



**ROCHDALE EARLY ADVANTAGE CHARTER SCHOOL
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 SCHOOL YEAR
DECEMBER 2014**

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Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Background Information

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	
Board Chair(s)	Dr. Lillian Hamer
School Leader(s)	Dr. Lena Richardson
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 28
Physical Address(es)	122-05 Smith Street, Queens
Facility Owner(s)	Private
School Opened For Instruction	2010-2011
Current Charter Term Expiration Date	12/14/2014
Current Authorized Grade Span	K-5
Current Authorized Enrollment	244
Proposed New Charter Term	2.5 years [December 15, 2014 – June 30, 2017]
Proposed Authorized Grade Span for New Charter Term	K-5
Proposed Authorized Enrollment for New Charter Term	420
Proposed Sections per Grade for New Charter Term	3

Overview of School-Specific Data

School Evaluation of Academic Goals as stated in Annual Report to NYSED and Renewal Application to NYC DOE

Academic Goal Analysis					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Cumulative Charter Term Total
Total Achievable Goals	13	13	13	13	52
# Met	0	1	3	1	5
# Partially Met	0	0	1	1	2
# Not Met	4	3	4	7	18
# Not Applicable *	9	9	5	4	27
% Met	0%	8%	23%	8%	10%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	8%	8%	4%
% Not Met	31%	23%	31%	54%	35%
% Not Applicable *	69%	69%	38%	31%	52%
% Met of All Applicable Goals	0%	25%	38%	11%	20%

* Some goals may not be applicable in all years. For example, goals related to the NYC Progress Report are not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year as Progress Reports were not issued that year.

ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	-	-	30.3%	21.5%
CSD 28	-	-	32.4%	34.2%
Difference from CSD 28 *	-	-	-2.1	-12.7
NYC	-	-	28.1%	30.5%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	2.2	-9.0
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-0.8	-9.1

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	-	-	24.2%	21.9%
CSD 28	-	-	37.0%	44.4%
Difference from CSD 28 *	-	-	-12.8	-22.5
NYC	-	-	33.1%	39.3%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-8.9	-17.4
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-6.9	-14.3

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

** New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

Student improvement on the state tests compared to other students

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School - All Students	-	-	-	42.0%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	-	-	-	0.0%
City Percent of Range- All Students	-	-	-	0.0%
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	43.0%
Peer Percent of Range – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	0.0%
City Percent of Range – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	0.0%

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile – Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School - All Students	-	-	-	36.5%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	-	-	-	0.4%
City Percent of Range- All Students	-	-	-	0.0%
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School - School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	38.0%
Peer Percent of Range – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	0.0%
City Percent of Range – School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	0.0%

A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Closing the Achievement Gap

Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	-	-	22.2%
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	40.0%
Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	-	-	12.5%
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	25.0%

* Defined as students with a placement in Self-Contained, ICT, or SETSS.

II. Renewal Recommendation and Rationale

Based on the evidence presented herein and detailed below in Part II, the NYC DOE recommends a 2.5 year short term renewal with an academic performance condition.

The academic performance condition is as follows:

1. The school must demonstrate academic growth, as measured by the school's median adjusted growth percentiles in ELA and math, for each year of the charter term to maintain enrollment expansion. If the median adjusted growth percentile for the school's students is not at or above 50 percent of city percent of range for each ELA and math in each year of the charter term, the school's authorized enrollment growth of one additional section per grade may be rescinded for future years.

As part of the renewal application Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School submitted two material revisions. The NYC DOE determination is as follows: regarding the material revision to expand authorized grades from grades kindergarten through five to grades kindergarten through eight during the next charter term, the NYC DOE does not approve this material revision; regarding the material revision to increase the authorized maximum enrollment to 675 students during the next charter term, the NYC DOE approves an increase in authorized enrollment to 420 students in grades kindergarten through five in the next charter term. Under the school's current charter (which expires on December 14, 2014), enrollment was permitted up to 15% above the maximum authorized enrollment; in the renewal charter agreement, the allowance over maximum authorized enrollment has been eliminated for all NYC DOE Chancellor-authorized schools.

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has partially demonstrated academic success.

New York Charter Schools Act

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include:

§ 2850 (2)

- (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.

Data available for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School indicates that the school has made progress towards meeting some of these objectives.

Mission and Vision

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's mission is to provide an early college preparatory program serving students in kindergarten through grade five. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is committed to a balanced multi-literacy approach, educating each student to "stand out from the crowd" intellectually, historical-culturally, digitally, economically, physically, artistically and civically, in an increasingly diverse and fast-changing global society. Driven by the principles of purpose, passion and proficiency, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School offers each student a

challenging, college-bound education that develops character and critical thinking ability infused with family and social values to support lifelong learning, leadership and productive citizenship. The school executes against this mission by using a curriculum, designed to be challenging and prepare students for college in accordance with its mission, which has been aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) since its first year. The Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School instructional program includes Mandarin Chinese instruction for all grades, in service to its stated mission to prepare students for a global society.

School Specific Academic Performance

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the 2014-2015 academic year. As a result, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data and four years of other academic data, such as data obtained through internal assessments and attendance information, to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School.

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, NYS assessments were aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. As such, proficiency rates for school years prior to the 2012-2013 are not directly comparable. However, as this school had its first year of testing in 2012-2013, all proficiency results are aligned to the CCLS.

In 2012-2013, 24.2% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students were proficient in math. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's math proficiency was higher than 45.9% of elementary schools citywide. However, when compared to elementary schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools), Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School outperformed 54% of similar schools. In 2012-2013, 30.3% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students demonstrated proficiency in state tests in English Language Arts (ELA). With this level of proficiency, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School outperformed 65% of elementary schools citywide. Additionally, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School outperformed 85% of its peer schools.

The following year, in 2013-2014, 21.9% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students were proficient in math. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's math proficiency was higher than 29% of elementary schools citywide. However, when compared to elementary schools with student populations most like its own, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School outperformed only 20% of similar schools. In 2013-2014, 21.5% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students demonstrated proficiency in state tests in ELA. With this level of proficiency, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School outperformed 43% of elementary schools citywide. However, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School only outperformed 23% of its peer schools.

Over the four years that data is available for the retrospective charter term, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has met only 20% of its applicable academic charter goals.^{1,2} Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School met one of nine applicable academic goals in its most recent year. Because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not evaluate goals that measure a school's academic performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and Math exams for the 2012-2013 school year. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, due to a change in state regulation, the NYC DOE will not include

¹ This calculation does not include goals which have not been evaluated (not applicable) either as a result of the goal no longer being measurable (e.g. NYC DOE Progress Report grades for 2013-2014 school year and beyond) or the goal not yet measurable for the school at the time of the annual reporting (e.g. high school graduation rate for an academic year in which the school was not serving grade 12 students).

² It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and Math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and Math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two or NYC DOE Progress Report grades. The school has demonstrated a trend of inconsistent achievement of its stated charter goals over the four years of the charter term under review.

