Charter School (UD Team) is a completely unique and innovative alternative High School for over-aged, under-credited youth whose mission is to combine a rigorous academic curriculum with a hands-on, real-world vocational program, and an award-winning college readiness program that strives to give each graduate a high school diploma, a foundation for higher education, and the job skills needed to enter the world of work. Graduates of UD Team will</i>

	<i>be healthy, active, focused young adults ready to fulfill their potential. They will have a commitment to their futures, a positive connection to their community and a desire to take advantage of the opportunities before them. UD Team partners with Urban Dove, a non-profit that has specialized in working with at-risk youth for fifteen years. Urban Dove will provide critical support in delivering key elements of the school program, including in the areas of Sports-based Youth Development, College guidance, internships and job-skills and summer programming.</i>
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports-based youth development (SBYD)</li> <li>• Support Services</li> <li>• More time on task</li> <li>• Same-sex groupings</li> <li>• Multiple Intelligences</li> <li>• Differentiated instruction</li> <li>• Targeted interventions</li> </ul>
<b>Requested Revisions</b>	Seeking approval to contract with Urban Dove, Inc., to provide comprehensive charter school management services.

### Current Grade Levels and Maximum Authorized Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Approved Enrollment	Actual Enrollment
2016-2017	Ungraded (high school)	265	281 <sup>7</sup>
2015-2016	Ungraded (high school)	265	271
2014-2015	Ungraded (high school)	240	207
2013-2014	Ungraded (high school)	170	166
2012-2013	Ungraded (high school)	95	107

### Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Maximum Authorized Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Authorized Enrollment
2017-2018	Ungraded (high school)	265
2018-2019	Ungraded (high school)	265
2019-2020	Ungraded (high school)	265
2020-2021	Ungraded (high school)	265
2021-2022	Ungraded (high school)	265

<sup>7</sup> Self-reported by Urban Dove Team Charter School in Renewal Site Visit Workbook

## **Background**

The NYSED Board of Regents approved and issued a five-year initial charter for UDTCS on December 14, 2010. After a planning year, the school opened for instruction in August 2012. UDTCS is designed to engage and support the academic and social-emotional needs of over-aged, under-credited (OA/UC) students.

As per the charter, the school admits students who are 16 years old or younger who have earned eight or fewer high school credits at the time of enrollment. Students eligible for enrollment must have attempted ninth grade at least once in another school. Unlike many schools that serve OA/UC students and accept students on a rolling basis throughout the year, UDTCS enrolls and groups students at the start of each academic year to build a strong student cohort structure with a shared sense of accountability to one another. Students at UDTCS advance through a three-year high school academic program (which may extend to four or five years as necessary) with an intensive sports-based youth development component and a focus on college and career readiness.

To fully and fairly evaluate the performance of the school, UDTCS was invited to develop an Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan describing its outcomes over the initial charter term in comparison to schools serving similar student populations. The school worked with NYSED and with NYCDOE to develop the plan which analyzed outcomes of students who entered the charter school in the fall of 2012 (Class of 2015) and in the fall of 2013 (Class of 2016).

UDTCS partners with Urban Dove, Inc., which offers a variety of services and resources to UDTCS. The school is requesting a material revision to the charter to enter into a comprehensive management contract with Urban Dove, Inc.

## **Summary of Evidence for Renewal**

### **Key Performance Area: Educational Success**

This section will summarize the outcome data for UDTCS as per the school's Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan which was provided by the school as part of the charter Renewal Application.

As per the school's Alternative Accountability Measurement Plan, academic outcome data is presented by charter school enrollment year, by high school entry year cohort, by rate of attendance and level of risk. This section will summarize that information, which was provided by the school as part of the charter Renewal Application. Given that the school is currently in its fifth year of operation, and has graduated only 61 students, and although their program is promising, there is not yet sufficient outcome data to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the school in a fair or representative manner.

