



Charter School Renewal Report  
Charter Accountability and Support  
2012-2013

**VOICE CHARTER SCHOOL OF NEW YORK  
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2012-13 SCHOOL YEAR**

# Part 1: Executive Summary

## **School Overview and History:**

VOICE Charter School is an elementary school currently serving approximately 440 students in Kindergarten through grade 5.<sup>1</sup> The school is under the terms of its first charter and has expanded to K-5 during its current term, which expires in January of 2013. If approved for renewal, the school is projected to reach its full grade span, K-8, during the 2015-2016 school year. The school currently is split between two locations. Lower Academy, Grades K–2, is housed in a Department of Education (DOE) facility in District 30, co-located with P.S. 111 Jacob Blackwell. VOICE Upper Academy, Grades 3-5, is located at 36-14 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Long Island City, NY 11106.<sup>2</sup>

VOICE is an independent charter school not associated with a charter management organization (CMO). The school earned a B on the 2011- 2012 Progress Report, scoring in the 49<sup>th</sup> percentile of its peers.<sup>3</sup> The school scored Average on the Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety & Respect sections of the NYC DOE School Survey in 2011-2012, greater than citywide averages. Sixty-seven percent of the school’s parents responded to the survey, and 58% of the school’s teachers.<sup>4</sup>

The student body is compromised of 77.6 free-and-reduced lunch (FRL) students, compared to 63% in the district; 13.4% special education students (SPED), compared to 12.6% in the district; and 21% English language learners (ELL), compared to 20% in the district.<sup>5</sup>

	2011-12 PR overall grade	2012 ELA, 3+%	2012 Math, 3+%	FRL %	SWD %	ELL %
School <sup>6</sup>	B	56.5	65.7	77.6	13.4	21
CSD 30 <sup>7</sup>		54.2	67.6	63	12.6	20

## **Renewal Recommendation:**

In order for a charter school to be renewed it must demonstrate that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City students.

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

<sup>1</sup> ATS data pull 11/20/12.

<sup>2</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

<sup>3</sup> NYC DOE Progress Report – [www.schools.nyc.gov/progressreport](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/progressreport)

<sup>4</sup> NYC DOE School Survey – [www.schools.nyc.gov/survey](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/survey)

<sup>5</sup> School demographics from ATS 11/20/12. CSD demographics from ATS 11/26/12.

<sup>6</sup> Proficiency rates from <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>. Demographics from ATS 11/20/12.

<sup>7</sup> CSD ELA and Math data from NYC DOE website and measures average performance of common grades only. Demographics from ATS 11/26/12 data pull.

financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are important factors that inform a renewal decision.

Based on the evaluation of the renewal application, renewal visit, historical annual reports and visits, performance on Progress Reports, comparisons to the CSD, and other factors, the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools Accountability & Support team (NYC DOE CSAS) recommends a **Full-Term Renewal** of the charter for VOICE Charter School.

## Part 2: Renewal Decision and Findings

### **Renewal Framework:**

The New York State Charter Schools Act (“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. 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.
  - (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.

The Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) team may recommend four potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal, renewal with conditions, short-term renewal, or non-renewal.

***Full-Term Renewal***

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 yielded strong student performance and progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

***Renewal with Conditions***

In cases where a school has demonstrated mixed academic results or concerns about organizational viability, renewal is contingent upon changes to the prospective application or new charter, new performance measures, or both. These may include changes to curriculum, leadership, or board governance structure that are intended to yield improved academic outcomes during the next chartering period.

***Short-Term Renewal***

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has fewer than two years of state-assessment results, a renewal of three-years or fewer may be considered. In very limited circumstances, a school not in its initial charter or in its initial charter with more than three years of state assessment data, may be considered for a short-term renewal *if* the school's most recent year results are good (for example, an A or B on the NYC DOE Progress Report) while the previous year's results may have been poor (D or F).

***Non-Renewal***

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.

**NYC DOE CSAS Renewal Recommendation:**

Based on the evaluation of the renewal application, renewal visit, historical annual reports and visits, performance on Progress Reports, comparisons to the CSD, and other factors, the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools Accountability & Support team (NYC DOE CSAS) recommends a **Full-Term Renewal** of the charter for VOICE Charter School for reasons that include the following:

1. The first listed objective of charter schools, in accordance with the NY Charter Schools Act of 1998, is to improve student learning and achievement (Education Law Section 2850(2)(a)).

VOICE has demonstrated student progress and achievement for the following reasons:

- i. Achieving a B overall grade on the 2010-11 and 11-12 Progress Reports.
- ii. Scoring a C on Student Progress in 2011-12, indicating average performance improvement versus that of peer schools.<sup>8</sup> The School performed roughly the same as the district in both ELA and Math.
- iii. The school has made some progress towards meeting its academic goals.

2. In accordance with Education Law Section 2852(2)(b), a charter applicant must demonstrate the ability to operate the school in a educationally and fiscally sound manner.

VOICE has proven to be an effective and viable organization:

- i. The school is operating with a budget surplus and is financially and fiscally sound.
- ii. The roles on the school's operations team are clearly defined and the staff has ably managed operating the school in multiple buildings.
- iii. VOICE Charter School has established a school climate that is conducive to learning, evidenced by scoring an A each year on the School Environment section of the Progress Report.<sup>9</sup>
- iv. The school has made some progress towards meeting its operational goals.

3. In accordance with Education Law Section 2853(1)(f), the board of trustees of the charter school shall have final authority for policy and operational decisions of the school.

The board of VOICE has proven to be effective for the following reasons:

- i. The school has number of committees, including culture, social and community committees, some of which include parents. Grade team leaders are on all committees to facilitate communication among stakeholders.
- ii. The school uses a variety of strategies to involve parents, including newsletters, workshops, social events, parent association meetings, and home visits.
- iii. Academic goals with clear, measurable targets are evident throughout the school.
- iv. The school has developed interim assessments using a variety of resources and is in the process of aligning them to Common Core standards and evolving state tests.
- v. VOICE has a comprehensive professional development program.

---

<sup>8</sup> 2011-12 Progress Report.

<sup>9</sup> 2010-11 and 11-12 Progress Reports.

4. In accordance with Education Law Section 2855(1)(b) and Education Law Section 2855(1)(c), a charter may be terminated or revoked in the event of serious violations of law, and/or material and substantial violations of the charter.

VOICE has been in compliance with its charter and applicable laws and regulations.

5. As defined by Part 4 of the NYC DOE CSAS Accountability Framework, a school is to be assessed on its plan for its next charter term.

VOICE has demonstrated viable plans for its next term for the following reasons:

- i. VOICE will begin a middle school program in the 2013-2014 school year, beginning with grade six, eventually serving K-8.
- ii. The school's Board of Trustees' has divided the planning duties for the middle school program into three committees: Future Task Force, Instrument Committee and Admissions Task Force.
- iii. VOICE has planned to hire staff with specialized expertise that will prepare students for competitive high schools, such as a middle school guidance counselor and teachers with high school experience.
- iv. The school has plans to vertically align their elementary and middle school programs by nurturing leaders and promoting from within the existing faculty. An existing teacher is planned to join the Emerging Leaders Fellowship program run through the NYC Charter Center, eventually becoming the middle school curriculum specialist.
- v. VOICE will make enhancements to their teacher evaluation system by implementing a more detailed system. Teachers have created an evaluation rubric for both teacher assistants and teachers.
- vi. The school plans on individualizing professional development procedures so that each teacher can use a rubric to identify three major areas for improvement and guide their professional development. Rubrics will help guide what kind of professional development opportunities will be offered to VOICE teachers beginning 2012-2013 school year.

### Part 3: Charter School Goals

VOICE Charter School has sufficiently met the goals set forth in its charter agreement. Please see the table of Charter Goals.

Please note that information in this section is provided by the school, and may vary from data reported by the NYC DOE because, among other reasons, the NYC DOE reports on all students, while certain school goals may only apply to students falling under a given criteria. All data errors, discrepancies, or omissions in this section are not the responsibility of the NYC DOE.



VOICE Charter School - Charter Goals

Goals

First Year  
2008-2009

Second Year  
2009-2010

Third Year  
2010-2011

Fourth Year  
2011-2012

GOAL 1: ELA Absolute Measure 1	Beginning in 2010-2011, 75 percent of all tested students in grades 3-8, who are enrolled at VOICE for two full academic years, will score at or above Level 3 on the New York State ELA examination.	N/A	N/A	Percent of all VOICE third graders enrolled at VOICE for two full academic years at Level 3 & 4: <b>57%</b>	Percent of all VOICE third and fourth graders enrolled at VOICE for two full academic years at Level 3 & 4: <b>57%</b>
				<b>Met? No</b>	Breakdown for students in at least their 2nd year at VOICE:
				<b>Explanation of Result:</b> VOICE believes that scores were affected by the newness of many of our teachers. We acknowledge that instructional practices strengthen over time. Therefore, all teachers were provided intense PD, delivered by experienced teachers, in the summer of 2011. We also identified room for growth in our intervention program and test preparation process.	Grade 3: 47% at Level 3 or 4 Grade 4: 70% at Level 3 or 4
					<b>Met? No</b> <b>Explanation of Result:</b> (1) Our third grade had a higher number of students with IEPs than the fourth grade. Our third grade teachers had less experience than our fourth grade teachers and in our next charter term we plan to provide increased professional development to support inexperienced teachers. We will also continue our efforts to pair inexperienced teachers with experienced teachers. (2) To improve VOICE's ELA program in our next charter term, we plan to refine the mapping of our workshop model. In our year-end analysis of instruction our teachers came to the consensus that the workshop model was working, but not to its full potential. We are also revising writing assessment methods to allow for more "on demand" assessment. (3) VOICE is maintaining the Intervention Dept. comprised of an intervention specialist, as well as, classroom and special ed. teachers. The team uses the detailed analysis of the NYS test scores to target students in severe need of support. (4) We are examining our test preparation process more closely in an effort to create a more efficient and effective model. After an analysis of scores by teacher and grade, teachers whose students performed better were asked to share their best practices.
GOAL 1: ELA Absolute Measure 2	Beginning in 2010-2011, the school's aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State ELA exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set forth in the state's NCLB accountability system.	N/A	N/A	<b>NYSED did not release a Performance Index for 2010-11.</b>	VOICE's ELA PI for the 2011-12 school year is <b>149</b> . This exceeds the ELA AMO for 2011-12 of 148. <b>Met? Yes</b>
GOAL 1: ELA Comparative Measure 1	Beginning in 2010-2011, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in local school district #30.	N/A	N/A	57% of VOICE 3rd grade cohort scored 3 or 4 50% of Queens District #30 scored 3 or 4 <b>Met? Yes</b>	57% of VOICE 3rd grade cohort scored 3 or 4 54% of Queens District #30 scored 3 or 4 <b>Met? Yes</b>

GOAL 1: ELA Value-Added Measure 1	Beginning in 2008-2009, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between prior year NCE group average in reading (Terra Nova) and an NCE group average of 50. Only for 2008-09 will we be required to use fall 2008 baseline NCE scores. Future years will utilize spring-to-spring scores.	<b>Fall 2008 Grade 1</b>	<b>June 2009 Grade 1</b>	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Cohort</b>
		NCE= 30.7	NCE= 50.95	(1st in '10/2nd in '11)	(1st in '11/2nd in '12)
		Goal = +9.65	Goal = Improve	June 2010 NCE: 50.71	June 2011 NCE: 57.9
		<b>Spring 2009 Grade 1</b>	<b>May 2010 Grade 2</b>	June 2011 NCE: 52.84	June 2012 NCE: 56.4
		NCE = 46.6	NCE = 56.15		
		<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>
GOAL 1: ELA Value-Added Measure 2	Beginning in 2011-2012, each grade-level cohort 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. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	2011 NYS ELA Number Tested: 43
					2011 NYS ELA Number Proficient: 28 (65%)
					2012 NYS ELA Number Tested: 43
					Goal: Increase by 5%
					2012 NYS ELA Number Proficient: 30 (70%)
					<b>Met? Yes</b>
GOAL 2: Mathematics Absolute Measure 1	Beginning in 2010-2011, 75 percent of all tested students in grades 3-8, who are enrolled in at least their second year, will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Math examination.	N/A	N/A	Percent of all VOICE third graders enrolled in at least their second year at Level 3 & 4: <b>65%</b>	Percent of all VOICE third graders enrolled in at least their second year at Level 3 & 4: <b>66%</b>
				<b>Met? No</b>	<b>Met? No</b>
					<b>Explanation of Result:</b> The scores of the third and fourth grade combined did not meet our goal of 75% proficient. However, it should be noted that our 84% of our fourth graders in at least their second year at VOICE scored at or above Level 3 on the math exam, which exceeds our goal of 75%. Our third grade had a higher number of students with IEPs than the fourth grade. As well, our third grade teachers had less experience than our fourth grade teachers and we attribute some of the discrepancy in scores to this difference between instruction in the third and fourth grades. Upon examination of our math program after these test results, we discovered that the use of manipulatives was not consistent as it could have been. We are also working to balance our math approach approach so that teachers focus on teaching algebraic fundamentals rather than math strategies geared toward testing.
					<b>Explanation of Result:</b> Please refer to the ELA explanation for 2011.
GOAL 2: Mathematics Absolute Measure 3	Beginning in 2010-2011, the school's aggregate Performance Index (PI) on the State Math exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) accountability system.	N/A	N/A	<b>NYSED did not release a Performance Index for 2010-11.</b>	VOICE's math PI for the 2011-12 school year is <b>162</b> . This exceeds the math AMO for 2011-12 of 155.

GOAL 2: Mathematics Comparative Measure 1	Beginning in 2010-2011, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam will be greater than that of all students in the same tested grades in local school district #30.	N/A	N/A	63% of VOICE 3rd grade cohort scored 3 or 4	66% of VOICE 3rd grade cohort scored 3 or 4
				56% of Queens District #30 scored 3 or 4	67% of Queens District #30 scored 3 or 4
				Met? Yes	Met? No
					<b>Explanation of Result:</b> VOICE came within one percent of meeting this goal. It should be noted that 85% of VOICE's fourth graders scored at or above Level 3 on the NYS math exam. This percentage exceeds the fourth graders in district #30, of which 71.6% scored proficient on the NYS math exam.

