



Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
2013-2014

**COMMUNITY ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT**

2013 – 2014 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview

School Information for the 2013-2014 School Year

Name of Charter School	Community Roots Charter School
Board Chair(s)	Tracey Strauss and Scott Strasser
School Leader(s)	Allison Keil (K-5), Sara Stone (K-5), Sarah Weeks (6-7), Adam Weinstock (6-7)
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	Brooklyn Academy of Music
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 13
Physical Address(es)	51 Saint Edwards Street, Brooklyn 11205 (K-5)
	50 Navy Street, Brooklyn 11201 (6-7)
Facility Owner(s)	DOE

School Profile

- Community Roots Charter School (Community Roots) is an elementary and middle school, which served 407 students¹ in grades K-7 during the 2013-2014 school year. It opened in 2006-2007, and is under the terms of its second charter. The school's anticipated full grade span is K-8 which it expects to reach in the 2014-2015 school year. The school is located in DOE-operated facilities in Brooklyn within Community School District (CSD) 13.²
- Community Roots enrolls new students in kindergarten, but backfills empty seats in all grades. There were 1,132 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2013 lottery.³ The average attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year to date, as reported in February 2014, was 95%.⁴
- Community Roots was renewed during the 2010-2011 school year for a period of five years, consistent with the terms of its renewal application, with the following conditions:
 - The school must demonstrate improved student achievement by scoring in the 25th percentile or above of all schools on the NYC DOE Progress Report within one year after renewal, in the 50th percentile or above of all schools on the NYC DOE Progress Report within two years after renewal, and in the 75th percentile or above of all students on the NYC DOE Progress Report in each of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th years after renewal.⁵
- The elementary school is led by Co-Directors, Allison Keil and Sara Stone, who have both been at the school for eight years, since the school's inception. Sarah Weeks, the Middle School Director, and Adam Weinstock, Assistant Middle School Director, joined the school in the 2012-2013 school year, as the school expanded to include the middle school grades.
- Community Roots has a student to teacher ratio of 8.8:1 in grades K-5 and 9.8:1 in grades 6-7, serving seven sections in grades K-7 with an average class size of 25 students in grades K-5 and 26 students in grades 6-7.⁶
- The lottery preferences for Community Roots' 2013-2014 school year included the New York State Charter Schools Act required preferences of returning students, students residing in the community school district of the school's location and siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school, as well as students who live in the public housing complex near the school.⁷

¹ Enrollment reflects ATS data from 10/31/13.

² NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System database.

³ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

⁴ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

⁵ This condition will be waived for the 5th year of the charter term as NYC DOE discontinued the issuance of Progress Reports beginning with the 2013-14 school year.

⁶ Self-reported information given on 9/19/14.

⁷ Community Roots Charter School's 2013-2014 application.

Part 2: Summary of Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the school an academic success?

Overview of School-Specific Data through 2012-2013

Students scoring at or above Level 3 on the NYS assessment, compared to CSD, NYC, and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Community Roots Charter School	59.0%	66.7%	73.6%	43.8%
CSD 13	43.5%	47.4%	49.8%	25.4%
Difference from CSD 13	15.5	19.3	23.8	18.5
NYC	46.1%	49.4%	51.2%	26.8%
Difference from NYC	12.9	17.3	22.4	17.0
New York State	53.2%	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	5.8	13.9	18.5	12.7

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Community Roots Charter School	71.0%	71.3%	73.0%	46.8%
CSD 13	49.7%	53.3%	57.5%	25.0%
Difference from CSD 13	21.3	18.0	15.5	21.8
NYC	56.3%	60.0%	62.6%	31.7%
Difference from NYC	14.7	11.3	10.4	15.1
New York State	61.0%	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	10.0	8.0	8.2	15.7

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served.

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	F	C	C	B
Student Progress	F	F	D	B
Student Performance	D	C	B	B
School Environment	A	A	A	A
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	0.8	1.5	1.8	1.6

Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals

- According to its 2012-2013 Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), of its seven academic performance goals identified in its charter, Community Roots met five and did not meet two.