In 2013-2014, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's English Median Adjusted Growth Percentile was 42% with a City Percent of Range of 0%, placing the school in the zero percentile of schools citywide.³ Similarly, the school's peer and Community School District (CSD) percentiles were also 0%. This means that all other elementary schools in CSD 28 and in Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's peer group had an ELA median adjusted growth percentile greater than Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's median adjusted growth percentile.

In 2013-2014, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's Math Median Adjusted Growth Percentile was 37% with a City Percent of Range of 0.4%, placing the school in the bottom 2% of elementary schools citywide. In addition, all other elementary schools in CSD 28 had a Math median adjusted growth percentile greater than Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's median adjusted growth percentile.

Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school indicate that in the first three years of the charter the school had an assessment system in place and used the results to inform instruction and identify students in need of support. In visits to the school in April 2012 and May 2013, reviewers noted that, "teachers interviewed reported reviewing data collaboratively in weekly meetings and using the results to inform grouping and instruction."⁴

On its 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School received a B grade in all sections including as an Overall grade. In 2012-2013 the school was classified by the NYC DOE as an Early Childhood School; Early Childhood schools do not receive a percentile rank therefore no percentile rank was included in the Progress Report.

NYC DOE Progress Reports graded each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and were based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores were based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of 30-40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide. The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report was the most heavily weighted of all sections. The grade in this section was based on Early Grade Progress, which measured how individual students' proficiency on State ELA and math exams exceeded their expected proficiency in third grade based on the student's demographic characteristics. Although the NYC DOE Progress Report was discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, individual academic performance metrics from the former NYC DOE Progress Report are included in this renewal report for all years for which data was available in the current charter term.

Closing the Achievement Gap

NYC DOE-authorized charter schools are also assessed based on their ability to close the achievement gap for specific student populations. In school years prior to the 2013-2014 school year, schools received additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, charter schools will be assessed on the actual performance as well as the academic growth of students in these populations compared with public school students in the CSD and throughout New York City.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 25% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched

³ A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A percentile rank provides the percentage of schools that score the same or lower than the school under consideration. A City Percent of Range of 0% indicates that the school's score was two standard deviations below the average score, while a Citywide percentile of 0% indicates that no schools serving similar grade levels scored below the school.

⁴ Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012 and Annual Comprehensive Review 2012-2013

or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level places Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School above 6% of elementary schools citywide. Similarly, only 40% of students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting English scores; this level places Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School in the 15th percentile of all elementary schools citywide.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 13% of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's students with disabilities⁵ experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level places Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School above 2% of elementary schools citywide. Similarly, only 22% of students with disabilities experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting English scores. This places Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School above 3% of all elementary schools citywide.

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School served no English Language Learner (ELL) students who took the 2013-2014 NYS assessments in either math or ELA. As a result, there is no data on the percent of ELL students who experienced growth in math or ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting scores.

⁵ Defined as students with a placement in Self-Contained, ICT, or SETSS

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is an operationally sound and fiscally viable organization. This assessment was made based on a review of the following indicators of operational and fiscal viability:

- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's self-reported staffing data;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's financial disclosure forms;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's FY12, FY13, and FY14 independent financial audits;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's 2014-2015 staff handbook;
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's 2014-2015 student/family handbook; and
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's FY15 budget.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a partially developed governance structure and developed organizational design. However, while Board member size does fall within the range outlined in the school's charter, there is no evidence that all of the committees referenced in the bylaws are active. According to the Board minutes and meeting agendas reviewed, the Executive and Finance committees are active, but the Development, Academic Accountability and Governance committees are not active. Between the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school year there was only one new addition to the Board, though required documentation for this addition was not submitted. To date, the Board has 10 active board members, as evidenced by the school's website and Board meeting minutes; quorum at Board meetings was achieved for all meetings in 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 school years. The founding Board chair has been with the school and Board since inception.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture. School leadership, as defined by the school, has experienced no turnover. The school leader has been with the school since inception.

The school has experienced a reduction in instructional staff turnover since opening, with a level of turnover in the most recent academic year far below average. In year one, year two, and year three of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013), 60%, 11%, and 21% of instructional staff did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year. However, for the most recent period, staff turnover was only 6%.⁶

The school has established clear opportunities for parents to become involved in the school community and for students to become involved in the greater Queens Community. The school has an established parent association. Beginning with its second year of operation, the school has hosted 10 parent association meetings per year. The school has scheduled two parent-teacher conferences per year since opening; average attendance at these meetings has been 97% each year.⁷ For the first time in the 2013-2014 school year, third and fourth grade students performed at senior citizen facilities in the community.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations. The school has at least 132 days of unrestricted cash on hand to meet obligations totaling \$857,444.⁸

Overall, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

⁶ Data on instructional staff turnover was self-reported by the school in its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE dated November 2014.

⁷ Data on parent association meetings and parent-teacher conferences was self-reported by the school in its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE dated November 2014.

⁸ 2013-2014 Financial Audit

There was no material weakness noted in the three independent financial audits for FYs 12-14.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has been compliant with most applicable laws and regulations.

The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30% of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.

The school has submitted its required safety plan. The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.

The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.

The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

For the 2014-2015 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 10, 2014, adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1. Over the course of the charter term the school did consistently adhere to this requirement.

The school has submitted a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 school year. However, the policy is determined to be out of compliance with federal law because the due process policy is not clearly outlined and the policy does not include disciplinary measures for students with disabilities. In addition, the policy states that the school has adopted the NYC DOE Discipline Code for its discipline policy, but this is in question due to the inability of charter schools to implement certain provisions of the NYC DOE Discipline Code.

Although the Board held the required number of meetings per the Board's bylaws in years one, two, three and four of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014), the Board did not adhere to the Charter Schools Act in all years of the charter term. The Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year, but Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School held eight or nine board meetings per year. The Board has been in compliance with making Board agenda items and minutes available to the public for inspection via posting on the school's website. All Board members have submitted financial disclosure forms as part of the 2013 NYSED Annual Report, however, the Board did not consistently submit board resignation notices or new board member credentials within the required five days of change to the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnership (OSDCP) for review and if necessary, approval.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

The school has submitted a request to make the following material revisions to its charter as part of its next charter term:

- expand to serve students in grades six through eight; and
- increase its authorized enrollment from 244 students in grades kindergarten through five to 675 students in grades kindergarten through eight to meet high community demand.

The application also noted that Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School plans to secure a new facility to house the entire student body in grades kindergarten through eight. The Board of Trustees hired a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in July 2013 with the expectation that the CEO's primary duties will center on strategic planning for the new facility.

Part 2: School Overview and History

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is an elementary school serving 238 students⁹ in kindergarten through fifth grade during the 2014-2015 school year. It opened in the 2010-2011 school-year with kindergarten and first grades and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's authorized full grade span is kindergarten through five, which it reached this school year, 2014-2015. The school's current charter expires on December 14, 2014.¹⁰ The school currently offers as a charter school a public universal Pre-Kindergarten program in New York City. The school is located in a privately operated facility in Community School District 28, in Queens.

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is an elementary school in Queens. According to the school's mission statement, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School offers each student a challenging, college-bound education that develops character and critical thinking ability infused with family and social values to support lifelong learning, leadership and productive citizenship. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's instructional program focuses on a balanced multi-literacy approach and includes Mandarin Chinese instruction in order to prepare all students for a global society.