GOAL 2: Mathematics Value-Added Measure 1	Beginning in 2008-2009, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between prior year NCE group average in Math (Terra Nova) and an NCE group average of 50.	<b>Fall 2008 Grade 1</b>	<b>June 2009 Grade 1</b>	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Cohort</b>
		NCE= 31.4	NCE= 47.67	(1st in '10/2nd in '11)	(1st in '11/2nd in '12)
		Goal = +8.3	Goal = +1.17	June 2010 NCE: 48.32	June 2011 NCE: 50.4
		<b>Spring 2009 Grade 1</b>	<b>May 2010 Grade 2</b>	June 2011 NCE: 51.46	June 2012 NCE: 51.6
		NCE = 43.4	NCE = 51.03		
		<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>	<b>Met? Yes</b>

GOAL 2: Mathematics	Beginning in 2011-2012, each grade-level cohort will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's exam and 75 percent at or above State Math exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, that cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.	N/A	N/A	N/A	2011 NYS Math Number Tested: 43
					2011 NYS Math Number Proficient: 33 (77%)
					Goal: Increase by 7%
					2012 NYS Math Number Tested: 43
					2012 NYS Math Number Proficient: 36 (84%)
					<b>Met? Yes</b>

GOAL 3: Science Absolute Measure 1	Beginning in 2011-2012 when our student enrollment reaches 4th grade, 75 percent of fourth grade students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Science examination.	N/A	N/A	N/A	NYS Science Scores have not been released as of this draft.
---	--	-----	-----	-----	---

GOAL 3: Science Comparative Measure 1	Beginning in 2011-2012 when our student enrollment reaches 4th grade, students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Science exam will be greater than that of fourth grade students in local school district #30.	N/A	N/A	N/A	NYS Science Scores have not been released as of this draft.
--	---	-----	-----	-----	---

Charter-Specific Goal	Each year, our School will be deemed "in good standing" by the state's accountability system.	VOICE deemed "in good standing."	VOICE deemed "in good standing."	VOICE deemed "in good standing."	Although the official NYS Report Card has not been released, the pre-AOR indicates VOICE Charter School is in good standing.
		Met? Yes	Met? Yes	Met? Yes	Met? Yes

## Part 4: Charter School Performance Data

The tables presents the percentage of students at the school scoring at or above grade level (performance level 3 or greater) on the New York State ELA and Math exams as well as a comparison to the percentage of students at or above grade level in District 30 and New York City.

### Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - Whole School<sup>10</sup>

<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York			57.4	56.5
CSD 30*			49.7	54.2
NYC*			48.1	50.7
<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York			64.8	65.7
CSD 30*			55.9	67.6
NYC*			54.8	61.4

### Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - By Grade

Grade 3

<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York			57.4	46.8
CSD 30			49.7	53.0
NYC			48.1	49.0
<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York			64.8	51.6
CSD 30			55.9	63.4
NYC			54.8	57.0

<sup>10</sup> All data from NYC DOE website.

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>.

\*CSD and City data represent the average performance of the same testing grades of the school.

Grade 4

<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York				69.6
CSD 30				55.4
NYC				52.4
<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
VOICE Charter School of New York				84.8
CSD 30				71.7
NYC				65.7

## Part 5: VOICE Charter School Renewal Visit



**Department of  
Education**

*Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor*

Charter School Renewal Visit Report  
Charter Schools Accountability and Support  
2012-2013

### **VOICE CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL VISIT REPORT**

**OCTOBER 2012**

## Part A: Executive Summary

### Renewal Review Process Overview:

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) team conducts renewal visits of charter schools authorized by the NYC DOE. The renewal visit is designed to address four questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization; is the school in compliance with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations; and what are the school's plans for its next charter term? The visits are conducted by representatives of CSAS and may also include the district superintendent and other DOE staff or consultants. The visits last the duration of two to three school days. The renewal visit begins with a meeting with the school leadership team. Afterward, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators, teachers, and students. They also review academic and operational documents. Additionally, reviewers meet with one or more of the school's Board representatives and speak to a sampling of the school's parents. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security. The renewal visit is intended to provide a snapshot of the school and reflects what was observed at the time of the visit.

The following experts participated in the review of this school on October 15 - 16, 2012:

- Sonya Hooks, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Andrea McLean, Director of Oversight, NYC DOE CSAS
- Keisha Womack, Director of Operations, NYC DOE CSAS
- Jaclyn Leffel, Deputy Director, NYC DOE CSO
- Simeon Stolzberg, Consultant to NYC DOE CSAS

## Part B: Renewal Visit Observations

### Areas of Strength

- VOICE Charter School has established a school climate that is conducive to learning.
  - On the day(s) of the visit, the school was safe, orderly and students were generally well-behaved and respectful in both classrooms and public spaces. Transitions between classes were calm and efficient with students walking politely in lines. Older students are provided with enhanced autonomy to encourage independence and maturity; for instance, they are allowed to move between classes without adult supervision.
  - Within classrooms most teachers utilized effective classroom management techniques. An emphasis on consistent procedures and routines was evident, which most students appear to have internalized. For example, teachers used a variety of clapping and counting routines to gain students' attention, and many teachers effectively employed hand signals to maintain quiet during independent work time. Transitions between activities were generally quick and orderly. Procedures were posted on classroom walls; for instance, one classroom had a poster that listed expectations for turn and talk.
  - The school has embraced the Love and Logic program, using a consultant and ongoing professional development to instill its principles and practices in staff. Students are expected to learn how to self-monitor and take breaks to prevent further escalation of problem behavior. Recovery spaces were evident in classrooms where student are expected to reflect before returning to work with their class.
  - The school uses a modified DOE discipline code, liking the levels that allow a range of responses and are sensitive to repeated violations. Incident reports are used to communicate between teachers and administration and monitor trends. Suspensions are conducted in school and the school reports having never expelled a student.
  - In the 2011-2012 year, the school implemented a Community Engagement Program (CEP) that allows all students to participate in community service.
  - Students participate in Mind Body Heart classes that are taught by the school's social workers and address social-emotional issues and school values.
  - The school uses a variety of strategies to involve parents. A newsletter is sent home regularly, there are designated classes where parents and volunteers read to students in class. The Love and Logic coach provides workshops for parents and social workers conduct home visits. Social events such as a carnival and parent conferences are reportedly very well attended and parent orientation was moved back to October to focus on the curriculum. The parent association has been active and helped to build a school playground; the co-chairs are on the school's board. In addition, the

school concerts are held in conjunction with parent association meetings. Furthermore, the principal conduct monthly coffees with parents. One parents said she enrolled her child because she was looking for a school with both a strong curriculum and values.

- The school is clearly focused on values and has produced videos and posters to teach them to students and families.
- The school has number of committees, including culture, social and community committees, some of which include parents. Grade team leaders are on all committees to facilitate communication among stakeholders.
- VOICE has an organized curriculum that is being aligned to Common Core standards and supports the school's mission.
  - Teachers develop scope and sequences and curriculum maps during the summer that establish teaching points for monthly units. Grade teams build collaborative lessons that are archived on a shared drive available to peers, intervention staff and administrators. Instructional leaders provide feedback and the school has a system for ongoing review and revision of its curriculum; faculty members are expected to annotate lessons after implementation for future use in revising the curriculum.
  - A focus on enhancing vocabulary was evident in classrooms observed. For example, some classrooms exhibited posters showing synonyms students could use instead of basic words; for instance, "said is dead" and "put said to bed" posters included long lists of more sophisticated alternative words. Many teachers also used subject-specific vocabulary in their lessons.
  - While all students experience the Foundations program through 2nd grade, the school also uses supplemental curriculum programs, such as Wilson Just Words and Basic Writing as well as double doses of Foundations, for intervention and remediation.
  - The school has remained true to its mission and is developing a unique music program "rooted in the traditional Kodály method, blended with a workshop model." Teachers are receiving ongoing training in this method and moving up levels as their expertise grows. The music curriculum is evolving and being aligned with other subjects, such as social studies. A music teacher noted communication with grade team teachers to support implementation of Common Core standards in areas such as pattern recognition and understanding rhythm in poetry.
  - The school has developed a Mind Body Heart curriculum based on a number of programs and is explicitly teaching values in some grades this year. Students use the case study method to problem solve.
  - The school is reportedly moving towards a more content focused middle school program and is planning to hire high school teachers interested in working with middle school students. While school leaders acknowledged that elementary teachers are less confident about content, they expect the

elementary program will come into alignment with the middle school curriculum.

- VOICE has a systematic approach to administering assessments and collecting and analyzing data.
  - The school administers a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments, including Terra Nova, DIBELS, Teachers College benchmark assessments for reading, and unit tests from the Math Connects program. The school has developed interim assessments using a variety of resources and is in the process of aligning them to Common Core standards and evolving state tests. In addition, on the day of the visit many teachers were observed conferencing with individual students and maintaining notes.
  - Academic goals with clear, measurable targets were evident throughout the school. Posted in hallways were specific goals for individual subjects and grade, including the intervention and the Mind Body Heart programs. The school expects students to sing with perfect pitch within two months and to site read and sing in two part harmony by 2nd grade.
  - The school has a system in place for collecting and analyzing assessment data. Scantron is used to collect data and spreadsheets are produced that facilitate item and error analysis as well as class comparisons. An assistant principal oversees the process and a data clerk was hired this year to support data entry and timely production of spreadsheets.
  - The school uses rubrics for evaluating student work and school leaders indicated an increased focus on norming their use. Genre specific rubrics were evident with student writing posted in the hallways and are reportedly used for peer review by students.
  - Regular data meetings are conducted using a protocol to identify topics students did not master. Re-teach days are built into the schedule and planned based on assessment data. Teachers also use the results to create strategy groups within their classes to provide targeted instruction. In addition, data teams look at patterns across classes and grades; for example, last year they noted students struggling with application of algorithms in story problems and piloted new units to address this topic.
  - The music faculty uses a variety of techniques to assess student achievement, including trimester performance tasks, solo tasks during class, and conferencing.
  
- VOICE has systems and resources in place to meet the needs of at-risk students.
  - The special services staff share individualized educational programs (IEPs) with staff, keeping copies in both buildings and at-a-glance versions in a lock box in each classroom.

- All but 5th grade have an integrated co-teaching (ICT) class and the school deploys assistant teachers to provide opportunities for targeted instruction and support within the classroom.
  - The school has formalized its special services department, which includes four intervention teachers and two leaders this year.
  - The school has put in place an intervention services (IS) process to identify struggling students. Using the response to intervention (RTI) model and a protocol based on case study, the IS team discusses students of concern, implements and monitors strategies, and evaluates progress over multiple cycles. Pupil intervention plans are devised for struggling students, including those who have been retained, and these plans are reviewed at monthly meetings.
  - The school is implementing Power My Learning, a computer-based intervention program that allows students to learn online at home as well as at school.
  - Along with report cards, the special services staff monitors student performance and provide reports of progress toward IEP goals. Beginning in November, staff meets three times per year with parents of students whose promotion is in doubt.
  - The school is seeking an ESL teacher and the primary responsibility for meeting the needs of ELL students is currently classroom teachers; intervention staff hope to develop a scope and sequence that identifies additional resources and teachers noted ELL support as an area for improvement. Strategy groups are used to target instructional support within and outside of the general education classroom and teachers are being trained in differentiation techniques and vocabulary development.
- VOICE has a comprehensive professional development program.
    - Professional development is coordinated by the Principal and Assistant Principals. A three week summer session for teachers provided opportunities for training and collaborative development of curriculum. Music teachers participate in a three week training at NYU.
    - The school makes extensive use of external consultants and coaches to support staff in implementation of programs and strategies. For example, one coach supports teachers with literacy and classroom management. A Love and Logic coach is on site almost weekly. A recruiter helps with induction of staff.
    - School leaders and coaches provide frequent informal observations and feedback. Review of observation documents found both specific “commendables” and actionable areas for improvement. Their focus included classroom management, teaching points, rigor, and tone. Teachers described regular meetings with instructional leaders who provide concrete suggestions and resources. They also noted examining student work samples together.

- The school administers a Myers-Briggs type test to assess teachers' styles and determine how best to provide effective professional development and facilitate collaborative learning.
  - School leaders are holding teachers accountable for student achievement. They described a system of intensive coaching, support and feedback for struggling teachers and said they are increasingly willing to terminate teachers mid-year. Observations and evaluations include specific expectations for improvement.
  - The school introduced individual professional development goals this year. Teachers each have a professional development binder that includes individual and team professional and personal goals. Reviewed binders included culture, curriculum and student achievement goals as well as self-reflection forms, peer mentoring templates based on a rubric, peer review protocols and a buddy log form.
  - Teachers are all required to have a "buddy" outside their grade team, conduct peer observations and provide weekly feedback. Teachers found this external perspective to be valuable.
  - Staff noted that the administration is supportive of external professional development opportunities as well. For example, a music teacher participates in a fellowship at Carnegie Hall and staff attends the annual KIPP Summit conference.
- VOICE is organizational and financially sound.
    - The staff has ably managed operating the school in multiple buildings with Kindergarten, 1st and 3rd grade in a co-located public school building and 2nd and 5th grade in a private space a few blocks away.
    - The school is in compliance with New York State Education Law 917. Seventeen staff members have been AED/CPR trained.
    - The school immunization rate is currently 99.5%, which is above the New York City Department of Health recommended rate.
    - Both VOICE sites have a safety plan in place which has been communicated to the VOICE community.
    - The school is operating with a budget surplus.
    - The roles on the school's operations team are clearly defined.

### **Areas of Growth**

- VOICE is encouraged to continue to raise student achievement to reach accountability goals.
  - The school did not achieve its absolute targets in either English language arts (ELA) or Mathematics this year. It did achieve its growth targets in both subjects and performed about the same as the local district.

- The school is in the process of aligning its curriculum and interim assessments to Common Core standards and state tests. It is also focused on increasing the rigor of texts and vocabulary.
- VOICE is encouraged to continue to enhance the rigor and engagement of classroom instruction to meet the needs of all students.
  - Teachers did not consistently articulate clear teaching points and lesson activities were not consistently aligned with teaching points. In some cases the teaching points were more description of learning activities than clear skill or knowledge outcomes.
  - While classroom management was effective and students were generally compliant with instructions, they were not always cognitively engaged in the learning activities. For example, in one class observed, students were writing on individual white boards and some were copying from each other rather than grappling with spelling the words themselves. Pacing did not always maintain student engagement; for instance, in some observed classes, time was unnecessarily devoted to distribution of materials or repetition of instructions.
  - On the day of the visit, questioning and tasks did not always challenge students to develop higher order thinking skills. In an observed 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class, though the lesson included grade level content, the teacher used a tone, instructions and questioning style more appropriate for early childhood classes and did not challenge students to develop a deep understanding of the concept being taught. In a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class students had access to a variety of texts, but were only asked to identify basic information with no comparison or analysis.
  - Classroom observations noted limited evidence of differentiation and instruction did not always maximize the use of multiple adults in the classroom. Most instruction was whole class or independent practice and used common materials and activities. Some teachers pulled small groups while other students worked independently, but focused on the same tasks and materials as other students. The co-teaching model most often observed was lead and assist, with the latter sometimes focused on behavior rather than instruction. In a number of classes observed, assistants did work individually with students or conferenced, though they did not appear to be taking notes. Lessons and class environments did address multiple learning styles, including visual, auditory and tactile learning opportunities.
- VOICE is encouraged to continue to articulate clear expectations for teacher performance and hold teachers accountable for student achievement.
  - As the school has grown it has begun to distribute leadership. The school has established grade leaders and department chairs and initiated regular cabinet meetings that include administrators and grade team heads. A case

study protocol is used to address issues and a weekly school-wide circular is used to communicate with faculty and staff.