### **Student Performance – Compared to Similar Schools (Alternative Accountability Plan)**

#### **Attendance, Persistence and Graduation**

As part of the Alternative Accountability Plan, UDTCS analyzed student attendance as an indicator of persistence within the program and ultimately with high school completion. Students in each enrollment cohort were divided into three sub-groups – Disengaged (below 60% average daily attendance), Engaged (60% to 79% average daily attendance), and Highly Engaged (80% average daily attendance and above). Baseline analysis of student outcomes for the enrollment Class of 2015 and Class of 2016 shows higher

persistence and graduation rates for Highly Engaged students. The school has used this preliminary analysis to demonstrate its strong outcomes with that segment of its students, and to set goals for the school’s Attendance Task Force, a group within the school that is working to raise awareness of the importance of striving to attain an average attendance rate of 80% for at least 65% of its enrolled students in the upcoming charter term.

Students who are disengaged tend to drop out at much higher rates and graduate at much lower rates when compared to UDTCS students who are engaged or highly engaged. Engaged and highly engaged students tend to persist and graduate at much higher rates (see Table 1).

Due to a lack of data available from the NYCDOE, we are unable to make a comparison between attendance rates at UDTCS and similar schools within the district.

**Table 1: UDTCS Attendance, Persistence and Graduation**

<b>Class of 2015 (Enrolled in 2012)</b>	Dropped Out	Still Enrolled	Graduated
Disengaged – 37% of UDTCS Student Population	84%	8%	8%
Engaged – 63% of UDTCS Student Population	9%	16%	75%
Highly Engaged Subset of the Engaged Group – (32% of Engaged Students above)	0%	4.5%	95.5%

<b>Class of 2016 (Enrolled in 2013)</b>	Dropped Out	Still Enrolled	Graduated
Disengaged – 52% of UDTCS Student Population	53%	35%	12%
Engaged – 48% of UDTCS Student Population	14%	3%	83%
Highly Engaged Subset of the Engaged Group – (22% of Engaged Students above)	0%	23.5%	76.5%

Due to a lack of data available from the NYCDOE, we are unable to make a comparison between dropout rates at UDTCS and similar schools within the district.

#### Similar Student Graduation Outcomes

UDTCS used NYC DOE OA/UC student categories to compare graduation outcomes of Urban Dove students in these categories with similar students in NYC (“Peer Target”). The analysis is based on information provided by the NYCDOE. Most UDTCS students fall into three of the NYCDOE’s at-risk categories of OA/UC students: 15 years old with less than 11 credits, 16 years old with less than 11 credits and no Regents exams passed, and 16 years old with less than 11 credits and one or more Regents exams passed. For each of these three categories, the chart below shows the percentage of each Class in that category, their graduation rate at UDTCS and the graduation rate for the that category citywide.



**Table 2: 2016 UDTCS Student Outcomes Compared to Similar NYC DOE Student Outcomes (“Peer Target”)**

<b>Class of 2015 – Charter School Entry 2012</b>	Number	NYC Peer Target Graduation Rate	UDTCS Graduate Rate to Date (9 still enrolled)	Variance to Date
15-year-old <11 credits	33	30%*	61%	+31
16-year-old, <11 credits, no Regents	22	27%	41%	+14
16-year old, <11 credits, at least 1 Regents	5	28%	40%	+12
Other OA/UC categories	6	30%	33%	+3
Non OA/UC	2	67%	100%	+33
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>			

\*The NYC Peer Target for 15 year old students with less than 11 credits was not developed by NYCDOE as part of its transfer school accountability analysis, because this category of students is not included in the DOE definition of OA/UC students. UDTCS identified the target graduation rate on the basis of graduation data for this population that was provided to the school by the NYCDOE.