To reach its goals, the school partners with a paid services vendor, Charter School Business Management. Charter School Business Management provides, via contract with the school, back office support and other financial support services. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School manages student information via the DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system and invoices through the NYC DOE vendor portal. The annual budget is created by the Board of Trustees of the school. Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's Board of Trustees is solely responsible for complying with all requirements of grants for the school, the school's governing charter, and all applicable laws.

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's Board of Trustees is led by chair Dr. Lillian Hamer, who has been with the Board since the school's inception; she was elected as the board chair in July 2013. The elementary school is led by Principal Dr. Lena Richardson who has been at the school since the school's inception. The school hired CEO Dr. Calvin Rice in July 2013 to manage the Principal and Business and Operations Manager, begin planning for a new facility, and act as the key liaison between the school and the Board. Dr. Rice, the school's founder, was a former Board member and Board Chair, but became a non-voting Board member when he was hired by the school in July 2013.

Due to Hurricane Sandy, the school was not in session for three days during October 2012. The school was not temporarily re-located due to Hurricane Sandy.

The school typically enrolls new students in grades kindergarten but backfills in grades one through five. There were 796 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2014 lottery.¹¹ The school also enrolls students from the waitlist during the school year for all grades kindergarten through five.

Over the charter term, the school enrolled and served students as follows with average class size and section count noted for the most recently completed school year, 2013-2014.

⁹ ATS data as of October 31, 2014

¹⁰ NYC DOE internal data

¹¹ Reflects self-reported data submitted with the 2014-2015 Annual DOE Charter School Survey

Enrollment

Grade-Level Annual Enrollment *	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Kindergarten	36	35	37	47
Grade 1	35	38	37	39
Grade 2	-	34	35	40
Grade 3	-	-	33	34
Grade 4	-	-	-	32
Grade 5	-	-	-	-
Total Enrollment	71	107	142	192

* Enrollment figures reflect ATS data as of October 31 for each school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

Additional Enrollment Data

School Year 2013-2014 Information	Section Count	Average Class Size
Kindergarten	2	24
Grade 1	2	20
Grade 2	2	20
Grade 3	2	17
Grade 4	2	16
Grade 5	-	-
Students Admitted Through The Lottery	47	

* Lottery and section count information are based on self-reported data from the 2013-2014 DOE Annual Charter School Survey. Average Class Sizes were determined by dividing ATS enrollment as of October 31, 2013 by the appropriate grade-level section count.

Please see additional demographic data in Section 4 of this report for information regarding the enrollment of special populations at Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School. This information includes enrollment data for the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities as compared to the CSD and citywide averages as well as targets proposed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).¹²

¹² Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Board of Regents authorized charter schools, including those authorized by the NYC DOE, will be held accountable to enrollment targets once established by NYSED for students with disabilities, English Language Learner students, and students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

Part 3: Renewal Report Overview

Renewal Report

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the NYC DOE regarding the charter school's application for charter renewal. This report is based on a cumulative record of the school's progress during the current charter term, including but not limited to oversight visits, annual reports, and formal correspondence between the school and its authorizer, the NYC DOE, all of which are conducted in order to evaluate and monitor the charter school's academic, fiscal, and operational performance. Additionally, the NYC DOE incorporates into this report its findings from the renewal application process, which includes a written application, a report on student achievement data, and a school visit by the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) and other staff from the NYC DOE.

Upon review of all the relevant materials, a recommendation is made to the NYC DOE Chancellor. The Chancellor's determination, and the findings on which that decision is based, are then submitted to the New York State Board of Regents.

Is the school an academic success?

To assess whether a school is an academic success, the NYC DOE considers performance measures including, but not limited to, the following (as appropriate for grades served):

- New York State ELA and math assessment absolute results; New York State Regents exams passage rates;
- Comparative proficiency for elementary and middle schools, including growth rates for ELA and math proficiency;
- Comparative graduation rates and Regents completion rates for high schools;
- Closing the achievement gap performance relative to CSD or New York City public schools;
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) or other approved alternate assessments; and
- Performance data pertaining to college and career readiness.

Academic success is rated as **Demonstrated, Partially Demonstrated, or Not Yet Demonstrated**.

Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?

To assess whether a school is a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization, OSDCP focuses on three areas: Governance Structure & Organizational Design, School Climate & Community Engagement, and Financial Health. This includes an analysis of the school's audited financial statements, based on the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Core Performance Framework.¹³

The NYC DOE considers a variety of supporting materials and data, including but not limited to the following:

- Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Annual Reports submitted by schools to New York State Education Department (NYSED);
- NYC DOE School Surveys;
- Data collection sheets provided by schools;
- Student, staff, and Board turnover rates;
- Audits of authorized enrollment numbers; and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed, Partially Developed, or Not Yet Developed**. A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

¹³ Please refer to the following website for more information:
http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/126547/q/%20q=performance*20framework&c=82

Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?

As it pertains to compliance, the NYC DOE identifies areas of compliance and noncompliance with relevant laws and regulations as identified in the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework.

Staff Representatives

The following experts participated in the review of this school, including the renewal visit to the school conducted over two separate occasions: May 19, 2014 and May 20, 2014:

- Sonya Hooks, Senior Director of Evaluation and Policy, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Andrea McLean, former Director of Oversight, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Meera Jain, Director of Evaluation and Policy, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Kim Wong, Director of Operations, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Caitlin Robisch, Director of Analytics, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Paul Yen, Data Analyst, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships

Part 4: Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

At the time of this school's renewal Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

High Academic Attainment and Improvement

- The school has four years of academic performance data and two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data at the time of this report. For detailed information on grade-level data on NYS assessments, please see Appendix A.

NOTE: The 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 ELA and math proficiency percentages should not be compared directly with prior-year results. Unlike prior years, proficiency on the NYS assessments for ELA and math in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 were based on the Common Core Learning Standards – a more demanding set of knowledge and skills necessary for 21st century college and career readiness. However, as Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School had its first year of testing in 2012-2013, all proficiency results are aligned to the CCLS.

ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	-	-	30.3%	21.5%
CSD 28	-	-	32.4%	34.2%
Difference from CSD 28 *	-	-	-2.1	-12.7
NYC	-	-	28.1%	30.5%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	2.2	-9.0
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-0.8	-9.1

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	-	-	24.2%	21.9%
CSD 28	-	-	37.0%	44.4%
Difference from CSD 28 *	-	-	-12.8	-22.5
NYC	-	-	33.1%	39.3%
Difference from NYC *	-	-	-8.9	-17.4
New York State **	-	-	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-6.9	-14.3

* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

** New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Elementary School Progress Report Grades	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Overall Grade	-	-	B	Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
Student Progress	-	-	B	
Student Performance	-	-	B	
School Environment	-	-	B	

Mission and Academic Goals

According to the school's Renewal Application submitted to the NYC DOE, as well as annual reports submitted to NYSED, over each of the four years in the charter term during which the school was open, the school achieved/met academic goals as follows:

- 0 of 4 applicable charter goals in the first year of the charter,
- 1 of 4 in the second year,
- 3 of 8 in the third year,¹⁴ and
- 1 of 9 in the fourth year.