- The school places a great deal of responsibility for teacher development on coaches. Given their inconsistent presence in the building, maintaining consistent communication about school priorities and needs is essential.
- The school is developing a rubric with teacher input that defines expectations for teacher practice; it is described as “work in progress.” It is being used for peer observations, teacher self-evaluations and formal teacher evaluations.
- The school has experienced both teacher turnover and significant growth, which has required bringing in large numbers of new teachers. During interviews, current teachers described this as a challenge and an opportunity. School leaders have recruited relatively novice teachers who are open to their new approach and also noted that their relative inexperience has been a challenge. Regular onboarding requires ongoing support and training on school systems and procedures, which may limit the traction of programs designed to raise student achievement. However, the school is not planning to grow or replicate in the coming charter term, and school leaders believe this will provide them with the opportunity to stabilize their current faculty. Teachers reported increased consistently this year in expectations, language and programs such as Love and Logic.
- School leaders are still planning the middle school program and have not yet decided upon staffing structures and student groupings. They are hoping to hire a high school placement officer next year and begin preparing students for the transition. The school plans to rely on internal leadership development and support programs such as Emerging Leadership Fellowship (ELF) and New Leaders pre-program to staff the middle school. In addition, school leaders recognize the need to bolster content knowledge in middle school teachers and plan to utilize external expertise to support teachers.

## Part 6: Background on the Charter Renewal Process

### I. PROCESS BACKGROUND

#### A. Statutory Basis for Renewal

The Charter Schools Act of 1998 (“the Act”) authorizes the creation 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:

- Improve student learning and achievement;
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system;
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance based accountability systems by holding the schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.<sup>11</sup>

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.<sup>12</sup>

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.<sup>13</sup> As one such charter entity, the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) 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;
- 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;

---

<sup>11</sup> See § 2850 of the Charter Schools Act of 1998.

<sup>12</sup> See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

<sup>13</sup> See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

- 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.

Where the NYCDOE 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.<sup>14</sup>

#### B. NYCDOE's Charter Renewal Process

The expiration of charters and their renewal based on a compelling record of success is the linchpin of charter school accountability. The NYCDOE's processes and procedures reflect this philosophy and therefore meet the objectives of the Act.<sup>15</sup>

In the final year of its charter, a Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during the initial 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 first term, to make a compelling, evidence-based case that it has earned the privilege of an additional charter term, and, if renewed, to build an ambitious plan for the future.

Consistent with the requirements of § 2851(4) of the Act, a school applying for renewal of its charter must use data and other credible evidence to prove its success, a case that can be organized into three questions:

1. Has your school been an academic success?
2. Has your school been a viable organization?
3. Has your school complied with applicable laws and regulations?

A school will answer these overarching questions by demonstrating that its students have made significant academic progress and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its initial 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.

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the NYCDOE regarding a school's application for charter renewal. This report is based on a cumulative record of the school's progress during its charter term, including but not limited to oversight visits, annual reports, and formal correspondence between the school and its authorizing entities, all of which are conducted in order to identify areas of weakness and to help the school to address them. Additionally, the NYCDOE incorporates into this

---

<sup>14</sup> § 2852(5)

<sup>15</sup> The NYCDOE charter renewal application is available on the Office of Charter Schools website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/charters/default.htm>

report its findings from the renewal application process, which includes a written application, completion of student achievement data templates, and a school visit by the Charter Schools Accountability and Support team of the NYCDOE (“NYCDOE CSAS”).

The NYCDOE CSAS then prepares a draft report and provides a copy to the school for its review and comment. The draft contains the findings, discussion, and the evidence base for those findings. Upon receiving a school’s comment, the NYCDOE CSAS reviews its draft, makes any appropriate changes, and reviews the amended findings to make a recommendation to the Chancellor. The Chancellor’s final decision, and the findings on which that decision is based, is submitted to the Board of Regents for a final decision.

## Part 7: The CSAS Accountability Framework

Throughout the Renewal Process and the life of each school's charter, the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office uses the following Accountability Framework to monitor Charter School success:

To help NYC DOE authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the CSAS 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 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?

There is no strict, number-driven point scale for applying the framework to a school's overall performance record. 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.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what CSAS looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions. As schools use the Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so they can be 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.

### 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
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing performance of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing performance district and city proficiency or better averages
- Are meeting other rigorous academic and non-academic goals as stated in school's charter

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

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates (absolute and progress, overall, for at-risk student populations)
- 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
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic and Non-Academic Goals
- NYC Progress Reports

### **1b. Mission and Academic Goals**

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

- Have an animating mission statement that staff, students and community embrace
- Set ambitious academic and non-academic goals that entire school community knows and embraces
- Have processes for regular monitoring and reporting on progress toward school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

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

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

### **1c. 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 standards and the new Common Core Curriculum.
- Use instructional models and resources consistent with school mission and that are flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Implement 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
- Use a defined process for evaluating curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals
- Have school calendars and day schedules that provide the time necessary to deliver on the school's mission and academic goals

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

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

### **1d. Learning Environment**

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

- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best efforts
- 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
- Provide for safe, respectful, efficient transitions, hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Provide opportunities for students to actively engage in their own learning and in the life of the school
- Have a plan with 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:

- School mission and articulated values
- School calendar and class schedules
- 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)
- DOE School Survey student results
- DOE School Survey parent and teacher safety and respect results
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Internal satisfaction survey results
- Leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)

## **2. Is the School a Fiscally Sound, Viable Organization?**

### **2a. Governance Structure and Organizational Design**

Schools with successful governance and organizational design 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 laws and conflict of interest regulations, 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 and despite circumstance
- 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
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization is identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implements a process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's staff that is clearly defined in staff handbook
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide 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, operations manual
- School calendar
- Professional development plan for leadership staff
- School leadership and staff interviews

## **2b. School Climate and Community Engagement**

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

- Create and maintain a healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and aligned with school mission and values
- Implement flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- 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
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Engage parents actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Develop strong community-based partnerships who support and advocate for the school
- 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

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

- DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Internal satisfaction surveys
- Staff handbook
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- 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
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent/Student Handbook
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)

## **2c. Financial and Operational Health**

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

- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets
- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, as 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
- Have clearly established policies and procedures for overall fiscal and operational health of the school (onboarding of all new staff, record-keeping, processing requests of HR services, application and enrollment calls, visitors, volunteers, etc.)
- Maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Receive consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, have strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school design and academic program
- Ensure a safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage

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 leader(s) job description, resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Financial audits
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships
- Operational policies and procedures, including training resources
- Staff turnover and retention records
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- School safety plan
- Appropriate insurance documents

### **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 their charter and agreement have:

- Implemented 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
- Implemented 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 Site Visit reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership, Board, staff and community interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

#### **3b. Applicable Federal and State Law**

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for FRL, ELL and Special Education students to those of their district of location<sup>16</sup> or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention

<sup>16</sup> School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from NY State Education Department

- 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 with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and 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 Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Family/Student handbook
- Student discipline 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

### **3c. Applicable Regulations**

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns with applicable regulations
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and have completed 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 complying with NYC DOE CSAS's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members.
- Informed NYC DOE CSAS, and where required, received CSAS 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
- Interviews with Board, staff, parents, students or others, as appropriate

## 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 schools may be considering various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment or altering their 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 address the 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 (replication) Application
- 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 (human resource policies for growing your own talent, for example, 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)

Evidence for organizational sustainability 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
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organization 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 if they don't make major changes through expansion or replication, they 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 submission, 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

### Part 8: NYC DOE School Progress Reports

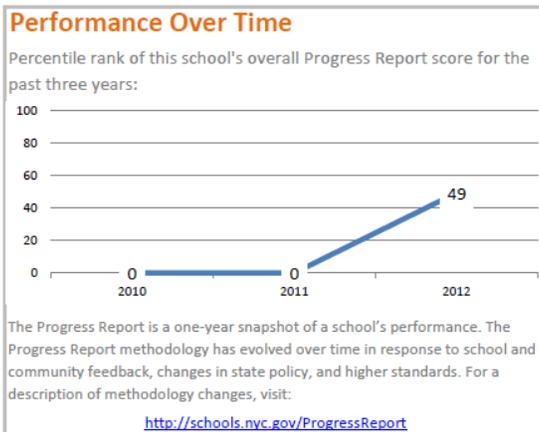
Please see the below Progress Reports for this school.

<b>VOICE Charter School of New York</b>	
PRINCIPAL:	Frank Headley
DBN:	84Q304
ENROLLMENT:	340
SCHOOL TYPE:	Elementary
PEER INDEX*:	43.54
*See p. 6 for more details on Peer Index.	

PROGRESS REPORT		
B	OVERALL SCORE	out of 100
	53.5	
	OVERALL PERCENTILE	49
This school's overall score is greater than or equal to that of 49 percent of elementary schools.		
For elementary, middle, and K-8 schools, the percent of schools receiving top grades was set in advance. Schools with average English and Math performance in the top third citywide cannot receive a grade lower than a C. Schools in their first year, in phase out, or with fewer than 25 students with progress results receive a report with no grade or score.		
Progress Report Grades - Elementary		
GRADE	SCORE RANGE	% OF SCHOOLS
A	64.7 or higher	25% of schools
B	49.8 - 64.6	36% of schools
C	35.8 - 49.7	30% of schools
D	25.6 - 35.7	7% of schools
F	25.5 or lower	2% of schools

**Overview** Each school's Progress Report (1) measures student year-to-year progress, (2) compares the school to peer schools, and (3) rewards success in moving all children forward, especially children with the greatest needs.

CATEGORY	SCORE	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Student Progress</b>	<b>26.6</b> out of 60	<b>C</b>	Student Progress measures how much individual students improved on state tests in English and Math between 2011 and 2012, compared to other students who started at the same level and weights the results of the 2012 3rd grade tests.
<b>Student Performance</b>	<b>14.7</b> out of 25	<b>B</b>	Student Performance measures student results on the 2012 state tests in English and Math.
<b>School Environment</b>	<b>10.4</b> out of 15	<b>A</b>	School Environment measures student attendance and a survey of the school community rating academic expectations, safety and respect, communication, and engagement.
<b>Closing the Achievement Gap</b>	<b>1.8</b> (16 max)		Schools receive additional credit for exceptional graduation and college/career readiness outcomes of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who enter high school at a low performance level.
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>53.5</b> out of 100	<b>B</b>	The overall grade is based on the total of all scores above. Category scores may not add up to total score because of rounding.



### Progress Report Implications

Strong Progress Report results are the basis for recognition and potential rewards for school leaders, and poor results are an important factor in determining whether schools require intensive support or intervention. For more information, see:  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/Support+and+Intervention.htm>

### State Accountability

The school's current status: **In Good Standing**

This designation is determined by the New York State Department of Education under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver. More information on New York State accountability can be found here:  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/accountability/default.htm>

GRADE **C**  
 SCORE **26.6**  
 (out of 60)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	38.8 or higher
B	29.8 - 38.7
C	21.5 - 29.7
D	15.3 - 21.4
F	15.2 or lower

Student Progress represents 60% of the total score. The grade is based on growth percentiles, a measure of how much individual students improved on state tests in English and Math between 2011 and 2012, and on early grade progress, a weighted measure of 3rd grade students' test results based on their demographic indicators of need.

THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

**English**

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile (n=46)	65.5		59.7%		57.6%	10.00	5.92
Median Adjusted Growth Percentile for School's Lowest Third (n=16)	79.0		83.8%		76.9%	10.00	8.21
Early Grade Progress (n=62)	1.7		17.2%		27.4%	10.00	1.98

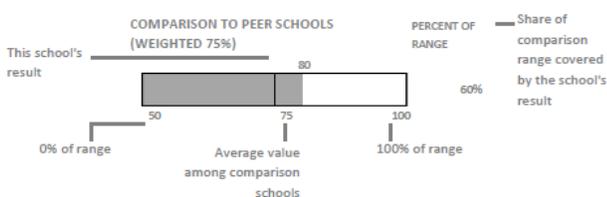
**Mathematics**

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile (n=46)	55.5		37.7%		39.6%	10.00	3.82
Median Adjusted Growth Percentile for School's Lowest Third (n=18)	61.5		45.8%		41.6%	10.00	4.48
Early Grade Progress (n=62)	1.5		19.7%		27.7%	10.00	2.17

TOTAL POINTS	60.00	26.58
--------------	-------	-------

**How To Interpret These Charts**

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2011-12 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of peer schools and all schools serving the same grade levels citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all schools citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2009-10 and 2010-11 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



**Score Calculation Example**

FORMULA	( PERCENT OF PEER RANGE x 0.75 + PERCENT OF CITY RANGE x 0.25 ) x POINTS POSSIBLE = POINTS EARNED
EXAMPLE	( 60% x 0.75 + 80% x 0.25 ) x 10 = 6.50

GRADE **B**  
 SCORE **14.7**  
 (out of 25)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	16.1 or higher
B	12.4 - 16.0
C	8.9 - 12.3
D	6.4 - 8.8
F	6.3 or lower

The Student Performance grade is based on results on the 2012 state tests in English and Math. Student Performance represents 25% of the total score. State test metrics evaluate the percent of students who reach or exceed proficiency (Level 3 and 4) and students' average proficiency rating.

THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

**English**

Percentage of Students at Level 3 or 4 (n=109)

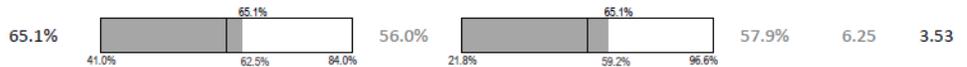


Average Student Proficiency (n=109)



**Mathematics**

Percentage of Students at Level 3 or 4 (n=109)



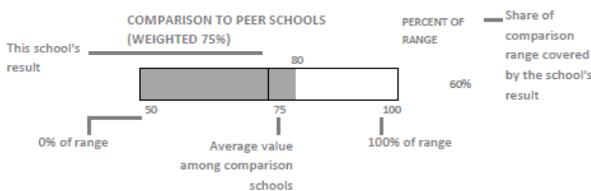
Average Student Proficiency (n=109)



<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	25.00	14.68
---------------------	-------	-------

**How To Interpret These Charts**

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2011-12 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of peer schools and all schools serving the same grade levels citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all schools citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2009-10 and 2010-11 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



**Score Calculation Example**

FORMULA	( PERCENT OF PEER RANGE x 0.75 + PERCENT OF CITY RANGE x 0.25 ) x POINTS POSSIBLE = POINTS EARNED
EXAMPLE	( 60% x 0.75 + 80% x 0.25 ) x 6.25 = 4.06

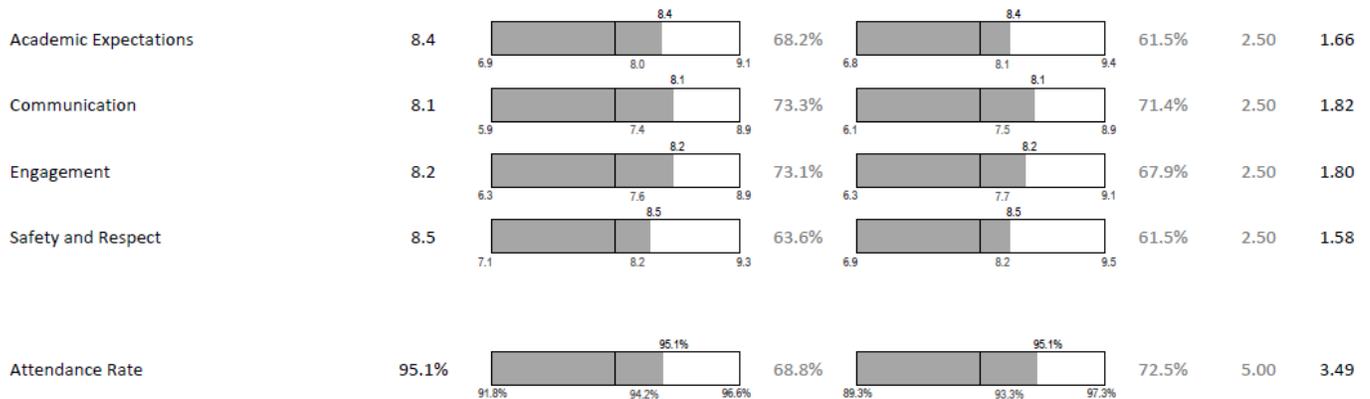
GRADE **A**  
 SCORE **10.4**  
 (out of 15)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	9.7 or higher
B	7.4 - 9.6
C	5.3 - 7.3
D	3.8 - 5.2
F	3.7 or lower

School Environment represents 15% of the total score. The School Environment grade is based on student attendance and results of the NYC School Survey, on which parents and teachers rate academic expectations, safety and respect, communication, and engagement.

THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

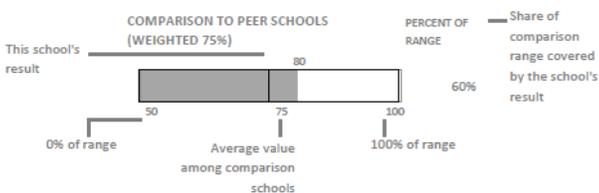
School Survey Results



TOTAL POINTS	15.00	10.35
--------------	-------	-------

How To Interpret These Charts

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2011-12 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of peer schools and all schools serving the same grade levels citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all schools citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2009-10 and 2010-11 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



Score Calculation Example

FORMULA	$( \text{PERCENT OF PEER RANGE} \times 0.75 + \text{PERCENT OF CITY RANGE} \times 0.25 ) \times \text{POINTS POSSIBLE} = \text{POINTS EARNED}$
EXAMPLE	$( 60\% \times 0.75 + 80\% \times 0.25 ) \times 2.5 = 1.63$

Schools receive additional credit for exceptional gains by students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students starting with the lowest proficiency citywide. A school earns additional credit when each high-need student meets the success criteria for an eligible metric. The number of points will depend on the percentage of the school's population that is in the high-need group, the percentage of that group that is successful, and a "fixed point value" based on how difficult it is to achieve the success criteria. Additional Credit can only improve a school's Progress Report score. It cannot lower a school's score. Elementary schools are eligible for points on 16 additional credit metrics while middle and K-8 schools are eligible for points on up to 17 metrics, each of which is worth up to one point. (In the table below, "." in "This School's Results" indicates that a school has fewer than 5 eligible students in one of the categories.)

CATEGORY	THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	POPULATION PERCENTAGE	FIXED POINT VALUE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
<b>Percent at Level 3 or 4</b>					
<b>English</b>					
Self-Contained (n=1)	.	.	0.326	1.00	.
Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) (n=8)	0.0%	7.3%	0.113	1.00	0.00
Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) (n=7)	28.6%	6.4%	0.174	1.00	0.32
<b>Mathematics</b>					
Self-Contained (n=1)	.	.	0.119	1.00	.
Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) (n=8)	0.0%	7.3%	0.065	1.00	0.00
Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) (n=7)	57.1%	6.4%	0.103	1.00	0.38
<b>Percent at 75th Growth Percentile or Higher</b>					
<b>English</b>					
English Language Learners (n=7)	57.1%	15.2%	0.021	1.00	0.18
Lowest Third Citywide (n=7)	57.1%	15.2%	0.013	1.00	0.11
Self-Contained/ICT/SETSS (n=4)	.	.	0.022	1.00	.
Black and Hispanic Males in Lowest Third Citywide (n=2)	.	.	0.026	1.00	.
<b>Mathematics</b>					
English Language Learners (n=7)	28.6%	15.2%	0.019	1.00	0.08
Lowest Third Citywide (n=7)	14.3%	15.2%	0.016	1.00	0.03
Self-Contained/ICT/SETSS (n=4)	.	.	0.028	1.00	.
Black and Hispanic Males in Lowest Third Citywide (n=0)	.	.	0.035	1.00	.
Movement from SC/ICT/SETSS to Less Restrictive Environments (n=22)	0.59	6.5%	0.105	1.00	0.40
English Language Learner Progress (n=55)	58.2%	16.2%	0.026	1.00	0.25
				<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>1.75</b>

## PEER INDEX CALCULATION

The Peer Index is used to sort schools on the basis of demographics. A higher Peer Index indicates a higher need population. The Peer Index operates on a 1-100 scale and is calculated using the following formula:

FORMULA ( Economic Need Index x 30 ) + ( % Students with Disabilities x 30 ) + ( % Black/Hispanic x 30 ) + ( % English Language Learners x 10 ) = PEER INDEX

FOR THIS SCHOOL ( 0.60 x 30 ) + ( 15.3% x 30 ) + ( 64.4% x 30 ) + ( 16.5% x 10 ) = 43.54

Note: the Economic Need Index is calculated as follows: (1.0 × Percent Temporary Housing) + (0.5 × Percent HRA-eligible) + (0.5 × Percent Free Lunch Eligible)

## PEER GROUP FOR: VOICE Charter School of New York

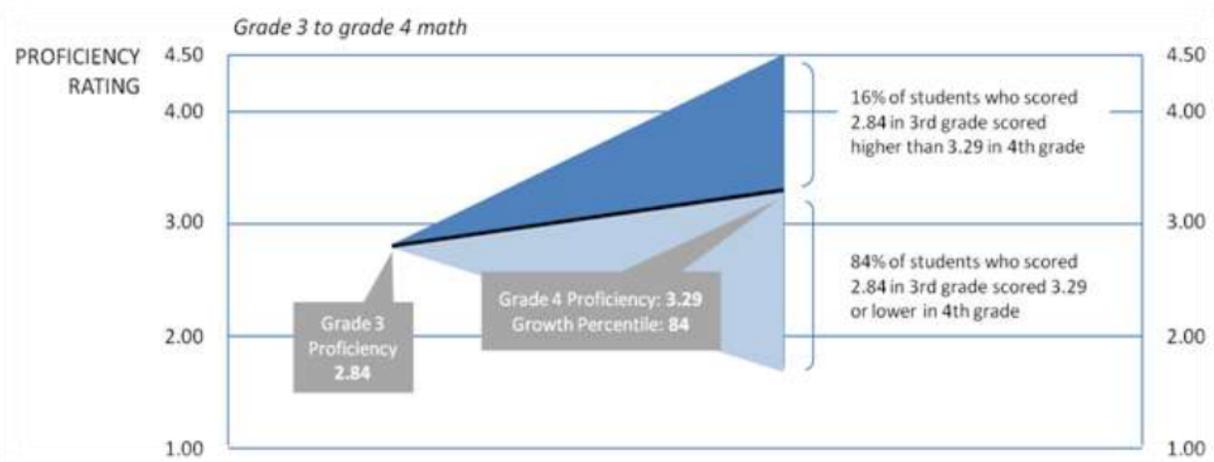
Each school's performance is compared to the performance of schools in its peer group. Peer schools are those New York City public schools with a student population most like this school's population, according to the Peer Index. Each elementary and middle school has up to 40 peer schools and each K-8 school has up to 30 peer schools.

DBN	SCHOOL	PEER INDEX	ECONOMIC NEED INDEX	% IEP	% BLACK or HISPANIC	% ELL
24Q088	P.S. 088 Seneca	40.36	0.53	19.6%	55.4%	19.5%
22K193	P.S. 193 Gil Hodges	40.56	0.48	14.0%	68.8%	12.6%
20K179	P.S. 179 Kensington	40.59	0.71	13.6%	35.6%	44.8%
27Q063	P.S. 063 Old South	40.92	0.56	15.1%	60.9%	13.3%
27Q155	P.S. 155	41.10	0.70	10.5%	54.7%	6.7%
02M198	P.S. 198 Isador E. Ida Straus	41.13	0.51	20.2%	63.3%	8.3%
30Q166	P.S. 166 Henry Gradstein	41.72	0.59	14.9%	55.7%	27.7%
03M084	P.S. 084 Lillian Weber	41.93	0.53	13.9%	70.4%	8.4%
31R013	P.S. 013 M. L. Lindemeyer	41.94	0.61	15.8%	57.3%	16.1%
15K130	P.S. 130 The Parkside	42.22	0.72	15.9%	48.7%	10.9%
24Q013	P.S. 013 Clement C. Moore	42.34	0.57	8.5%	63.9%	34.4%
29Q095	P.S. 095 Eastwood	42.37	0.69	10.0%	51.8%	30.1%
21K212	P.S. 212 Lady Deborah Moody	42.47	0.67	20.1%	46.9%	21.9%
31R011	P.S. 11 Thomas Dongan School	42.53	0.58	26.9%	54.8%	7.1%
28Q054	P.S. 054 Hillside	42.62	0.62	14.9%	57.9%	20.7%
19K214	P.S. 214 Michael Friedsam	43.01	0.75	9.7%	52.1%	20.3%
15K094	P.S. 094 The Henry Longfellow	43.24	0.72	7.3%	45.6%	56.8%
84Q704	Merrick Academy Charter School	43.27	0.44	6.3%	94.0%	0.6%
21K253	P.S. 253	43.29	0.72	15.5%	47.5%	28.1%
29Q176	P.S. 176 Cambria Heights	43.52	0.42	7.2%	95.5%	2.3%
<b>84Q304</b>	<b>VOICE Charter School of New York</b>	<b>43.54</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>15.3%</b>	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>
11X106	P.S. 106 Parkchester	43.88	0.63	10.3%	67.8%	14.1%
13K011	P.S. 011 Purvis J. Behan	43.98	0.50	9.0%	86.7%	2.6%
22K134	P.S. K134	43.98	0.77	13.8%	49.2%	20.5%
11X153	P.S. 153 Helen Keller	44.02	0.39	22.2%	84.5%	1.9%
04M964	Central Park East II	44.12	0.47	21.6%	77.9%	2.3%
27Q090	P.S. 090 Horace Mann	44.16	0.59	16.6%	63.5%	22.7%
28Q086	P.S. Q086	44.18	0.63	16.2%	55.3%	39.6%
11X097	P.S. 097 Bronx	44.28	0.54	15.3%	76.2%	5.7%
13K009	P.S. 009 Teunis G. Bergen	44.69	0.53	16.9%	78.0%	3.4%
15K169	P.S. 169 Sunset Park	44.75	0.73	11.2%	50.3%	44.9%
31R046	P.S. 046 Albert V. Maniscalco	44.86	0.66	30.7%	50.2%	8.9%
29Q035	P.S. 035 Nathaniel Woodhull	44.89	0.65	10.4%	69.5%	14.5%
24Q199	P.S. 199 Maurice A. Fitzgerald	44.91	0.63	12.9%	58.8%	44.1%
15K295	P.S. 295	45.10	0.54	27.2%	62.5%	18.8%
84X378	Icahn Charter School 2	45.46	0.51	7.1%	91.3%	5.2%
02M002	P.S. 002 Meyer London	46.15	1.08	15.0%	14.5%	48.0%
13K020	P.S. 020 Clinton Hill	46.55	0.53	16.3%	84.7%	4.2%
22K139	P.S. 139 Alexine A. Fenty	46.67	0.65	10.6%	72.2%	24.1%
30Q212	P.S. 212	46.76	0.59	14.4%	76.4%	17.8%
15K131	P.S. 131 Brooklyn	47.53	0.72	10.2%	61.2%	45.2%
PEER GROUP AVERAGES		43.55	0.61	14.7%	62.8%	19.4%

The Progress Report for elementary and middle schools focuses on students' growth to proficiency and beyond, regardless of their starting point. The Progress Report measures individual students' growth on state English and Math tests using growth percentiles.

**1 GROWTH PERCENTILES**

A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. It is a number between 0 and 100 which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. For example, a student with a growth percentile of 84 earned a score on this year's test that was the same or higher than 84 percent of the students in the City who had the same score as he did last year.



**2 ADJUSTED GROWTH PERCENTILES**

To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentiles, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The adjustments are made to students' ending proficiency rating as follows:

CATEGORY	ADJUSTMENT
Students with Disabilities (Self-contained)	+0.25
Students with Disabilities (ICT)	+0.15
Students with Disabilities (SETSS)	+0.10
Economic Need Index (per 0.10)	+0.005

Note: "Students with Disabilities" for purposes of adjustments is based on the most restrictive setting of students over the last four school years.

**3 MEDIAN ADJUSTED GROWTH PERCENTILES**

The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all the students' adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

This page provides more granular data on students' state exam scores. It disaggregates these scores by grade and subject for 2011-12. While the numbers here do not individually count for points, the detailed deconstruction should provide deeper insight into 2011-12 student performance.

State Exam Scores by Grade	AVERAGE STUDENT PROFICIENCY	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS AT LEVEL 3 OR LEVEL 4	MEDIAN ADJUSTED GROWTH PERCENTILE
<b>Mathematics</b>			
3rd Grade (n = 62)	3.01	51.6%	.
4th Grade (n = 47)	3.55	83.0%	55.5
<b>English</b>			
3rd Grade (n = 62)	2.82	46.8%	.
4th Grade (n = 47)	3.19	70.2%	65.5
<b>Science</b>			
4th Grade (n = 47)	3.83	97.9%	.

<b>VOICE Charter School of New York</b>	
PRINCIPAL:	Frank Headley
DBN:	84Q304
ENROLLMENT:	214
SCHOOL TYPE:	Early Childhood
PEER INDEX:	44.14
(see p. 6 for more details on peer index)	

OVERALL GRADE

# B

OVERALL SCORE

## 36.0

out of 70

RANK

## 18

This school's overall score was higher than 22 of 40 Early Childhood schools.

### Overall Grades - Early Childhood

GRADE	SCORE RANGE	% of Schools
A	43.9 or higher	26% of schools
B	28.2 - 43.8	36% of schools
C	17.9 - 28.1	28% of schools
D	14.7 - 17.8	8% of schools
F	14.6 or lower	3% of schools

For early childhood, the percent of schools receiving top grades was set in advance. Schools in their first year, in phase out, or which have fewer than 25 students with progress results receive a report with no grade or score.

## Overview

Each school's Progress Report (1) measures student year-to-year progress, (2) compares the school to peer schools and (3) rewards success in moving all children forward, especially children with the greatest needs. Strong Progress Report results are the basis for monetary rewards for school leaders, and poor results are an important factor in determining whether schools require intensive support or intervention. For more information, see [schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/Support+and+Intervention.htm](http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/Support+and+Intervention.htm).