<b>Class of 2016 – Charter School Entry 2013</b>	Number	Peer Target Graduation Rate	UDTCS Graduation Rate to Date (27 still enrolled)	Variance to Date
15-year-old <11 credits	30	30%	47%	+17
16-year-old, <11 credits, no Regents	26	27%	12%	-15
16-year old, <11 credits, at least 1 Regents	8	28%	25%	-3
Other OA/UC categories	6	30%	67%	+37
Non OA/UC	7	67%	85%	+18
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>			

\*The NYC Peer Target for 15 year old students with less than 11 credits was not developed by NYCDOE as part of its transfer school accountability analysis, because this category of students is not included in the DOE definition of OA/UC students. UDTCS identified the target graduation rate on the basis of graduation data for this population that was provided to the school by the NYCDOE.

#### NYSED Cohort Outcomes

As full six-year graduation data for the 2011, 2012 and 2013 cohorts become available, this information will also be considered to assess whether the school is meeting NYSED charter school performance criteria. At this point in the school’s history, given that the school is in its fifth year of operation, complete graduation rate and valid comparison data is not yet available.

### **Key Performance Area: Organizational Viability**

#### Financial Condition

Throughout the charter term, the school’s fiscal condition has steadily improved. At the present, UDTCS appears to be in adequate financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

The Charter School Office reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio (current assets to current liabilities) and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to-asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations<sup>8</sup>.

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department’s Office of Audit Services. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. UDTCS’s composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.50. The table below shows the school’s composite scores from 2012-2013 through 2015-2016.

**UDTCS’s Composite Scores  
2012-2013 to 2014-2015**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.50
2014-2015	2.10
2013-2014	0.60
2012-2013	-0.70

Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services

Financial Management

The Charter School Office reviewed UDTCS’ 2015-2016 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor identified three issues believed to be significant deficiencies. Two of these deficiencies have been resolved, however, NYSED is still seeking documentation of the annual fire safety inspection report.

**Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law**

Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention

Over the duration of the charter term, UDTCS has essentially met or exceeded its enrollment targets in all special population subgroups. UDTCS enrolls a higher proportion of economically disadvantaged (ED) students and students with disabilities (SWDs) than the district of location, and is generally meeting its target for English language learners (ELLs). Ninety-eight percent of the students enrolled in UDTCS in 2015-2016 are Black/African American or Hispanic/Latino students, according to the NYSED School Report Card. See Table 5, below, for more information.

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<sup>8</sup> These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

**Table 5: Student Demographics – Urban Dove Team Charter School Compared to District of Location (CSD 13)**

	2014-2015 Percent of Enrollment			2015-2016 Percent of Enrollment			2016-2017 Percent of Enrollment <sup>9</sup>
	School	CSD #13	Variance	School	CSD #13	Variance	School
<b>Enrollment of Special Populations</b>							
Economically Disadvantaged	69%	70%	-1	82%	66%	+16	73%
English Language Learners	3%	3%	0	2%	4%	-2	4%
Students with Disabilities	37%	7%	+30	39%	15%	+24	35%

The school is making good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students<sup>10</sup>. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include reaching out to district and other charter school principals and deans of schools in the district of location and other Brooklyn districts, mail and telephone outreach campaigns to long-term absentees, meetings with neighborhood-based representatives and high school guidance counselors, translation into Spanish of all recruitment materials, and the hiring of a special education director to serve the needs of special education students.

#### Student Retention

According to NYSED data, the overall student retention rate at UDTCS is 48.37%.

#### **Legal Compliance**

UDTCS is complying with most applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of its charter, however, there have been some areas of concern. Issues cited include the adoption and use of a discipline policy which was not submitted for authorizer approval and did not include the appropriate DASA provisions, and compliance with annual facility safety inspection requirements.

<sup>9</sup> Enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year is preliminary and therefore cannot be compared to the district. The enrollment figures provided for the school year have been reported by the school.

<sup>10</sup> 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).

### **Public Hearing Information**

The required public hearing was held on September 27, 2016 at UDTCS. Twenty-eight people were present. There were eight speakers and five letters/emails of support. Additionally, five comments were submitted in writing. All feedback was in support of the school and was offered by a combination of school staff and community members.