Progress Towards Academic Charter Goals *

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. The school will receive a 'B' or higher on the Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report.	N/A	N/A	Met	N/A
2. 75% of third through fifth graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS ELA	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
3. 75% of third through fifth graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
4. 75% of fourth graders who have been enrolled at the School on BEDS day for at least two consecutive years will perform at or above Level 3 on the NYS Science exam.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Met

¹⁴ It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and Math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and Math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that refer to comparative academic performance of the school (e.g. to the Community School District) were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

Academic Goals		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
5.	If students fall below 75% at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam, in the following year students who are in our school for two years in a row will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam. In years in which our students surpass 75% at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam, we will demonstrate growth (above 75 percent) in the following year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
6.	If students fall below 75% at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam, in the following year students who are in our school for two years in a row will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State Math exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State Math exam. In years in which our students surpass 75% at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam, we will demonstrate growth (above 75 percent) in the following year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met
7.	The school will meet AYP status and be deemed "In Good Standing" by New York State.	N/A	N/A	Met	N/A
8.	At least 75% of K-2 students will perform at or above grade level in reading on a norm-referenced reading assessment.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
9.	At least 75% of K-2 students will perform at or above grade level on a norm-referenced math assessment.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
10.	Fountas and Pinnell Reading Levels: 75% of students will read at or above grade level.	Not Met	Not Met	Partially Met	Partially Met
11.	The percent of students performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of the Community School District.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Not Met
12.	The percent of students performing at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam in each tested grade will, in the majority of grades, exceed the average performance of students tested in the same grades of the Community School District.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Not Met
13.	The school will have an average daily student attendance rate of at least 95%. ¹⁵	Not Met	Met	Met	Not Met

* Goals were self-reported by the school in the school's Renewal Application submitted to NYC DOE and 2013-2014 Annual Report documentation submitted to NYSED.

¹⁵ Please note the school self-reported attendance rates over the four year charter period of 94.5%, 95.3%, 95.3%, and 95.8%, respectively, in its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE dated November 2014. However, information captured in the DOE Automate the Schools database (ATS) shows attendance rates of 95.2% and 94.5% in the last two years. As a result, the DOE considers this goal met in only two of the four years of the charter period. Please see the attendance table in the School Climate & Community Engagement section for more information.

Responsive Education Program

In 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School did not reach its goals to have 75% of students in grades kindergarten through two perform at or above grade level on norm-referenced assessments for reading and math. (Due to a change in state regulation, the NYC DOE will not assess goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.)

- In 2010-2011 Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School used the Stanford and Binet assessment, which the school determined was not well-suited to provide data on grade-level proficiency.
- Beginning in 2011-2012, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School began using the TerraNova Assessments for reading and math. Students performing at grade level on the TerraNova Assessments achieve a Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) of 50 or above.¹⁶
- TerraNova assessment data for the 2012-2013 school year is presented in the table below.

Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School TerraNova Fall to Spring Percent at or above NCE of 50			Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School TerraNova Fall to Spring Percent at or above NCE of 50		
Grade	Reading Fall 2013	Reading Spring 2014	Grade	Math Fall 2013	Math Spring 2014
K	---	60%	K	---	71%
1	47%	69%	1	32%	57%
2	47%	60%	2	44%	66%

The school administers the TerraNova exam twice a year and a CCLS-aligned exam from Continental Press. Both exams are administered over a three-day period and mimic the length and rigor of the NYS ELA and math exams. The school also administers GO MATH! and Rigby Literacy by Design unit tests, chapter tests, mid-term exams, and end of year exams.

As part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE visited the school on May 19, 2014 and May 20, 2014. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- **Alignment with Common Core:**
 - Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has made strategic adjustments to its curriculum by using GO MATH! and Literacy by Design and mapping the curriculum to ensure CCLS-alignment. To help teachers focus on implementing the CCLS, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School brought in outside consultants in the 2012-2013 school year to provide support and training on topics such as algebraic thinking, operations, and fractions, which the Continental Press baseline math exam revealed to be weak areas.
 - A specialist in math CCLS provided two half-day institutes for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School. These institutes consisted of a classroom lesson and modeling for the teachers to observe followed by an opportunity for staff to discuss the demonstration with the consultant.
 - In Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's first three years of operation, consultants were used on a monthly basis to train Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School teachers on how to deliver lessons on topics integral to the

¹⁶ NCE is the Normal Curve Equivalent. This curve was designed to be used in the evaluation of compensatory education and other special programs. The range is from 1 to 99 and coincides with the NP scale at 1, 50, and 99. NCEs are normalized equal interval scores and are not recommended for use in reporting individual student scores since the NCE is easily confused with the NP.

CCLS, such as close reading, thematic writing, the writing process, comprehension skills, and supporting details.

- **Addressing the Needs of All Learners:**

- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School uses data from interim assessments to determine whether students need academic intervention.
 - Students showing weaknesses on interim assessments are placed in an intervention program for ELA and/or math. The intervention cycle happens every six to eight weeks.
 - If students continue to require intervention after four to six cycles, then recommendations are made to the School Based Support Team (“SBST”) on behalf of the child in question.
 - The SBST consists of the school Principal, ELA and math interventionists, the guidance counselor, Special Education (SPED) paraprofessional, and classroom teacher. The SBST meets one to two times per month. In some cases, the parent or guardian of a child in question will also attend the SBST meeting.
 - The SBST will decide whether to refer the student to the Committee on Special Education, or create an interim action plan before making a referral.
- Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has not had a large ELL population in its first four years of operation; in three of the four years of the charter term, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School served no ELL students. However, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School teachers are trained to use ESL Strategies for Classroom Teachers so that they can challenge ELL students and support learning.

- **Instructional Model and Classroom Instruction:**

- During the renewal visit, 28 classrooms across grades kindergarten through five were observed with the school’s Principal and the Coordinator of Curriculum and Professional Development.
- In all observed classes, teachers were following a co-teaching model. One section of each grade was an Integrated Co-Teaching classroom with one SPED certified teacher and one general education certified teacher, while the second section for each grade-level cohort had one general education certified teacher and one teaching assistant
- Class-sizes observed ranged from 14 to 21 students in size, with two teachers in each classroom.
- Forms of questioning identified during the classroom observations included some basic fact recall but mostly challenged students to demonstrate understanding or to analyze and apply. For example a student in an ELA class was pushed to support an original answer by finding evidence within the reading.
- In most rooms, checks for understanding that included questioning, polling, classwork, and teacher observation were observed.
- In some observed classrooms, differentiation of materials, tasks, and products, through small group instruction or independent practice, was observed. These were consistent with the school model. In one math class, each table was given a different set of manipulatives to help students get to the same answers.
- In most observed classes, students were responsive to teacher directions and instruction.
- In all observed classes, students were either fully on task or mostly on task. Off-task students were off-task for a short duration.

- Based on debriefs with the school's leadership team members after classroom visits, all classrooms had instruction that aligned with the instructional model and current academic goals of the school.