CATEGORY	SCORE	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Student Progress</b>	<b>12.0</b> out of 30	<b>B</b>	Student Progress measures the results of students on 2011 3rd grade state tests in English and Math, with extra weight given to students who scored higher than expected.
<b>Student Performance</b>	<b>9.4</b> out of 25	<b>B</b>	Student Performance measures the results of students on 2011 3rd grade state tests in English and Math.
<b>School Environment</b>	<b>10.6</b> out of 15	<b>A</b>	School Environment measures student attendance and a survey of the school community rating academic expectations, safety and respect, communication, and engagement.
<b>Closing the Achievement Gap</b>	<b>4.0</b> (14 max)		Schools receive additional credit for exceptional gains by students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and Black and Hispanic male students.
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>36.0</b> out of 70	<b>B</b>	The overall grade is based on the total of all scores above, including additional credit for closing the achievement gap. Category scores may not add up to total score because of rounding.

## Other accountability measures

These measures are separate from the Progress Report, and are an important part of school accountability in New York City and State.

### Quality Review

The school's most recent Quality Review Score:

The Quality Review is an observational evaluation conducted by an experienced educator, focused on how well a school is organized to educate its students.

### State Accountability

The school's current status:

**In Good Standing**

2010-11

This status is determined by the New York State Department of Education under the No Child Left Behind Act.

GRADE **B**  
 SCORE **12.0**  
 (out of 30)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	16.6 or higher
B	10.4 - 16.5
C	4.8 - 10.3
D	4.4 - 4.7
F	4.3 or lower

Student Progress accounts for 30 of the total 70 points. The grade is based on the results of students who attended the school on the 2011 3rd grade state tests in English and Math, and evaluates the extent to which the early childhood school helped students exceed their expected performance.

	THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
--	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

**English**

Early Grade Progress Measure (n=56)	2.43		40.4%		53.0%	15	6.53
-------------------------------------	------	--	-------	--	-------	----	------

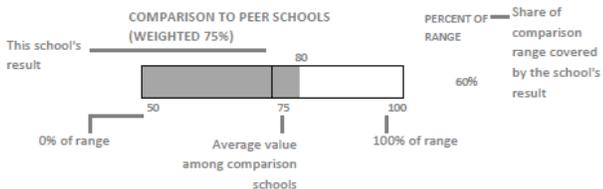
**Mathematics**

Early Grade Progress Measure (n=56)	2.58		34.1%		42.8%	15	5.44
-------------------------------------	------	--	-------	--	-------	----	------

TOTAL POINTS	30	11.97
--------------	----	-------

**How To Interpret These Charts**

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2010-11 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of third graders at peer schools and all third graders citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all third graders citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2008-09 and 2009-10 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



**Score Calculation Example**

FORMULA	$( \text{PERCENT OF PEER RANGE} \times 0.75 + \text{PERCENT OF CITY RANGE} \times 0.25 ) \times \text{POINTS POSSIBLE} = \text{POINTS EARNED}$
EXAMPLE	$( 60\% \times 0.75 + 80\% \times 0.25 ) \times 15 = 9.75$

GRADE **B**  
 SCORE **9.4**  
 (out of 25)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	10.9 or higher
B	7.0 - 10.8
C	4.0 - 6.9
D	3.6 - 3.9
F	3.5 or lower

Student Performance accounts for 25 of the total 70 points. The Student Performance grade is based on results on the 2011 state tests in English and Math. The section evaluates the percent of third grade students who reach or exceed proficiency (Level 3 and 4).

THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

**English**

Percentage of students at level 3 or 4 (n=56)	57.1%		35.5%		48.5%	6.25	2.42
Average Student Proficiency (n=56)	3.00		35.7%		50.0%	6.25	2.45

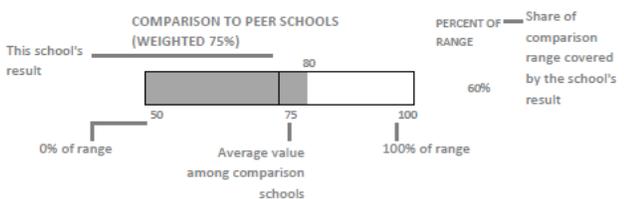
**Mathematics**

Percentage of students at level 3 or 4 (n=56)	64.3%		36.3%		52.1%	6.25	2.52
Average Student Proficiency (n=56)	3.24		29.3%		42.6%	6.25	2.04

TOTAL POINTS	25	9.43
--------------	----	------

**How To Interpret These Charts**

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2010-11 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of third graders at peer schools and all third graders citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all third graders citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2008-09 and 2009-10 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



**Score Calculation Example**

FORMULA	( PERCENT OF PEER RANGE x 0.75 + PERCENT OF CITY RANGE x 0.25 ) x POINTS POSSIBLE = POINTS EARNED
EXAMPLE	( 60% x 0.75 + 80% x 0.25 ) x 6.25 = 4.06

GRADE **A**  
 SCORE **10.6**  
 (out of 15)

GRADE	SCORE RANGE
A	9.4 or higher
B	7.5 - 9.3
C	6.3 - 7.4
D	5.6 - 6.2
F	5.5 or lower

School Environment accounts for 15 of the total 70 points. The School Environment grade is based on student attendance and results of the NYC School Survey, on which parents and teachers rate academic expectations, safety and respect, communication, and engagement.

THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	COMPARISON TO PEER SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 75%)	PERCENT OF PEER RANGE	COMPARISON TO CITY SCHOOLS (WEIGHTED 25%)	PERCENT OF CITY RANGE	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS EARNED
-----------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-----------------------	-----------------	---------------

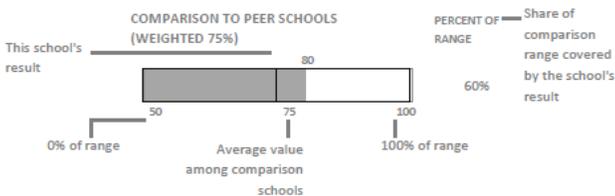
School Survey Results

Academic Expectations	8.6		76.9%		75.0%	2.5	1.91
Communication	7.9		69.4%		70.0%	2.5	1.74
Engagement	8.2		75.0%		75.0%	2.5	1.88
Safety and Respect	8.1		45.8%		50.0%	2.5	1.17
Attendance Rate	95.5%		78.3%		78.6%	5	3.92

TOTAL POINTS	15	10.62
--------------	----	-------

How To Interpret These Charts

To determine the number of points earned, this school's 2010-11 results on each metric are compared to the historical results of third graders at peer schools and all third graders citywide. The comparison to peer schools is worth 75% of the points for each metric and the comparison to all third graders citywide is worth 25% of the points. The bars represent the range of results for the peer and city comparison schools for 2008-09 and 2009-10 that are within two standard deviations of the average. The percent of the range that is shaded is the school's share of possible points. The share is multiplied by the weight (75% or 25%) and the possible points for the metric to determine the points earned.



Score Calculation Example

FORMULA	$( \text{PERCENT OF PEER RANGE} \times 0.75 + \text{PERCENT OF CITY RANGE} \times 0.25 ) \times \text{POINTS POSSIBLE} = \text{POINTS EARNED}$
EXAMPLE	$( 60\% \times 0.75 + 80\% \times 0.25 ) \times 2.5 = 1.63$

Schools receive additional credit for exceptional gains by students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students starting with the lowest proficiency citywide. A school earns full additional credit when its results are in the top 20% of schools citywide. It earns half credit when its results are in the top 40%. Additional Credit can only improve a school's Progress Report score. It cannot lower a school's score. Early childhood schools are eligible for points on 7 additional credit metrics, each of which is worth up to 2 points. (In the table below, "." indicates that a school has fewer than 10 eligible students in a category.)

CATEGORY	THIS SCHOOL'S RESULTS	TOP 20% CUTOFF	TOP 40% CUTOFF	POINTS EARNED
<b>Early Grade Progress</b>				
<b>English</b>				
English Language Learners (n=3)	.	2.21	1.59	.
Self-Contained/CTT/SETSS (n=6)	.	3.01	2.41	.
Black/Hispanic male students (n=15)	3.64	2.65	2.00	2.0
<b>Mathematics</b>				
English Language Learners (n=3)	.	2.37	1.58	.
Self-Contained/CTT/SETSS (n=6)	.	4.35	2.71	.
Black/Hispanic male students (n=15)	5.23	3.75	2.07	2.0
Movement of students with disabilities to less restrictive environments (n=11)	.	0.37	0.25	.
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>				<b>4.0</b>

## PEER INDEX CALCULATION

The Peer Index is used to sort schools on the basis of demographics. A higher Peer Index indicates a higher need population. The Peer Index operates on a 1-100 scale and is calculated using the following formula:

FORMULA  $( \% \text{ eligible for free lunch} \times 30 ) + ( \% \text{ students with disabilities} \times 30 ) + ( \% \text{ Black/Hispanic} \times 30 ) + ( \% \text{ English language learners} \times 10 ) = \text{PEER INDEX}$

FOR THIS SCHOOL  $( 60.7\% \times 30 ) + ( 13.6\% \times 30 ) + ( 68.2\% \times 30 ) + ( 14.0\% \times 10 ) = 44.14$

PEER GROUP FOR: VOICE Charter School of New York

Each school's performance is compared to the performance of schools in its peer group. Peer schools are those New York City public schools with a student population most like this school's population, according to the peer index. Each school has up to 40 peer schools. An early childhood school's peer group can include elementary, K-8, and early childhood schools, though only the third grade test results are included in the metrics.

DBN	SCHOOL	PEER INDEX	% FREE LUNCH	% IEP	% BLACK or HISPANIC	% ELL
03M084	P.S. 084 Lillian Weber	41.61	53.7%	14.0%	67.9%	9.2%
24Q091	P.S. 091 Richard Arkwright	41.65	62.2%	17.7%	55.7%	9.7%
02M001	P.S. 001 Alfred E. Smith	41.67	76.2%	14.9%	30.4%	52.3%
27Q065	P.S. 65 - The Raymond York Elementary School	41.91	67.4%	18.1%	51.2%	8.9%
02M002	P.S. 002 Meyer London	42.03	94.5%	12.0%	15.5%	54.4%
24Q088	P.S. 088 Seneca	42.21	61.1%	18.0%	54.6%	20.9%
14K132	P.S. 132 The Conselyea School	42.25	71.7%	8.7%	59.2%	3.9%
15K010	Magnet School of Math, Science and Design Technology	42.32	68.6%	20.4%	50.1%	5.9%
30Q152	Q152 - P.S. 152 Gwendoline N. Alleyne School	42.39	74.8%	6.6%	45.6%	42.9%
29Q268	PS/IS 268	42.53	63.5%	9.7%	64.8%	11.3%
25Q219	P.S. 219 Paul Klapper	42.70	65.6%	24.6%	45.2%	21.0%
31R046	P.S. 046 Albert V. Maniscalco	42.90	62.9%	28.9%	48.8%	7.5%
30Q234	P.S. 234	42.97	76.7%	8.5%	48.6%	28.2%
29Q208	P.S. / I.S. 208	43.34	41.8%	13.8%	87.2%	5.1%
24Q012	P.S. 012 James B. Colgate	43.34	79.7%	10.0%	43.6%	33.6%
31R013	P.S. 013 M. L. Lindemeyer	43.35	69.3%	14.5%	55.4%	16.0%
31R065	P.S. 65 The Academy of Innovative Learning	43.37	61.1%	21.8%	60.7%	3.0%
21K226	P.S. 226 Alfred De B.Mason	43.64	78.7%	24.5%	32.3%	29.9%
25Q029	P.S. 029 Queens	43.77	62.6%	18.5%	53.1%	35.2%
29Q135	The Bellaire School	44.06	76.7%	11.9%	54.5%	11.2%
<b>84Q304</b>	<b>VOICE Charter School of New York</b>	<b>44.14</b>	<b>60.7%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>68.2%</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
02M198	P.S. 198 Isador E. Ida Straus	44.33	61.3%	21.1%	63.1%	6.9%
30Q011	P.S. 011 Kathryn Phelan	44.36	69.4%	12.1%	54.4%	35.9%
21K121	P.S. 121 Nelson A. Rockefeller	44.38	75.0%	18.0%	49.2%	17.2%
24Q007	P.S. 007 Louis F. Simeone	44.59	78.8%	10.3%	41.1%	55.4%
13K282	P.S. 282 Park Slope	44.76	54.4%	6.1%	87.0%	5.2%
02M033	P.S. 033 Chelsea Prep	44.83	70.3%	13.0%	61.8%	13.0%
28Q206	P.S. 206 The Horace Harding School	44.95	75.8%	12.9%	53.3%	23.3%
84Q704	Merrick Academy Charter School	45.06	49.3%	4.7%	95.9%	0.7%
11X153	P.S. 153 Helen Keller	45.15	46.1%	18.7%	85.0%	2.1%
27Q063	P.S. 063 Old South	45.15	69.4%	14.4%	61.8%	15.0%
21K212	P.S. 212 Lady Deborah Moody	45.25	72.0%	19.5%	52.2%	21.6%
20K179	P.S. 179 Kensington	45.27	84.3%	13.2%	38.4%	44.9%
29Q095	P.S. 095 Eastwood	45.34	77.0%	9.8%	51.6%	38.2%
28Q054	P.S. 054 Hillside	45.65	75.4%	11.9%	57.8%	21.2%
22K193	P.S. 193 Gil Hodges	45.66	63.4%	15.4%	68.5%	14.8%
84X255	Bronx Charter School for Excellence	45.75	58.9%	6.3%	85.7%	4.9%
29Q035	P.S. 035 Nathaniel Woodhull	45.90	65.4%	11.1%	71.6%	14.8%
11X106	P.S. 106 Parkchester	46.22	67.3%	12.5%	69.8%	13.5%
24Q013	P.S. 013 Clement C. Moore	46.34	68.6%	8.7%	63.3%	41.4%
13K009	P.S. 009 Teunis G. Bergen	46.47	58.3%	17.8%	77.2%	4.7%
PEER GROUP AVERAGES		43.93	67.8%	14.3%	57.6%	20.3%

## Part 9: Historic Accountability Reports



**Department of  
Education**

*Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor*

**Charter School Annual Site Visit Report  
Charter Schools Office  
2010-2011**

### **VOICE CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT**

JUNE 2011

## Part 1: Executive Summary

### **School Overview and History:**

VOICE Charter School is an elementary school serving approximately 210 students from kindergarten through grade four in the 2010-2011 school year.<sup>17</sup> It has plans to grow to serve students kindergarten through grade 8.<sup>18</sup> It is currently housed in NYC DOE school facilities at 37-15 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Long Island City, Queens.<sup>19</sup> This school is geographically located in Community School District 30 in New York City.

The school population comprises 12 % Black, 49 % Hispanic, 18 % White, less than 1 % American Indian/Alaska native, less than 1% Native Hawaiian, 15 % Asian students, and 2% Multi-racial. Eighty-four percent of students are designated as Title I.<sup>20</sup> District 30's student population, for the 2010-2011 school year, comprises of 8 % Black, 53% Hispanic, 16% White, less than 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 22% Asian students.<sup>21</sup> The student body, as reported on the school data collection form completed by the school, includes 14 % English language learners and 13.8 % special education students<sup>22</sup>. For the 2010-2011 school year, 8.2% of the students in District 30 were classified as special education students and 23% of the students are classified as English Language Learners.<sup>23</sup>

The school is in its first year and has not yet earned a Progress Report grade or state/federal accountability designation.<sup>24</sup> The average attendance rate, for the school year 2010 – 2011, was reported by the school as 95.2 %, as of June 9, 2011. As of December 31, 2010, the average attendance rate for District 30 schools was 92.79%.