Responsive Education Program & Learning Environment⁸

- The school outperformed their CSD (13) on both the ELA and math NYS assessments for the 2012-2013 school year in each grade level for grades 3-6 (the school only had testing grades 3-6 for the 2012-2013 school year).
- School leadership reported that their curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in ELA and math. During the 2013-2014 school year, they moved from using TERC Investigations to Engage NY for their math curriculum.
- The school reported the use of in-house assessments, including the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessments) in grades K-5, on which they had the following results for students (by grade level) on or above the benchmark for the 2012-2013 school year: Kindergarten- 88%, 1st grade- 78%, 2nd grade- 94%, 3rd grade- 80%, 4th grade- 84%, and 5th grade- 76%. The school uses Fountas and Pinnell in their middle school grades to assess reading comprehension and fluency for students who are receiving reading interventions.
- The school began working with the Achievement Network during the 2013-2014 school year in order to better determine students' understanding and mastery of the CCLS. The school reports that the data from these assessments allow for staff to make adjustments to the curriculum and to inform planning and instruction.
- The school has on staff a Director of Special Education as well as a Learning Specialist and a Math Specialist to provide the needed supports of students with IEPs, ELL students, and students who are not meeting their benchmarks. Within the school, there is a support network of social workers and therapists (occupational, physical, and speech) along with the learning specialists, who meet weekly to coordinate their work.
- An integral part to the school model is that all of its elementary classrooms and its core subject middle school classrooms are Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms. In each ICT classroom, there is one special education teacher and one general education teacher.
- The school utilizes the Kim Marshall rubric, with some adjustment to incorporate the school's instructional approach and school culture, to evaluate its teachers' growth throughout the year. The teacher and his or her supervisor have a mid-year meeting and an end-of-year meeting to discuss the assessment. The supervisors for the elementary school are the Co-Directors and the supervisors for the middle school are the Director and Assistant Director.
- The school has common planning periods for grade level or content-area teachers at least three times per week. During these periods, teachers can meet with staff developers and supervisors.

⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted ACR self evaluation form on 2/14/14.

Essential Question 2: Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

After reviewing information and documentation concerning Board turnover, Board minutes, reporting structure, organizational chart, annual accountability reporting documents, Board agendas, and the school's website, the NYC DOE notes the following:

- The Board has 16 board members, all voting. The Board has two Co-Chairs, Scott Strasser and Tracey Strauss, who have served on the Board since 2010 and 2006, respectively.
- As recorded on the school's Board roster, the Board added five Board members during the 2013-2014 school year.
- As recorded in the Board's minutes, there is a clear reporting structure with school leadership providing regular updates on academic and operational performance to the Board and its committees.
- Board minutes and agenda items have been provided via the school's website for inspection by the public.

School Climate & Community Engagement

After reviewing information and documentation concerning leadership turnover, staff turnover, attendance rate, student turnover, NYC School Survey results and response rates, and PTO meetings, the NYC DOE notes the following:

- The school has experienced no leadership turnover; the founding Co-Directors are still leading the school. The school's middle school director and middle school assistant director, hired at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, have remained with the school.
- Instructional staff turnover was 12.2%, with five out of 41 instructional staff that chose not return to the 2013-2014 school year from prior year. As of February 2014, during the 2013-2014 school year, no teachers left the school.⁹
- As of February 2014, average daily attendance for students during that school year was at 95%, which meets the school's charter goal of at least 95%.¹⁰
- Student turnover was 3.7% of students from the 2012-2013 school year who did not return at the start of the 2013-2014 school year and 1.9% of the students left the school between the start of the 2013-2014 school year and February 2014.¹¹
- The school reported having a parent organization, called the Community Council, as evidenced on the school's website.

2012-2013 NYC School Survey Results¹²

Categories	Result	Community	Response Rate	Citywide Rate
Academic Expectations	Above Average	Parents	80%	54%
Communication	Well Above Average	Teachers	80%	83%
Engagement	Above Average	Students	88%	83%
Safety & Respect	Average			

⁹ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

¹⁰ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

¹¹ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/12/14.