Learning Environment

- NYC DOE representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with 12 teachers. The following was noted:
 - All interviewed teachers reported that they received school-based professional development both in the summer and weekly during the school year, with the administration providing resources. They also reported being supported by consultants hired by the school's administration.
 - All of the interviewed teachers mentioned formal and informal teacher evaluations with feedback conducted by the school's administration.
 - All interviewed teachers reported that they use data in the classrooms connected to both formal (i.e. Common Core standards-based tests, TerraNova) and informal assessments (i.e. observational notes, exit slips assessments) for groupings and lesson planning.
- According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, most parents strongly agree "that the school has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss [their] child" and all parents who responded to the survey agree "that the school has high expectations for [their] child."¹⁷
- According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, 88% of teachers agree that "order and discipline are maintained at the school" and 83% disagree with the statement that "at my school students are often harassed or bullied in school."¹⁸

¹⁷ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 58% of parent respondents strongly agree that Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss their child; another 41% agree with the statement. Similarly, 64% of parent respondents strongly agree that Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School has high expectations for their child; another 36% agree with the statement.

¹⁸ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 47% of teacher respondents strongly agree that order and discipline are maintained at Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School; another 41% agree with the statement. Of teacher respondents, 18% marked that they strongly agree that students are often harassed or bullied in the school; 0% of teacher respondents marked 'agree' to the statement.

Essential Question 2: Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has partially developed its governance structure and organizational design.

On May 19, 2014 as part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE met with a representation of the school's Board of Trustees independent of the school leadership team. Based on document review and observation, the following was noted:

- The Board currently has 10 active members. This level of membership is consistent with the levels established in the Board's bylaws: a minimum of seven members and maximum of 15 members.
- The Board's President/Board Chair, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, specified positions in the bylaws, are currently filled with no vacancies.
- The Board has consistently achieved quorum, as recorded in meeting minutes across 19 Board meetings reviewed.
- The Board has been inconsistent with reporting requirements. Required documentation for Board member resignations and additions were not submitted on schedule.
- The Principal, Dr. Lillian Hamer, and the CEO, Dr. Calvin Rice, update the Board on academic progress/operations/financial standing at the school, on a monthly basis, as recorded in meeting minutes across 19 Board meetings reviewed.
- There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school's organization chart and school leadership's monthly updates on academic, financial and operational performance to the Board and its committees, as recorded in Board meeting minutes.
- The Board's bylaws reference the following committees: Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Development Committee, Academic Accountability Committee, and Governance Committee. The meeting minutes indicate that the Executive and Finance committees are active, but that the Development, Academic Accountability and Governance committees are not active.
- The school's founder Dr. Calvin Rice is a non-voting member of the school's Board and is currently serving as Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Lillian Hamer served on the board since its inception and is currently the Board Chair. The elementary school leader is Dr. Lena Richardson, who has been at the school for five years, since the school's inception.

School Climate & Community Engagement

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture.

- To date, the school has yet to meet its charter goal of having an annual average student attendance rate of at least 95%. Average daily attendance for students over the four year charter period is 94.9% according to data in the table below.¹⁹ The school did meet this goal in two of the four full years of operation during the charter term.

¹⁹ The table reflects school self-reported attendance data for school years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 and attendance data taken from the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) database for school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Please note that the school self-reported different attendance rates than those recorded in ATS for the last two years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. The school self-reported attendance rates of 95.3% and 95.8% for school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, respectively.

Average Attendance

Elementary School Attendance				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School *	94.5%	95.3%	95.2%	94.5%
NYC **	93.2%	93.9%	93.6%	93.2%
Difference from NYC	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.3

* Attendance was self-reported by the school for school years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012. For school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 attendance was taken from ATS.

** NYC attendance figures reflect average attendance across all general education district schools as reflected in ATS.

- Staff turnover has not been consistent over the charter term but has generally improved over time. In year one, year two, and year three of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013), 60%, 11%, and 21% of instructional staff did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year. However, for the most recent period, staff turnover was only 6%.²⁰
- Student mobility is presented below for the charter term without comparison to other schools, the CSD or NYC as final student retention goals were not established by the New York State Education Department for the retrospective charter term. Based on the NYC DOE's evaluation and not in comparison to any other school, the CSD or NYC averages, the school has not had challenges with retaining students.

Mobility

Student Mobility out of Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School *				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Number of Students who Left the School	11	11	20	16
Percent of Students who Left the School	15.5%	10.3%	14.1%	9.5%

* Figures are based on student enrollment as of October 31 for each respective school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012. Students in terminal grades are not included.

- The NYC DOE has made changes to the NYC School Survey during the entirety of the retrospective charter term. Questions asked have been altered, added or deleted from year to year. Also, beginning with the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, survey categories are no longer measured in total points out of 10 possible points. To allow for consistency during the evaluated charter term, selected questions, consistent with the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, were identified as relevant for charter schools. These are presented below for the duration of the retrospective charter term. In the most recent year of survey results, 2013-2014, the percentage of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for all selected questions; the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for two of three selected questions.
- NYC School Survey Response Rates should be comparable over time, however, as the measurement of these has remained consistent. Response rates for parents, teachers and students (if participating) are presented below for each year of the charter term. In general for each year of the charter term, the response rates for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School parents and teachers are above NYC averages (with the exception of the teacher response rate in the first year of operation for the school).

²⁰ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form in November 2014

NYC School Survey Results

Percent of Respondents that Agree or Strongly Agree						
Survey Question		Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School				Citywide Average
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014
Students*	Most of my teachers make me excited about learning.**	-	-	-	-	-
	Most students at my school treat each other with respect.	-	-	-	-	-
	I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, cafeteria, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Parents	I feel satisfied with the education my child has received this year.	91%	92%	95%	98%	95%
	My child's school makes it easy for parents to attend meetings.	86%	91%	87%	94%	94%
	I feel satisfied with the response I get when I contact my child's school.	88%	95%	94%	96%	95%
Teachers	Order and discipline are maintained at my school.	100%	100%	92%	88%	80%
	The principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school.	66%	100%	100%	100%	88%
	School leaders place a high priority on the quality of teaching.	100%	100%	100%	100%	92%
	I would recommend my school to parents.***	-	100%	100%	89%	81%

* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

** This question was phrased as "My teachers inspire me to learn" in the 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 School Surveys.

*** This question was not introduced until the 2011-2012 School Survey.

NYC School Survey Results

Response Rates					
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students*	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	-	-	-	-
	NYC	-	-	-	-
Parents	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	68%	88%	93%	96%
	NYC	52%	53%	54%	53%
Teachers	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	30%	88%	100%	100%
	NYC	82%	81%	83%	81%

* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

- The school's charter goals include, "parents will express satisfaction with the school's program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect." The school met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

- The school's charter goals include, "staff will express satisfaction with school leadership and professional development opportunities as determined by the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect." The school met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

As part of the renewal process, representatives for the NYC DOE have collected evidence relevant to the school's climate and community engagement over the school's charter term. Based on discussion, document collection and review, and observation, the following was noted:

- An internal survey performed by the school during the 2013-2014 school year indicated that 96% of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their child's education.
- The NYC DOE conducted a public renewal hearing on September 4, 2014 at Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School located at 122-05 Smith Street, Queens, NY, 11434 in an effort to elicit public comments. Approximately 16 participants attended the hearing with 16 persons speaking in support of the school's renewal and zero speaking in opposition.
- The NYC DOE made randomized phone calls to parents/guardians from a roster provided by the school for students of all grades. Calls to parents/guardians were made during November 2014 until 20 phone calls were completed. Of these calls, 95% provided positive feedback regarding the school.