### **Annual Review Process Overview:**

The NYC DOE Charter Schools Office conducts an annual site visit of New York City Department of Education authorized charter schools in order to assess three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a viable organization; and is the school in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The visits are conducted by representatives of the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools Office and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the principal and school leadership team. Subsequently, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators, teachers, and students. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security.

The following experts participated in the review of this school on June 9, 2011:

- Sonia Park, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSO
- Keisha Womack, Director of Operations, NYC DOE CSO
- Karen Drezner, Consultant

---

<sup>17</sup> NYC DOE ATS system

<sup>18</sup> NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

<sup>19</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

<sup>20</sup> Demographic Data drawn from NYC DOE ATS System; Title I percentage from 2008 NY State Report Cards

<sup>21</sup> NYC DOE Statistical Summaries <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/Data>

<sup>22</sup> VOICE CS self reported School Evaluation Visit Data Collection Form (5/17/11)

<sup>23</sup> NYC DOE 2010-11 Demographics of New York City's English Language Learners Spring 2011 Report

<sup>24</sup> New York State Education Department - [www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov)

## Part 2: Findings

### Areas of Strength

- VOICE Charter School's culture is child-centered, warm and focused on learning.
  - Music is a significant and celebrated aspect of learning. It appeared to be well integrated into and enriching the culture, rather than overwhelming or crowding out other core content area learning. Teachers used developmentally appropriate and common language, verbally and in writing.
  - Students were observed on the day of the visit as being overall highly engaged in rigorous work. Plentiful visual cues were plentiful in observed classrooms. Reference charts included reading goals, procedural reminders, evidence of learned concepts and skills, and large, extended word walls.
  - All adults are being trained and supported to implement the social/emotional management and growth approach to discipline, based in large part on the work of Barbara Coloroso, author of *The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander*. Teachers reported feeling appreciative of their collective, proactive response to discipline issues, and noted the connection to Restorative Justice approach.
  - Additional student support was arranged through Partnership for Children to work on the social work structure and schedule. Fifty students were reported to have received support this year.
  
- VOICE Charter School's leadership is self-reflective and the professional atmosphere is communicative, collegial and collaborative.
  - During the visit, a strong sense of team was evident. The principal is mission-driven and demonstrated thoughtfulness of action. He described being "deliberate about what we put on teachers," and meets face to face with each staff member for approximately 20 minutes every 6 weeks.
  - Coaching and feedback is frequently provided. A literacy consultant supports teachers in the implementation of the workshop model, across all content areas (including music), 3 days a week. Another coach who is focused on classroom management was available twice a week at the school through the fall months. A music coach comes to the school once or twice a week. Teacher reported that school Leaders are active, available resources for teachers.
    - Teachers have 3 periods daily for prep periods.
  - Teachers interviewed reported being engaged in problem-solving on a variety of levels to address school-wide issues, as evidenced by the school-wide response to an incident of bullying and collaborative planning for the split-siting of the school in 2011-12.
  
- VOICE is self-reflective in terms of its operations management and has a conservative budgeting approach.
  - The school anticipates a budget surplus for 2010-11 of approximately \$200,000.
  - VOICE will add an additional site in the 2011-2012 school year for their upper grade levels. VOICE was in the process of signing a 20 year lease for their new site. Overall, the school has demonstrated a clear understanding of their expansion and goals.
  - The school has been proactive and has taken steps to account for any additional expenses that may arise due to the opening of the additional site. The school has applied for an additional line of credit to account for any unforeseen issues (such as window and boiler replacements, electrical service upgrade) that may arise when the new site is opened. The school is also actively pursuing grant funding, i.e. State Stimulus Fund to support the additional site.

- The School is focused on the effective use of data to inform instruction, and uses data to drive differentiation and small group instruction. Strategic interventions occur across several tiers, driven by performance data.
  - Approximately 25 % of students have been reviewed at IS meetings. Skill-focused and guided reading groups are being implemented in classrooms. CTT classes are established in Kindergarten and Second Grade, which certified teachers pushing into other grades and classes as needed.
  - Five intervention teachers utilize their own assessments to design targeted instruction and there are two Reading Recovery teachers are on staff.
    - Foundations materials are used to teach phonics skills.
  - Additional supports are made available through other organizations. This is evidenced by the School's partnership with LaGuardia Community College which offers two 10-week programs on Saturdays (approx. 80 students were reported to participated).
- The school uses a range of practices to involve and communicate with parents.
  - Teachers described "extraordinarily strong relationships" with families. Class parents meet often and are supportive to teachers. Teachers interact with parents in daily homework folders, through emails and phone calls. School-wide events, such as a music performance and a carnival, have been well-attended.
  - The school's formalized Parent Association (PA) meets regularly and has established bylaws and elected officers.
- VOICE is a diverse community, closely reflecting the surrounding neighborhood. Students with special needs and English language learners both represent approximately 14% of the school's population.

### Areas of Growth

- VOICE should enact corrective measures in order to be in full compliance with the 2010 amended Charter School Act. Areas of concern regard meeting target rates for enrollment and retention for ELL students.
  - The school should continue to refine and document its outreach strategies for recruitment and retention of ELLs in order to be comparable to the district, CSD 30. The school reported using Vanguard and a variety of recruitment strategies. VOICE has a population of 14%<sup>25</sup> ELLs, which is lower than CSD 30's ELL rate of 23%<sup>26</sup>.
- VOICE should continue to develop consistent student engagement and discipline across classrooms. The School is encouraged to learn more about effective discipline practices, particularly related to upper elementary and middle school grades.
  - Small distractions and minor off-task behaviors were observed in classrooms. Though teachers were seen using common language, consistent application across classrooms was not always evident.
  - Several teachers observed appeared to have solid, consistent management systems in place and were implementing well-designed instructional lessons. However, classroom management and pacing was variable across classrooms. Some teachers were observed struggling to maintain 100% engagement.
- The school is encouraged to continue to differentiate teacher growth opportunities.
  - Leadership is encouraged to help teachers continue to evolve their practice to facilitate deeper intellectual work by students and expand higher-order thinking and questioning.

---

<sup>25</sup> VOICE CS self reported School Evaluation Visit Data Collection Form (5/17/11)

<sup>26</sup> ATS data, (June 30, 2011)

- o VOICE leaders appear to know where the pressure points are in regards to planning their split site, and an expeditor has been hired. In addition, a Board of Trustees committee named “The Future” is actively involved in this aspect of the school’s evolution. VOICE leadership is encouraged to further develop clearly defined plans for instruction, operations and maintaining community culture.

## Part 3: Framing Questions

### FRAMING QUESTIONS:

Throughout the Renewal Process and the life of each school’s charter, the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office uses the following framing questions to monitor Charter School success:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
2. Has the School Been a Viable Organization?
3. Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

### Annual Site Visit Rubric:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
  - Academic Goals and Mission
    - o School components and curriculum align together and holistically support the mission
    - o School has high academic expectations and employs strategies for the full range of students served by the school, including those at risk and those with special needs
  - Curriculum and Instruction
    - o The educational plan is flexible and is adjusted to meet the performance levels and learning needs of all enrolled students
    - o School implements programming to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs
    - o Teachers demonstrate the use of differentiated instructional techniques to support the varying ways by which students learn
    - o School has implemented programming for students who need remediation or acceleration
  - School Culture
    - o The culture is strong, intentional, supportive and sustainable and promotes student learning
    - o The school motivates all students and respects the diversity of learners and cultures in the community
    - o School offers programs, activities or support services beyond academics to address students’ social and emotional needs
    - o School calendar and day are set to provide extra supports to ensure that students are able to meet and exceed academic goals
    - o Schedule for communication to parents/students is timely and allows for due process, includes strategies to prepare students for transitions and strategies for those students who are not on schedule, presents a clear and fair system that complies with students’ due process rights
    - o Structures that foster the development of authentic, sustained, caring, respectful relationships among all stakeholders within school
    - o Behavioral expectations and social supports that reflect the school’s mission and comply with all applicable laws and regulations
  - Assessment
    - o Establishes a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for student learning

- Develops assessments that shape and inform instruction on an ongoing basis and develop data that's used to gauge student, teacher and school progress through formative and summative assessment
  - Student learning measured with multiple forms of assessments/metrics
  - Develops educational goals and performance metrics that are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reflect the Mission and Time-Specific
  - Develops assessments that are appropriately aligned with curriculum, instruction, and adopted standards
  - Provides evidence of how data will influence instruction, professional development and curricular adjustments
  - Parent Engagement
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
    - Capacity to communicate effectively with parents and families
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
2. Is the School a Viable Organization
- Governance Structures and Organizational Design
    - School has articulated appropriate roles, responsibilities, and decision-making structure for school community members (including Board of Trustees and school leadership)
    - An accountability structure that provides effective oversight of the educational program and fiscal components of the school is in place and utilized
    - Board regularly reviews a data dashboard of student achievement and fiscal management that forms the basis for Board discussions and decisions
    - Board has diverse skill set that lends itself to strong educational / operational oversight
    - Board has an articulated process for ongoing policy development, Board member development and self-evaluation
    - Organizational charts are aligned with mission; roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
    - Board has developed essential strategic partnerships with organizations that support the mission of the school
  - Community Support
    - School Leadership demonstrated responsiveness to the unique needs and interests of the community to be served
    - School has established a presence in the community and has buy in from community members
3. Is the School in Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations
- Special Populations
    - Well-defined plan and sufficient capacity to service the learning needs of Special Education students, English Language Learners
    - School adequately addresses the academic and non academic needs of students in need of remediation, students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and gifted students
    - There is a coherent plan for meeting the non-academic needs of students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and other populations
    - School employs a process to identify students at risk of not meeting expectations and creates intervention plans and follow up
    - School demonstrates a comprehensive recruitment, enrollment and retention approach that is sensitive to the diverse needs of students
    - School admission policy and lottery preferences serve to create a student body that reflects community demographics and give a preference to community school district residents
  - Safety and Security

- School is well maintained
- Transitions and student gatherings are orderly and well supervised
- Expectations for student behavior are well known and are enforced fairly
- School is current with all safety recruitments and drills.
- AED machines are in operation and school staff is trained in CPR

## Part 3: Framing Questions

### FRAMING QUESTIONS:

Throughout the Renewal Process and the life of each school's charter, the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office uses the following framing questions to monitor Charter School success:

4. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
5. Has the School Been a Viable Organization?
6. Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

### Annual Site Visit Rubric:

4. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
  - Academic Goals and Mission
    - School components and curriculum align together and holistically support the mission
    - School has high academic expectations and employs strategies for the full range of students served by the school, including those at risk and those with special needs
  - Curriculum and Instruction
    - The educational plan is flexible and is adjusted to meet the performance levels and learning needs of all enrolled students
    - School implements programming to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs
    - Teachers demonstrate the use of differentiated instructional techniques to support the varying ways by which students learn
    - School has implemented programming for students who need remediation or acceleration
  - School Culture
    - The culture is strong, intentional, supportive and sustainable and promotes student learning
    - The school motivates all students and respects the diversity of learners and cultures in the community
    - School offers programs, activities or support services beyond academics to address students' social and emotional needs
    - School calendar and day are set to provide extra supports to ensure that students are able to meet and exceed academic goals
    - Schedule for communication to parents/students is timely and allows for due process, includes strategies to prepare students for transitions and strategies for those students who are not on schedule, presents a clear and fair system that complies with students' due process rights
    - Structures that foster the development of authentic, sustained, caring, respectful relationships among all stakeholders within school
    - Behavioral expectations and social supports that reflect the school's mission and comply with all applicable laws and regulations
  - Assessment
    - Establishes a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for student learning

- Develops assessments that shape and inform instruction on an ongoing basis and develop data that's used to gauge student, teacher and school progress through formative and summative assessment
  - Student learning measured with multiple forms of assessments/metrics
  - Develops educational goals and performance metrics that are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reflect the Mission and Time-Specific
  - Develops assessments that are appropriately aligned with curriculum, instruction, and adopted standards
  - Provides evidence of how data will influence instruction, professional development and curricular adjustments
  - Parent Engagement
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
    - Capacity to communicate effectively with parents and families
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
5. Is the School a Viable Organization
- Governance Structures and Organizational Design
    - School has articulated appropriate roles, responsibilities, and decision-making structure for school community members (including Board of Trustees and school leadership)
    - An accountability structure that provides effective oversight of the educational program and fiscal components of the school is in place and utilized
    - Board regularly reviews a data dashboard of student achievement and fiscal management that forms the basis for Board discussions and decisions
    - Board has diverse skill set that lends itself to strong educational / operational oversight
    - Board has an articulated process for ongoing policy development, Board member development and self-evaluation
    - Organizational charts are aligned with mission; roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
    - Board has developed essential strategic partnerships with organizations that support the mission of the school
  - Community Support
    - School Leadership demonstrated responsiveness to the unique needs and interests of the community to be served
    - School has established a presence in the community and has buy in from community members
6. Is the School in Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations
- Special Populations
    - Well-defined plan and sufficient capacity to service the learning needs of Special Education students, English Language Learners
    - School adequately addresses the academic and non academic needs of students in need of remediation, students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and gifted students
    - There is a coherent plan for meeting the non-academic needs of students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and other populations
    - School employs a process to identify students at risk of not meeting expectations and creates intervention plans and follow up
    - School demonstrates a comprehensive recruitment, enrollment and retention approach that is sensitive to the diverse needs of students
    - School admission policy and lottery preferences serve to create a student body that reflects community demographics and give a preference to community school district residents
  - Safety and Security

- School is well maintained
- Transitions and student gatherings are orderly and well supervised
- Expectations for student behavior are well known and are enforced fairly
- School is current with all safety recruitments and drills.
- AED machines are in operation and school staff is trained in CPR

VOICE  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

MAY 2010

## Part 1: Executive Summary

### School Overview and History:

VOICE Charter School is an elementary/middle school serving approximately 150 students from kindergarten through grade 2 in the 2009-2010 school year.<sup>1</sup> The school opened in 2008 with grades K-1 and plans to grow to serve students in K-8.<sup>2</sup> It is currently housed in a DOE facility in District 30.<sup>3</sup>

The school population comprises 16% Black, 47% Hispanic, 21% White, and 15% Asian students. 66% of students are designated at Title I.<sup>4</sup> The student body includes 13% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 39% of the students enrolled and girls account for 61%.<sup>5</sup>

The school is in its second year of operation and has not yet received a Progress Report. It is in good standing with state/federal accountability.

### Annual Review Process Overview:

The NYC DOE Charter Schools Office conducts an annual site visit of New York City Department of Education authorized charter schools in order to assess three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a viable organization; and is the school in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The visits are conducted by representatives of the New York City Department of Education Charter Schools Office Accountability Team and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the principal and school leadership team. Subsequently, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators, teachers, and students. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security.