¹² Results are particular to the school type as identified in the 2013 School Survey.

Financial Health

Near-term financial obligations:

- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's current ratio indicated a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school had sufficient unrestricted cash to cover its operating expenses for at least three months without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2013-2014 budget to the actual enrollment as of the last day for the 2013-2014 school year revealed that the school had met its enrollment target, supporting its projected revenue.
- As of the FY13 financial audit, the school had no debt obligations.

Financial sustainability based on current practices:

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13, the school generated an aggregate surplus over the three audited fiscal years though the school operated at a deficit during FY12.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.
- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13, the school had overall negative cash flow from FY11 to FY13.

Annual Independent Financial Audit

- An independent audit performed for FY13 showed no material findings.

Essential Question 3: Compliance with charter and all applicable laws and regulations?

After a review of documentation submitted for the NYC DOE annual accountability reporting requirements for the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE finds the following:

Board Compliance

The Board is in compliance with:

- The Board's membership size falls within the range of no fewer than seven and no more than 21 members, as outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board held six Board meetings, with quorum, meeting the required minimum of six as outlined in its bylaws and as indicated on its Board meeting schedule.

The Board is out of compliance with:

- Currently, officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled, with the exception of the Treasurer position.

School Compliance

The school is in compliance with (as reviewed during May 2014):

- All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification.
- The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- The school has posted its NYSED Annual Report and annual audit to its website as specified in charter law.
- The school had an application deadline of April 4, 2014 and lottery date of April 9, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

The school is out of compliance with:

- The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is not in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization as of May 2014.
- The school leader was not trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC as of May 2014, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

Essential Question 4: What are the school's plans for the next charter term?

As reported by the school's leadership, the following is noted:

- The school continues to plan to expand its middle school grades, an expansion that began in the 2012-2013 school year. The school will reach its full authorized grade span next school year, and will be a K-8 school.
- The school is split-sited with the elementary school (grades K-5) located at 51 Saint Edwards Street, and the middle school (grades 6-8, once the school is at full grade span) located at 50 Navy Street.
- The school will be up for renewal at the end of the 2014-2015 school year.

Enrollment and Retention Targets

As a reminder regarding accountability in the next charter term:

- Amendments to Article 56 of the New York State Consolidated Laws: Education, which relates to Charter Schools, call for charter schools, as a consideration of renewal, "to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets" for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The amendments further indicate "Repeated failure to comply with the requirement" as a cause for revocation or termination of the charter.
 - The law directs schools to demonstrate "that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students" in the event it has not yet met its targets.
 - The NYC DOE, as authorizer, will annually monitor the school's performance against these targets and the efforts it makes to meet this state requirement.
- While Community Roots Charter School has served a higher percentage of students with disabilities compared to CSD 13 and citywide averages, the school has also served lower percentages of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch and English Language Learner students as compared to CSD 13 and citywide averages.

Special Populations

School	Free and Reduced Price Lunch					Students with Disabilities					English Language Learners				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School	30.0%	28.3%	24.8%	30.6%	29.2%	16.0%	16.3%	16.8%	17.7%	22.1%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.3%	1.0%
CSD 13	70.4%	75.4%	73.9%	70.3%	70.5%	15.1%	15.7%	15.1%	15.4%	16.6%	4.2%	5.0%	4.8%	4.5%	4.6%
NYC	62.1%	65.3%	68.1%	69.8%	73.5%	15.9%	15.9%	15.7%	16.1%	17.1%	16.1%	16.1%	15.5%	15.0%	14.7%

Additional Enrollment Information					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-4	K-5	K-5	K-6	K-7
CSD(s)	13	13	13	13	13

Comparisons to both the CSD(s) and City are made against students in grades K-8, 9-12 or K-12 depending on the grades the school served in each school year. Special population figures are as of October 31 for each given school year, with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.