Financial Health

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations.

- Based on the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) financial audit, the school's current ratio of 4.61 indicated a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school had sufficient cash to cover its operating expenses with 132 days of unrestricted cash on hand allowing for at least two months of operating expenses without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2014-2015 budget to the actual enrollment as of September 30, 2014 revealed that the school had met its enrollment target, supporting its projected revenue.
- As of the FY14 financial audit, the school had met its debt obligations.

Financial Sustainability

Overall, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

- Based on the financial audits from FY12 to FY14, the school generated an aggregate surplus over these audited fiscal years, and in FY14 the school operated at a surplus.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio of 0.13 indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.
- Based on the financial audits from FY12 through FY14, the school generated overall positive cash flow from FY12 to FY14, and the school had positive cash flow in each measurable year.

There was no material weakness noted in the three independent financial audits for FYs 12-14.

Essential Question 3: Is the School Compliant with its Charter and All Applicable Law and Regulations?

As of the review in November 2014, the Board of Trustees for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is in compliance with:

- **Membership size.** Over the charter term, the Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of seven and maximum of 15 members.
- **Posting of minutes and agendas.** The Board has consistently made all board minutes and agendas available upon request to the public prior to or at Board meetings by posting the minutes on Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School's website.
- **Timely submission of documents.** The Board did consistently submit the school's Annual Reports to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term. The school has posted to its website its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law.

As of the review in November 2014, the Board of Trustees for Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School is out of compliance with:

- **Required number of monthly meetings.** The school's bylaws indicate that the Board is to hold six meetings a year. In all years of the charter term, the Board held the required number of monthly meetings per the bylaws, as evidenced by the Board Yearly Meeting Schedule and the posted meeting minutes. Required meetings are those which meet quorum. The current Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months, per year. The Board has not submitted revised bylaws to comply with this law and has been out of compliance since the 2010-2011 school year. Beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, the Board has not held the number of board meetings required by the Charter Schools Act. The Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year.
- **Notification of Board Member Resignations/Submission of New Board Members for Approval.** The board has not consistently submitted board resignation notices or new board member credentials within the required five days of change to OSDCP for review and, if necessary, approval. During the charter term, documents were not submitted per the required timeframe for one board member change.

As of the review in November 2014, the charter school is in compliance with:

- **Application and Lottery.** For the 2014-2015 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 10, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1. Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently adhere to this requirement.
- **Fingerprint clearance.** All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- **Teacher certification.** The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30% of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.
- **Safety Documents.** The school has submitted its required safety plan. The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- **Immunization.** The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- **Insurance.** The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.
- **Fire Emergency.** One or more of the school leaders were trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

- **Timely Submission of Invoicing and Reconciliation Documents.** Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.

As of the review in November 2014, the charter school is out of compliance with:

- **Student Discipline Plan.** The school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year. This policy was determined to be out of compliance with federal law because the due process policy is not clearly outlined, and the policy does not include disciplinary measures for students with disabilities.

Enrollment and Retention Targets

- 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.
 - As of November 1, 2014, charter school enrollment and retention targets as required by the NYS Charter Schools Act are still in a *proposed* status. The information presented below for enrollment is compared to NYC CSD and NYC averages, however, these averages should not be assumed to be similar to the final enrollment targets to be released by NYSED.²¹
- In school year 2013-2014, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School:
 - served a lower percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch compared to both the CSD 28 and citywide averages;
 - served a higher percentage of students with disabilities compared to the CSD 28 percentage and a similar percentage to the citywide average; and
 - served a lower percentage of English Language Learner students compared to both the CSD 28 and the citywide averages.

²¹ Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

Enrollment of Special Populations²²

Special Population		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 State Enrollment Target (Proposed)
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	70.4%	77.6%	79.6%	72.4%	77.8%
	CSD 27	83.0%	-	-	-	
	CSD 28	-	75.8%	76.4%	76.5%	
	NYC	80.7%	83.3%	82.6%	82.4%	
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	8.5%	10.3%	13.4%	19.3%	12.0%
	CSD 27	12.8%	-	-	-	
	CSD 28	-	12.0%	12.7%	15.3%	
	NYC	14.5%	15.2%	16.7%	19.3%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	14.5%
	CSD 27	13.5%	-	-	-	
	CSD 28	-	15.1%	14.5%	13.8%	
	NYC	20.2%	18.8%	17.7%	16.6%	

Additional Enrollment Information				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4
CSD(s)	27	28	28	28

²² Comparisons of a charter school's special populations to the CSD and City are made relative only to the grades served by the school. For example, if a charter school serves grades kindergarten through five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to grades kindergarten through five in the CSD and citywide. CSD comparisons are particular to the grades served in each CSD each year. Enrollment rates reflect demographic characteristics as of June 1 and enrollment as of October 31 for each given school year, with the exception of enrollment in the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

State enrollment targets were generated by a calculator developed by the State Education Department (SED). Once a school's CSD, total enrollment and grade span are entered, the calculator generates a school-specific enrollment target. The CSD for a multi-district school is the primary CSD as determined by each school. The enrollment is determined by the total number of students enrolled as of October 31, 2013. Any school with an unusual grade configuration (i.e. K, 6-9) should use an available grade configuration provided by SED that is most aligned as determined by the NYC DOE, otherwise a school's actual grade span is used. For more information regarding SED's methodology behind the calculation of charter school enrollment and retention targets, please refer to the memo at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/July2012/712brca11.pdf>.

Essential Question 4: What are the School's Plans for the Next Charter Term?

As part of its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School applied to expand to serve students in grades six through eight and increase its authorized enrollment from 244 students in grades kindergarten through five to 675 students in grades kindergarten through eight in its next charter term to meet high community demand. The application noted that, Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School plans to secure a new facility to house the entire student body in grades kindergarten through eight at its increased enrollment of 675 students. The Board of Trustees hired a CEO in July 2013 with the expectation that the CEO's primary duties will center on strategic planning for the new facility. The CEO will oversee the project as well as any associated planning, negotiations, and budget forecasting. The CEO will collaborate with the Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School Principal to develop plans that meet the instructional needs of the program. The Board's fundraising and finance committees have directed special focus to investigating the options available and planning for this expansion.

Based on the evidence presented in this report and the school partially demonstrating academic achievement and progress, the NYC DOE recommends that the school increase its authorized enrollment to 420 students in grades kindergarten through five, but not expand to serve middle school grades. If the academic condition placed on the school is met during the charter term, the school may apply to expand to serve middle school grades.