The following experts participated in the review of this school:

- Robert Galli, Education Consultant
- Aamir Raza, Director of Oversight and Policy, NYC DOE Charter Schools Office

---

<sup>1</sup> NYC DOE ATS system

<sup>2</sup> NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

<sup>3</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

<sup>4</sup> Demographic Data drawn from NYC DOE ATS System; Title I percentage from 2008 NY State Report Cards

<sup>5</sup> Student Demographic data is inputted by school staff into the ATS enrollment database and summarized by NYC DOE staff.

## Part 2: Findings

### What the school does well

- The school has developed a healthy learning environment that nurtures, motivates and challenges students to achieve the highest level of academic excellence.
  - Rigorous and standards-driven curricula are utilized to meet the individual needs of students.
  - A concept of efficacy rests at the core of the school's academic culture – the school follows the belief that all human beings are born capable of advanced study in all subject areas. This philosophy is evident as one walks throughout the school, viewing print-rich classrooms and hallways that display individual and group achievement on all grade levels.
  - Classroom teaching and planning are differentiated and child-centered. Strategy charts are displayed in classrooms with tips on good reading, good writing, how to find the main idea, and how to write a story.
  - Guided reading and independent reading activities enable students to focus on comprehension, building vocabulary and participating in clarifying questioning sessions.
  - Mathematics teachers use visual aides and manipulative tools to address the needs of different types of learners.
  - A daily morning sing-a-long has been instituted to develop a learning community based upon respect, excellence and academic performance; practice, focused learning and listening skills are all developed through these community activities.
  - Performance-based instruction in choral singing guides students to develop creative and higher order thinking skills that apply to academic subject areas.
- Benchmark assessments are used to evaluate student progress and assist with teacher planning and delivery of instruction.
  - Differentiated instructional strategies are used to focus on individual student assessments: coaches analyze test results with teachers and plan re-teaching strategies, group modifications, and targeted assistance.
  - The school employs a variety of assessments including Fountas & Pinnell, Dibbels, Foundations, Kodaly, and Rubrics.
- Professional development supports teacher excellence and high student performance.
  - Teachers receive training on implementing NYS Standards.
  - Teachers plan and work collaboratively to incorporate best practices on all levels.
  - Teachers demonstrate student learning by meeting lesson objectives, planning together, and reviewing assessments, rubrics, tests, work samples and projects.
- Parent and community connections support the mission and vision of the school
  - Parents demonstrate a high interest in the school and curricula by attending parent conferences in large numbers and volunteering during the day to assist with school projects.
  - Parents understand and endorse the Parent Involvement Policy.
  - Parents assist with student attendance and homework completion, and participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.
  - The school has established outside professional contacts with Elmezzi Foundation, Public Allies, PAAP and the Noguchi Museum.
  - Special programs such as Usdan, Public Library Summer Reading Program and several music concerts all serve to enhance the school's mission and vision.
- The school is in good financial condition and maintains appropriate internal controls.

- As of May 31, 2010, the school possessed \$1,052,603 in current assets and \$875,718 in current liabilities. Therefore, for each outstanding dollar in current liability, the school possesses \$1.20 in current assets to meet its obligations.
- The school's long-term financial outlook appears good based on the total assets of \$1,090,065 and total liabilities of \$875,718. Therefore, for each dollar in long-term liability, the school possesses \$1.24 in long-term assets to meet its obligations.
- The school exercises appropriate internal controls on its financial systems.
- The school board is providing adequate and balanced oversight.
  - The board reviews reporting from the management, Terra Nova test scores, income statement and balance sheet, and attendance and suspension figures, among other data.
  - The board plans to continue improving the music program and engaging parents further in the school community.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- The school should continue to encourage teachers' collaborative work in supporting the school's mission.
  - Currently there is no space for teachers to plan and prepare lesson plans without distraction – the school should consider setting aside professional space for teachers to “call their own.”
- The school should continue developing purposeful structures a K-8 program at scale.
  - The school staff should begin to plan for higher level learning.
  - To sustain the focus on voice and the arts, the school should begin to look at and develop middle school curricula on instrumental practices.
  - The school should begin to plan for extending the elementary model through grade 8 or incorporating a middle school model for grades 6-8.
- The school should consider outreach efforts to diversify its student body.
  - In order to close the gender gap (39% males to 61% females), the school should develop a comprehensive plan to recruit and retain males.
  - Early parent outreach to the community coupled with an intensive program to expose the high quality instructional program with a choral component may encourage a wider participation in the application process.

## Part 3: Framing Questions

### FRAMING QUESTIONS:

Throughout the Renewal Process and the life of each school's charter, the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office uses the following framing questions to monitor Charter School success:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
2. Has the School Been a Viable Organization?
3. Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

### Annual Site Visit Rubric:

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?
  - Academic Goals and Mission
    - School components and curriculum align together and holistically support the mission
    - School has high academic expectations and employs strategies for the full range of students served by the school, including those at risk and those with special needs
  - Curriculum and Instruction
    - The educational plan is flexible and is adjusted to meet the performance levels and learning needs of all enrolled students
    - School implements programming to address the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs
    - Teachers demonstrate the use of differentiated instructional techniques to support the varying ways by which students learn
    - School has implemented programming for students who need remediation or acceleration
  - School Culture
    - The culture is strong, intentional, supportive and sustainable and promotes student learning
    - The school motivates all students and respects the diversity of learners and cultures in the community
    - School offers programs, activities or support services beyond academics to address students' social and emotional needs
    - School calendar and day are set to provide extra supports to ensure that students are able to meet and exceed academic goals
    - Schedule for communication to parents/students is timely and allows for due process, includes strategies to prepare students for transitions and strategies for those students who are not on schedule, presents a clear and fair system that complies with students' due process rights
    - Structures that foster the development of authentic, sustained, caring, respectful relationships among all stakeholders within school
    - Behavioral expectations and social supports that reflect the school's mission and comply with all applicable laws and regulations
  - Assessment
    - Establishes a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for student learning
    - Develops assessments that shape and inform instruction on an ongoing basis and develop data that's used to gauge student, teacher and school progress through formative and summative assessment
    - Student learning measured with multiple forms of assessments/metrics
    - Develops educational goals and performance metrics that are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reflect the Mission and Time-Specific
    - Develops assessments that are appropriately aligned with curriculum, instruction, and adopted standards

- Provides evidence of how data will influence instruction, professional development and curricular adjustments
  - Parent Engagement
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
    - Capacity to communicate effectively with parents and families
    - Parent engagement strategies that integrate and mobilize parents within the school community as conduits for student success
2. Is the School a Viable Organization
- Governance Structures and Organizational Design
    - School has articulated appropriate roles, responsibilities, and decision-making structure for school community members (including Board of Trustees and school leadership)
    - An accountability structure that provides effective oversight of the educational program and fiscal components of the school is in place and utilized
    - Board regularly reviews a data dashboard of student achievement and fiscal management that forms the basis for Board discussions and decisions
    - Board has diverse skill set that lends itself to strong educational / operational oversight
    - Board has an articulated process for ongoing policy development, Board member development and self-evaluation
    - Organizational charts are aligned with mission; roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
    - Board has developed essential strategic partnerships with organizations that support the mission of the school
  - Community Support
    - School Leadership demonstrated responsiveness to the unique needs and interests of the community to be served
    - School has established a presence in the community and has buy in from community members
3. Is the School in Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations
- Special Populations
    - Well-defined plan and sufficient capacity to service the learning needs of Special Education students, English Language Learners
    - School adequately addresses the academic and non academic needs of students in need of remediation, students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and gifted students
    - There is a coherent plan for meeting the non-academic needs of students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, and other populations
    - School employs a process to identify students at risk of not meeting expectations and creates intervention plans and follow up
    - School demonstrates a comprehensive recruitment, enrollment and retention approach that is sensitive to the diverse needs of students
    - School admission policy and lottery preferences serve to create a student body that reflects community demographics and give a preference to community school district residents
  - Safety and Security
    - School is well maintained
    - Transitions and student gatherings are orderly and well supervised
    - Expectations for student behavior are well known and are enforced fairly
    - School is current with all safety recruitments and drills.
    - AED machines are in operation and school staff is trained in CPR

# Quality Review Report

## 2008-2009

**VOICE Charter School**  
**37-15 13<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Long Island City, NY 11101**

**Board Chair: Mr. Richard Bayles**

**Dates of review: April 30, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer(s): Aamir Raza, Chris Hawkins, Fred  
Lisker  
&  
Jo Cheadle (Cambridge Education)**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Voice Charter School is an elementary school with 92 students from K-1 grade. The school population comprises 22.8% Black, 42.3% Hispanic, 19.5% White, and 15.2% Asian students. The student body includes 7.6% English language learners and 8.7% special education students. The average attendance rate for the school year 2007 - 2008 was 95%.

### Overall Evaluation

Voice Charter School (“VCS”) is a happy, lively and focused environment for learning. The principal is extremely passionate about the school, encouraging an enthusiasm for continuous improvement and a thirst for success in his staff. He successfully conveys a very clear vision for the school’s future and work is firmly in place to support the realization of this vision. Leaders speak convincingly about the school’s original charter intentions and of the plans to ensure that the vision is completely achieved. Strategic plans and supporting actions are however not yet committed to paper nor effectively shared with all staff to ensure a clear understanding of the path the school is taking. Actions do not include planned points for evaluation, based on measureable success criteria, to provide the school with concrete evidence that they are definitely progressing towards the desired outcomes. Leaders are acutely aware that such plans must be in place to guide the school on a daily basis. They also understand that staff members must be involved in action planning and the development of success criteria so that they understand their roles, responsibilities and interim goals.

The school has an interesting and effectively developing curriculum. Leaders and teachers place appropriate and important focus on the continual evaluation and improvement of learning and teaching. Gradually, this is leading to a better match between the work planned and students’ needs. Teachers are gaining skills and confidence in creating lessons that challenge all students at an appropriate level. The principal rightly focuses on ensuring consistency in all lessons, including specialist subjects. The school understands that continual emphasis on tracking student progress through careful analysis of data will support the accuracy of lesson planning to meet the needs of student subgroups. Currently, there is limited analysis of patterns and trends in outcomes for pertinent subgroups. Leaders have made a good start in building and tracking student data however, and have clear intentions to expand this work as an important next step.

Staff members are happy to work at the school and there is a strong sense of community. They work collaboratively and enjoy learning together. There are good opportunities for professional development on a team and individual basis, all of which have the ultimate goal of improving student learning. While there is some way to go to ensure that all teaching focuses on clearly defined learning objectives for student groups and individuals, recent curriculum work has enabled staff to develop more succinct and measurable goals for student outcomes. The school takes a serious approach to doing whatever is best to ensure effective learning. In its first year, there are significant indications that the vision for a successful school is very achievable.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- A thoughtful, earnest and passionate principal communicates a very clear vision of success for the school.
- There is a tangible focus on classroom learning and teaching, and a committed drive to improve student achievement.
- Leaders and teachers understand the necessity to have useful, informative data and to make regular analysis of this data to inform school development plans.
- Reflective curriculum development work is showing clear benefits to teaching and learning.
- Despite the challenges of the building and space, the learning environment is attractive, child centered and conducive to learning.
- A wide range of professional development opportunities meet individual teacher needs and support the realization of the school vision.
- Relationships are positive and respectful, teachers work well as a team and students are happy.

### Areas of concern

- School lacks detailed action plans to support strategies for achieving the school's vision, which need to include timed, measurable checkpoints to enable ongoing evaluation of progress.
- More collaborative processes for teacher development and planning need to be in place so that all staff members understand school priorities and recognize their roles and responsibilities in achieving them.
- Increase the depth of data analysis by focusing on trends and patterns for the school's pertinent subgroups.
- Improve goal setting by including measureable targets that lead students towards an expected outcome, and by supporting students in understanding their next steps in learning.
- A majority of school meetings shall take place at the school to encourage higher staff and parent participation.

## Part 3: Main Findings

### How well the school meets the Charter School Office's (CSO) evaluation criteria

**Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do and to monitor the student's progress over time.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

As a small school, teachers and leaders have very good knowledge of the skills and abilities of every student. There is also a well-developed awareness that 'data' comprises of more than just test scores. A deep understanding of each child's context for learning is highly important to the school. Beyond this, all staff members are acutely aware of the power of assessment data to support and guide planning for learning. As a former public school leader, the principal is well versed in the use of New York Department of Education systems for data collection and analysis. Although the school does not have sophisticated systems for data management and disaggregation, there is a clear understanding of how to analyze and interpret summative and formative assessment information in order to develop baselines for students and to identify patterns and trends in outcomes. Leaders and teachers share and use available data systematically and consistently. During grade-level meetings, teachers use growing data sources to guide their planning for new learning. They understand that curriculum development is intrinsically connected to ongoing assessment. Data drives this development work.

The principal and assistant principal successfully convey a positive message about the use of data. They encourage teachers to see the marked difference when learning is supported by a deepening awareness of current student outcomes, historical patterns of progress and contextual information that may affect or promote learning. While analysis of trends and patterns for the school's most pertinent subgroups is at an early stage, the school has built a significant foundation for future success through their understanding of why data is important, how it should be used and how its use encourages increasingly more successful learning and teaching.

**Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student's next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student's learning.**

**This area of the school's work is underdeveloped with proficient features.**

High expectations for all adults and students are tangibly evident at the school. The principal is a 'hard task master' in the most supportive and caring way. Work ethic is good and centered totally on meeting the needs of all students in the best way possible. Expectations are borne out in many ways, including attention to creating stimulating learning environments, the positive way in which teachers communicate with students and in staff members' 'buckle down and get on with it' attitudes to their work. The school places great emphasis on ensuring that students learning needs are met through

continued development of useful assessments and responsive curriculum. Teachers are working towards levels of appropriate challenge for all students. In these initial stages, there are strong indications that the setting of specific goals for groups and individual students will become strong in the school. At the moment, goals do not consistently include measurable interim checkpoints to provide an opportunity for teachers and students to 'check in' on progress and to establish the next steps in learning. Additionally, there are few opportunities for students to create their own simple goals with their teacher's support. Teachers work regularly in collaboration to improve this aspect of their practice. There have been fewer opportunities for them to work together to establish the main priorities for whole school development and improvement or to contribute towards identifying strategies and actions to secure success.

Despite its newness, the school has a quickly growing reputation. Parents have played a key role in this, through political action, grant application and community engagement. Their active role in supporting the day-to-day work of the school is also developing, and some parents have been volunteer helpers in classes. The school communicates regularly with parents regarding their children's progress. Leaders are aware that conversations with parents will become more meaningful when interim assessments consistently drive the setting of measurable goals that are shared with parents in anticipation of their support for learning at home.

**Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students' learning goals.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

Teachers say that this is a 'great community to work in', and it is clear that there are high levels of mutual trust and respect. Attractive classrooms reflect the commitment of teachers to providing a motivational environment for students. Bulletin boards are lively and stimulating and make the small space productive, interesting and comfortable. Relationships are good among staff. This is evident particularly in the successful joint planning for curriculum. With the support of a consultant, the school is growing a standards aligned curriculum, based on authentic assessments of student past learning. The teachers truly value this as 'doing what's needed' to support learning, rather than providing instruction based merely on 'what's on offer'. They are reflective of their practice and see the opportunity to be centrally involved in developing the curriculum as very valuable. Currently, concentration has been on English language arts and math content areas. The impact of this work is very evident in lessons, where students are engaged and motivated in their learning.