Part 5: Background on the Charter Renewal Process

Renewal Process

In the final year of its charter, a NYC DOE Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during the current charter term and establish goals and objectives for the next charter term. Ultimately, the renewal process offers an opportunity for the school community to reflect on its experiences during its prior term, to make a compelling, evidence-based case that it has earned the privilege of an additional charter term, and, if renewed, to carry out an ambitious plan for the future.

The NYC DOE does not automatically grant charter renewal, and no charter operator is entitled to renewal. Rather, a school must prove that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City public school students. To make such determinations, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) renewal team performs a comprehensive review of the school's academic, operational and fiscal performance over the course of the charter which includes an analysis of the school's renewal application. This application is built around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and includes a retrospective analysis of the school's prior track record as well as a prospective plan for the school. In reviewing this information, a school must be able to demonstrate that it can satisfy the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

The school presents evidence to support their application for renewal by providing a compelling response to these overarching questions that demonstrates its students have made significant academic progress, is serving students equitably, has sustainable operations to be successful in the next charter term, and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its current charter. In addition, the school will describe challenges it has faced during its charter term, the strategies that were used to address those challenges and the lessons learned.

While the academic performance of students is the foremost determining factor of a school's success, a school's ability to demonstrate an effective educational program, a financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are also important factors that inform a renewal decision. For more information on how OSDCP makes renewal recommendations to the Chancellor, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework overview in Part 6 of this report.

Statutory Basis for Renewal

The New York State Charter Schools Act ("the Act") authorizes the creation of a system of charter schools to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently of existing schools and school districts in order to accomplish the following objectives:

§2850:

- (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.

When granted, a charter is valid for up to five years. For a school chartered under the Act to operate beyond the initial charter term, the school must seek and obtain renewal of its charter.²³

The Act states the following regarding the renewal of a school's charter:

§2851.4:

Charters may be renewed, upon application, for a term of up to five years in accordance with the provisions of this article for the issuance of such charters pursuant to section twenty-eight hundred fifty-two of this article; provided, however, that a renewal application shall [also] include:

- (a) A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in the charter.
- (b) A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private. Such statement shall be in a form prescribed by the board of regents.
- (c) Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school required by subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-seven of this article, including the charter school report cards and the certified financial statements.
- (d) Indications of parent and student satisfaction.
- (e) The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable, of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal. When developing such targets, the board of regents and the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall ensure (1) that such enrollment targets are comparable to the enrollment figures of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the charter school is located; and (2) that such retention targets are comparable to the rate of retention of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the proposed charter school would be located.

Such renewal application shall be submitted to the charter entity no later than six months prior to the expiration of the charter; provided, however, that the charter entity may waive such deadline for good cause shown.

The determination of whether to approve a renewal application rests in the sole discretion of a charter school's authorizer.

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.²⁴ As one such charter entity, the New York City Department of Education ("NYC DOE") institutes a renewal application process that adheres to the Act's renewal standards:

- A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in its charter;

²³ See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

²⁴ See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

- A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private;
- Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school including the charter school report cards and certified financial statements;
- Indications of parent and student satisfaction; and
- The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal.²⁵

Where the NYC DOE approves a renewal application, it is required under the Act to submit the application and a proposed charter to the Board of Regents for its review and approval.²⁶

²⁵ § 2851(4)(e) added with the 2010 amendments to the Act.

²⁶ See § 2852(5).

Part 6: NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) team may recommend to the Chancellor three potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal (with or without conditions), short-term renewal (with or without conditions), or non-renewal.

After the OSDCP renewal site visit, the OSDCP team incorporates its findings from the visit into this renewal report. The evidence and findings align to the four essential questions of our accountability framework and may include classroom observations, leadership interviews, assessment results, School Survey results, public hearings and other community feedback, as well as a variety of other data. Schools will be given the opportunity to correct factual errors in this report. If the OSDCP renewal team determines that renewal is not warranted, the school will be informed in writing of the reasons for the non-renewal. If OSDCP approves the renewal application and the Chancellor recommends renewal for the school, prior to the school's charter expiration date, OSDCP will send the renewal report and recommendation along with the school's renewal application and other supporting evidence to the Board of Regents for its approval.

Full-Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school has demonstrated exceptional results with its students, a five-year renewal will be granted. A school must show that its program has clearly and consistently demonstrated high academic attainment and/or consistent and significant student academic progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has demonstrated operational viability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

Short Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has two years or fewer of state-assessment results, or where any school has demonstrated mixed academic results or has uncertain organizational or financial viability, a short-term renewal with or without conditions may be considered.

Non-Renewal

Renewal is not automatic. Schools that have not demonstrated significant progress or high levels of student achievement and/or are in violation of their charter will not be renewed.

Grade Expansions or Enrollment Changes

A school may seek material charter revisions as part of the renewal process. In the case of a grade expansion or change in authorized enrollment, these material charter revisions are considered separately from the charter renewal. Charter renewal, with or without conditions, is not a guarantee of approval for a proposed material charter revision.

The NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

To help Chancellor-authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the OSDCP team has developed an Accountability Framework built around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of factors (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. These factors include academic, fiscal, operational and environmental indicators of a charter school's performance. Additionally, some of the indicators we evaluate relate to expected performance as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act including evidence of improved student learning and achievement, special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, use of different and innovative teaching methods, parent and student satisfaction, and enrollment and retention of special student populations. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided beginning on page 17 of the NYC DOE Chancellor-Authorized Schools Accountability Handbook for 2014-15.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what OSDCP looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions, and the duration of the charter term recommended by NYC DOE. As schools use the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so the schools are high-quality choices for families. This reminder should help a school apply this framework to its own performance analysis, underscoring the state and city's commitment to superior academic performance as the most important factor in a school's performance, while also recognizing the importance of closing the achievement gap and offering high-quality learning opportunities for all students.

1. Is the School an Academic Success?

1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

Schools that are academic successes have many of the characteristics below:

- Meet absolute performance goals established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- Meet other rigorous academic goals as stated on school charter
- Demonstrate increasing student achievement/growth
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing academic performance measures of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing academic performance measures compared with district/city proficiency averages

Evidence for success might include, but not be limited to, the following depending on school configurations:

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- Grades 8-12 College Readiness Credit Accumulation
- Percentage of Students Applying to and Being Admitted to College
- Percentage of Students Taking AP Courses and/or Percentage of Students Passing AP Courses
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic Goals
- School-reported internal assessments
- NYC DOE Progress Reports or School Quality Reports²⁷

1b. Instructionally Sound and Responsive Education Program

Schools with successful education programs have many of the characteristics below:

- Are self-reflective and examine practice based on outcomes against goals
- Have well-thought out curricular programs that are aligned with NYS learning outcomes as described by state and Common Core Learning Standards
- Use instructional models and resources that are consistent with school mission and flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Utilizes a coherent and effective interim assessment system (e.g., use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data) for monitoring progress, predicting performance, and adjusting instruction
- Have an effective process for supporting improved classroom instruction, including frequent observation and feedback
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Use a defined process for evaluating and supporting curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

²⁷ Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-2013 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