Curriculum development work is supporting teachers in making increasingly more effective choices about student groupings, setting of objectives and planning for learning that matches student needs. While skills and knowledge are still developing, student learning is generally encouraged by effective teaching and genuine thoughtfulness about student needs. Teachers know that they need further support to provide sufficient challenge to higher achieving students and this is a priority for development. There are currently some inconsistencies between general class lessons and teaching in specialist subjects. At times, teaching in specialist lessons is insufficiently differentiated for the range of student needs and behavior deteriorates. This is a particularly important issue,

since music and singing as specialist subjects are obviously a central theme for the Voice Charter School. The principal has already taken steps to ensure that planning and delivery of lessons is of a similarly high standard across all content areas. He is very aware that it is essential for all teachers to continue to collaborate on planning activities to ensure that everyone is 'working on the same page'.

**Quality Statement 4 - Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school's goals for accelerating student learning.**

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

As the school is very small, it is easy for the principal and assistant principal to regularly visit all classrooms. However, the principal and assistant principal place high emphasis on visiting classes on a daily basis because they know that it is important to provide ongoing feedback to teachers. Teachers acknowledge that leaders support them effectively and consistently, whether this is via helpful discussion following lesson observation, or by providing useful external support for specific aspects of teaching development. Teachers have personal plans for their professional development and the small team of teachers is confident that their practice is improving. There is a clear focus on the development of teachers' skills. The principal is determined to create a school where teachers 'want to be here because they know they can become great'. To this end, the school uses the whole month of August as a preparation period for the start to the school year. In addition, the principal relies heavily on a recruitment process that seeks to find potential teaching stars by first ensuring that they buy into 'what this school is about'. The careful hiring of staff members who totally share the vision for the school's future is an excellent strategy in securing success.

Good teamwork and a shared vision ensure that the school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis. Space is very tight and there is little room for administrative staff to have work or meeting areas. Everyone manages to carry out their duties effectively and harmoniously despite the limitations of the building. Leaders facilitate opportunities for teachers to observe each other's lessons, work together on planning and reflect on how well things are going. There is an obvious 'smoothness' to operations that emerges from good collaboration and a desire to make things work. From the early morning singing session that the principal leads in the hallway, to the 'huddling' around a table to hold meetings in the cramped area that the principal and assistant principal share, it is clear that people at Voice Charter just 'get on and do it'. At this early stage, the school has not yet had time to fully develop its desired range of community partnerships, but is fully aware of the value of encouraging and extending such relationships to enrich and enhance student learning experiences.

**Quality Statement 5 - Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student's progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.**

**This area of the school's work is underdeveloped with proficient features.**

The charter presents a school built on the principles of efficacy, arts infusion and professionalism. Although early in its development, the school has a solidly embedded

vision for the future and a distinct set of expectations to drive development. The principal acknowledges that it is a challenge to ensure that everyone is totally on board in these early days, but regular opportunities for reflection on 'where we are now' encourage all staff members to consider how well they are making progress towards the expected outcomes. Through such discussions, the school has already set in place informal self-evaluation procedures, successfully captured in the pre-review documentation. The school is taking the right steps to ensure that student outcomes are regularly measured and that teachers develop their work in direct response to student needs. The principal is very aware of how teachers are improving and developing over time. There are clear ideas about how the school will grow in the future.

As yet, the plans to address the core development priorities via agreed strategies have not been committed to paper. This means that everyone sees the 'big picture' but individuals are less secure about the specifics that will get them there. The school does not have a set of action plans with agreed success criteria to be measured at planned intervals throughout the year, giving a true overview of progress towards the achievement of the vision. The principal knows every step of what needs to be done, but without a central 'blue-print' document to guide the whole school in its work, it is difficult to remain focused on the main priorities and ensure that everyone knows their roles and responsibilities in reaching them. While the school is small, it is relatively easy to survive without a concrete plan for school development and improvement. As the school grows and new challenges are presented, for example an increase in the proportion of special education students, success cannot be left to chance. Without a collaboratively created strategy and action plans to address the schools agreed priorities; and in the absence of interim benchmarks to measure success at periodic intervals throughout the year, the school cannot be sure that it is making adequate progress in its intention to show how the arts can drive academic success,

**Quality Statement 6 - Monitor Effectiveness: The Charter School Board is proactive and diligent in monitoring its effectiveness and in undertaking its administrative responsibilities.**

The Board is responsible for the overall direction and fiscal well-being of the school. As such, the Board has the authority and duty to adopt policies and by-laws that are necessary to meet its statutory responsibilities and produce optimal academic results. Those administrative and daily operational responsibilities need to be delegated to principals, senior management/administrators, and board appointed officers to manage the school within the established policies. The principal /senior administrators, and board appointed officers should then be held accountable for performance.

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The VCS board is providing adequate oversight to the school and plans to evaluate the school leader at the end of the school year. The board receives regular updates from the school leader and by requesting financial (YTD Expenses, Cash Flow, Budget, Variance Analysis) and other data driven (attendance, testing type, dibels, e-class, retention, parent survey, scores) information as it relates to the educational programs offered by the school. The 15 member school board represents academic, music, legal, accounting, staff and parents, and financial expertise. The board mentioned three major accomplishments: opening of the school, hiring the right school leader and school staff,

and developing sound systems and structure in place. The school board has not conducted a self-evaluation of its assessment at this time but remains open to that possibility during a board retreat. The board identified four key goals for the upcoming school year: curriculum refining, starting the choir, hiring the right music teachers, and developing professional learning community to focus on individual child's learning goals. The budget preparation process is holistic and involves board members, administrators, staff inputs, and school leaders. The school board meets mostly off-site. A majority of school board meetings need to take place at the school to encourage increased parent and staff participation.

**Quality Statement 7 - Maintain Financial Viability: The Charter School and its Board maintain financial viability and control over the course of the academic year.**

A charter school shall be able to operate with an annual budget that reflects the expected revenue and expenses for the fiscal year. Since the revenue stream for charter schools tends to be based upon the number of students served (per pupil revenue) and the State and Federal grant (Title I funding, etc.) funding, a continued and growing negative net balance poses a threat to school's stability and the ability to fulfill its short and long-term financial obligations. In the end, it is worth noting that a school may implement and practice the best internal controls (procurement, check signing, balanced budget, etc.) and could still end up in a difficult financial condition. It is the ongoing financial information (cash flow, balance sheet, statement of activities, board approved budget), that determines the fiscal health of a school and keeps it solvent in the near future and beyond.

**This area of the school's work is proficient.**

The VCS board has contracted an audit firm to produce school's financial statements. The school maintains necessary financial documents to facilitate decision making at all levels. The unaudited balance sheet as of April '09 casts a good financial position with liquid assets totaling \$535,311 and current liabilities of \$440,088. The school is in good position to meet its short-term financial obligations. The statement of activities as of April '09 does not pose any particular concerns. The school provided the annual site visit team with a cash flow analysis projecting a positive balance of \$110,145 for June '09 period.

During the visit, the school officials were interviewed on the procurement process, check signing, randomly selected paid invoices were inspected, and fingerprinting documents were inspected. The school is following its adopted financial policies and has adopted sound internal controls. An appropriate balance of segregation of duties is in place among fiscal and operational staff. Paid invoices demonstrate that staff is following the process of purchase order approvals, ordering and receiving of goods, presence of packing slips and invoices along with proof of payment. The school has tagged all its assets for inventory purposes.

# Charter School Office Quality Criteria 2008-2009

<b>VOICE Charter School</b>				
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Gather Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, generate and analyze information on student learning outcomes and use it to understand what each student knows and can do, and to monitor the student’s progress over time.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty have...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
1.1 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of each student, classroom, grade level?			X	
1.2 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of special education students?			X	
1.3 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of English language learners? <b>N/A</b>				
1.4 an objective, constantly updated understanding of the performance and progress of ethnic groups, gender groups and all other categories of interest to the school?		X		
1.5 a measurement of performance and progress based on the school’s own past performance, and among students, classrooms, grades and subject areas?		X		
1.6 training, management systems and structures that support teachers in the use of school data to inform planning and instruction and to track the progress of students?			X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>				
			X	
<b>Quality Statement 2 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use data to understand each student’s next learning steps and to set suitably high goals for accelerating each student’s learning.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders and faculty...</i>	△	➤	✓	+
2.1 use collaborative and data-informed processes to set measurable, actionable and differentiated learning goals in core subjects for individual students and groupings of students and develop differentiated plans and timeframes for reaching these goals?		X		
2.2 use collaborative and data-informed processes to develop the school’s Strategic Development Plan?		X		
2.3 ensure that the achievement of learning goals, and the implementation of plans and timeframes for reaching these goals, is the central focus of school leaders, faculty, students and families?			X	
2.4 involve students in developing their learning goals and plans and in taking their next learning steps?		X		
2.5 convey consistently high expectations to students and their parents/carers?			X	
2.6 invite and enable parents/caregivers to provide useful information to teachers and the school about the learning needs and capacities of their children?		X		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>				
		X		

## DEFINITIONS

“**Analyze**” or “**analysis**” includes, but is not limited to, comparisons of:

- 2 the current and past outcomes of . . . individual students, administrative groupings and sub-groups of students and the school itself in core subjects;
- 3 the outcomes of different classrooms and sub-groups in the same grades and core subjects; and
- 4 the school’s Progress Report and other outcomes to those of peer/other schools

“**Assessment results**” include student outcomes on summative assessments (e.g., state ELA, math, science and social studies tests, NYSESLAT, Regents Exams, and Performance Based Assessment Tasks) and formative assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum (including Periodic, DY0, and teacher-developed Classroom Assessments).

“**Data-informed processes**” include analysis of Progress Report, Quality Review, Learning Environment Survey, Inquiry Team findings, assessment results and attendance data

“**Organizational decisions or strategies**” refer to a school’s use of budget and resources, staffing, planning, scheduling, grade structure, departments and teacher teams and other aspects of the school’s structure and organization that can affect student outcomes.

“**Sub-groups of students**” include special education students, English Language Learners, the other NCLB sub-groups, boys, girls, and other groups significant to the school.

<b>Quality Statement 3 – Develop Coherent Instructional and Organizational Strategies: The school uses rigorous curricula, teaching and organizational decision making to engage students and faculty in meeting all students’ learning goals.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
3.1 select core curricular approaches that facilitate and provide meaningful interim data and hold teachers accountable for the progress and learning of the students in their charge?			X	
3.2 provide a broad and engaging curriculum to enhance learning both within and outside the school day and hold teachers for making instruction interesting and compelling?			X	
3.3 hold teachers accountable for creating a positive, safe and inclusive learning environment?			X	
3.4 ensure that teachers use school, classroom and student data to plan for and provide differentiated instruction that meets the specific needs of all the students in their charge?		X		
3.5 ensure that there is an environment of mutual trust and respect between all staff and students to support personal and academic development?			X	
3.6 ensure that there are effective and consistently applied procedures to encourage and monitor student attendance and tardiness and report actual attendance data?			X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X	
<b>Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building to Goals: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals for accelerating student learning.</b>				
<i>To what extent do school leaders...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
4.1 use frequent observations of classroom teaching by the principal and other available information to develop a differentiated strategy for improving the quality of each teacher’s instruction?			X	
4.2 make professional development decisions strategically, based on data, to help meet the improvement goals of students and teachers?			X	
4.3 provide frequent opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s classroom instruction and to meet together in teams to plan, share effective practices, and evaluate one another’s instruction in an open and reflective professional environment?			X	
4.4 develop effective procedures for the induction and support of teachers who are new to the profession or the school?			X	
4.5 align youth development, guidance/advising, other student support services and partnerships with outside entities around stated academic and personal development goals?		X		
4.6 consistently implement clear procedures that enable the school to run smoothly, encourage effective learning and effectively address discipline-related incidents?			X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X	
<b>Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating each student’s progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.</b>				
<i>To what extent do...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
5.1 the school’s plans for improving student outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?		X		
5.2 the school’s plans for improving teacher outcomes include interim goals that are objectively measurable and have suitable time frames for measuring success and making adjustments?		X		
5.3 teachers and faculty use periodic assessments and other diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of plans and interventions for individual and groups of students in key areas?			X	
5.4 teachers and school leaders use the information generated by periodic assessments and other progress measures to revise plans immediately and make strategic decisions to modify practices in order to reach stated goals?			X	
5.5 school leaders and staff use each plan’s interim and final outcomes to drive the next stage of goal setting and improvement planning?		X		
5.6 the principal and school community have a clear vision for the future development of the school and implement procedures and systems to effect change?			X	
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>		X		

<b>Quality Statement 6 – Monitor Effectiveness: The Charter School Board is proactive and diligent in monitoring its effectiveness and in undertaking its administrative responsibilities.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the Board.....</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
6.1 ensure effective, broad outreach to create a student body that is representative of the school's Community School District?			X				
6.2 manage any conflict of interest within the governing body and throughout the school?			X				
6.3 hold EMOs, CMOs and school leadership accountable in their positions?			X				
6.4 ensure that teachers are provided with high quality professional development opportunities to further build on their professional expertise?			X				
6.5 respond to parent, staff and student concerns/complaints?			X				
6.6 provide ongoing training for board members so that they are able to fulfill the duties of their positions?			X				
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 6</b>			X				
<b>Quality Statement 7 – Maintain Financial Viability: The Charter School and its Board maintain financial viability and control over the course of the academic year.</b>							
<i>To what extent do the school and its Board.....</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
7.1 ensure that an independent auditor is appointed to undertake an annual financial audit, which is submitted to the OCS along with any other relevant documentation?			X				
7.2 comply with the adoption of an annual budget for the upcoming school year, which is submitted to the OCS for review?			X				
7.3 maintain an accurate balance sheet, statement of activities, year-to-date expense report and statement of cash flow?			X				
7.4 implement procedures that provide adequate internal control measures to detect and prevent financial fraud, such as bank reconciliation, revenue recognition and travel reimbursement?				X			
7.5 align financial decision making to analysis and evaluation of student achievement data?			X				
7.6 focus budget decisions on the priorities for school development and improvement?			X				
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 7</b>			X				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed

<b>Charter School Compliance Checklist</b>			
<b>Does the Board and the school . . .</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>In process</b>
1. have a documented policy for suspensions and expulsions?	X		
2. maintain up to date and compliant with IDEA Regulations for IEPs?	X		
3. send newsletters and other parent communications home in the predominant languages of the school community?	X		
4. implement a comprehensive special education program that complies with applicable governing laws?	X		
5. implement a comprehensive program for English Language Learners that complies with federal law?	X		
6. publish a schedule of regular board meetings that is easily accessible to the general public?	X		
7. ensure that accurate minutes from Board meetings are maintained and published?	X		
8. ensure that proposed contracts with EMOs and CMOs are submitted punctually to the OCS for review?	X		
9. maintain a functioning parent organization?	X		
10. ensure that parents are informed of the time and location of Board meetings that are open to the public?	X		