Evidence for successful education programs, in addition to positive results, may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- Instructional planning documents (alignments, scope and sequences, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans, etc.)
- Instructional leader and staff interviews
- Special Education/ELL progress monitoring documentation
- Professional development plans and resources
- Student/teacher schedules
- Student Intervention / Response to Intervention program description and resources
- Interim assessment results
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation

1c. Learning Environment

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Provide a safe, respectful, and stable academic environment conducive to student learning (one with efficient transitions and safe hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.)
- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best effort academically and to actively engage in their own learning and the life of the school
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Have formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

Evidence for successful learning environments may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- NYC DOE School Survey results (students, parents and teachers)
- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Interviews with school leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, students
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)
- School calendar and class schedules

2. Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

2a. Mission and Goals

Schools with a successful mission and goals have many of the characteristics below:

- Have an animated mission statement and clearly articulated goals (both academic and non-academic) that staff, students and community embrace
- Demonstrate an active self-evaluation process that involves regular monitoring, an examination of practices based on outcomes against goals, and reporting on progress towards school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

Evidence for a successful mission and goals might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Mission Statement
- School charter and external documents (student/family handbooks, school website, etc.)
- Annual Reports, school improvement plans, leadership/Board reports
- Board agendas and minutes
- Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction surveys
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs
- Stakeholder interviews (board, parents, staff, students, etc.)

2b. Leadership and Governance Structure

Schools with successful leadership and governance structures have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly, but not limited to, Open-Meeting Law and conflict of interest laws, and is fully compliant with its Board approved by-laws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)
- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provides regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

Evidence for school governance and organizational design may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, calendar of meetings, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Board resources for evaluating school leadership and staff, including rubric/performance metrics
- Board resources for self-reflection and professional growth
- Board development plan
- Board interviews
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook and core operational policies
- School calendar
- Professional development plans
- Stakeholder interviews (board, school leadership and staff)

2c. School Climate and Community Engagement

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student-centered, and open to parents and community support
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the NYC DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships that support and advocate for the school
- Engage families actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Share instructional and operational practices with the larger NYC school community and actively seek opportunities for partnering and collaboration
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives

Evidence for school climate and community engagement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- NYC DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs
- Participation in NYC DOE initiatives and efforts to collaborate/partner with other NYC schools
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- School Professional Development Plan and staff feedback on professional development events
- Resources for evaluations and observations, scheduled opportunities for professional collaboration, staff feedback on professional development events
- Student/Family and Staff Handbooks

2d. Operational Health

Schools that are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Demonstrate efficient and orderly daily operations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage and insurance and facility documents
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, supporting, and evaluating school leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets as established by SED (applicable to schools renewed after 2010)
- Communications with NYC DOE are timely, comprehensive, and appropriate
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees

Evidence of an operationally viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational organizational chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan
- Immunization completion rate information
- Appropriate AED/CPR certifications

2e. Financial Sustainability

Schools that are responsible stewards of public funds and are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, at school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Consistently clean financial audits and compliant escrow accounts
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school's design and academic program
- School leadership and Board maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- School leadership and Board oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Demonstrate financial planning for future school years, including per-pupil and space-related cost projections

Evidence for a financially sound, viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Financial audits, escrow accounts and other fiscal reporting documents
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships

3. Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with the school's charter and charter agreement have the characteristics below:

- Implement the key features of their charter as described in the original charter and, if appropriate, as modified in approved revisions to their charter, including but not limited to mission, academic program, school organization, grade configuration, enrollment, goals, etc.
- Ensure that up-to-date charter is available on request to staff, parents, and school community
- Implement comprehensive academic, behavioral, oversight, management, and operational policies and procedures that are substantially aligned with the charter and the school's stated mission and vision

Evidence for a school's compliance with the terms of its charter and charter agreement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Annual Comprehensive Review reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/Board and staff interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have the characteristics below:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, ELL and Special Education students to those of their community school district of location²⁸ or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention
- Implement school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage enrollment process and annual waiting lists with integrity
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and meet all certification requirements

Evidence for compliance with applicable federal and state law may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School reporting documents
- School's NYSED Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student/Family Handbook
- Student discipline policy and records
- Parent complaint/grievance records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Demographic data (school, district, and other as appropriate)
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

²⁸ School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from the NY State Education Department. This requirement of the New York State Charter Schools Act applies to schools renewed after 2010.

3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have the characteristics below:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and complete all other financial reporting as required
- Boards that meet requirements for size, meeting frequency, public notice, applicable open-meeting and conflict of interest regulations, as well as comply with NYC DOE OSDCP's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members
- Inform NYC DOE OSDCP, and where required, receive OSDCP approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

Evidence for compliance with applicable regulations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School or building safety plan; appropriate inspection documents
- Annual audits, escrow accounts, other financial reporting documents
- Board roster, calendar, agenda and minutes, conflict of interest documents, notification of changes/approval of new member request documents
- Charter revision requests
- Revised or new contracts
- Parent association calendar of meetings, identified officers, parent association agenda and minutes, parent satisfaction survey results
- Stakeholder interviews

4. What Are the School's Plans for its Next Charter Term?

4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

In anticipation of a new charter term, a school may consider various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment, or alteration of its model in some significant way. Successful schools generally have processes for:

- Conducting needs/opportunity assessments
- Forming Board and leadership committees or subcommittees to investigate options, develop action plans, ensure capacity and resources are aligned, etc.
- Engaging school community in articulating charter revisions (or a new charter in cases of replication) to determine community needs and to communicate regarding the school's proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

Evidence for likely success in planning for school growth in a new charter term may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Charter revision or merger applications
- Leadership and Board interviews

4b. Organizational Sustainability

Successful schools consistently perform despite change. While there is no single path for ensuring sustainability, successful schools often have the following features:

- School anticipates organizational opportunities/needs and plans for resource development (for example, human resource policies for growing your own talent, or fundraising or budget management to take care of anticipated capital needs and to mitigate risks for the unexpected, or board development to bring new talent or specific needs-based expertise to the school)
- School develops contingency plans especially for facilities or financial scenarios

Evidence for organizational sustainability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Charter renewal application
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organizational chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

4c. School or Model Improvements

Successful schools are thoughtful about the continued appropriateness of school design features and elements of their models. They:

- Review performance carefully and even without major changes through expansion or replication, are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission

Evidence for successful improvements to a school's program or model may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with partners or important vendors

Appendix A: School Performance Data

Students scoring at or above Level 3

Grade-Level Proficiency in English Language Arts					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School					
Grade 3	-	-	-	30.3%	18.2%
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	25.0%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 28 *					
Grade 3	-	-	-	-2.0	-14.5
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	-10.9
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC					
Grade 3	-	-	-	2.2	-11.7
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	-6.1

Grade-Level Proficiency in Mathematics					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School					
Grade 3	-	-	-	24.2%	21.2%
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	22.6%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 28 *					
Grade 3	-	-	-	-12.8	-21.0
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	-24.2
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC					
Grade 3	-	-	-	-8.9	-17.4
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	-17.4

* CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

Appendix B: Additional Accountability Data

NYC DOE Accountability Reports

[Annual Site Visit Report July 2011](#)

[Annual Site Visit Report April 2012](#)

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2012-2013](#)