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Chancellor

**PENINSULA PREPARATORY ACADEMY
CHARTER SCHOOL
RENEWAL REPORT**

JANUARY 12, 2009

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I. Introduction

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.¹

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.²

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.³ 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;
- 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.⁴

¹ See § 2850 of the Charter Schools Act of 1998.

² See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

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

⁴ § 2852(5)

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.

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 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 Office of Charter Schools of the NYCDOE ("NYCDOE-OCS").

The NYCDOE-OCS 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-OCS 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.

Review Process

In preparing this renewal decision, the NYCDOE-OCS reviewed site visit reports from each year of the school's charter, annual reports, financial audits, achievement data and other information provided by the school in the Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School Renewal Application Part I: Retrospective, as well as additional data from the NYCDOE Progress Report.

In addition, a site visit was conducted at the school from October 14-16, 2008 by NYCDOE-OCS. Reviewers observed classrooms and reviewed documentation on finances, teacher certification, IEPs, curricula, student data, etc. The team also spent a great deal of time

interviewing leadership, the board of trustees, teachers, students, parents, teaching assistants, operational staff, behavior specialists, and other staff in the building. The review team consisted of the following individuals:

- Jeannemarie Hendershot, Associate Director of Accountability NYCDOE-OCS
- Jo Cheadle, Cambridge Education
- Fred Lisker, Senior School Improvement Specialist, NYCDOE Office of Special Education Initiatives
- Aamir Raza, Director of Oversight and Policy, NYCDOE-OCS
- Christopher Hawkins, Charter Accountability Analyst, NYCDOE-OCS
- Christina Grant, Deputy Director, NYCDOE-OCS
- Michael Thomas Duffy, Executive Director, NYCDOE-OCS
- Kalimah Geter, NYSED

After the visit, the team continued to review documents collected at the visit, requested additional data, and reviewed all documentation related to the school. All of this information was compiled, using the NYCDOE-OCS Benchmarks for Renewal, and are laid out as findings in this report.

II. School Description and History

The Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School (PPA) opened in September 2004 in the Intermediate School 53 building located in Community School District 27 in the Far Rockaway section of Queens. The school opened with grades K-2, serving approximately 127 students. Since that time, the school has grown to serve grades K-5 and nearly 300 students. The mission of the school, as laid out in the school's charter is:

The mission of the Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School ("PPA") is to create a challenging learning environment that values high expectations and academic success for every child. The goal of PPA is to prepare students for entry to the best high schools in New York City. The school will emphasize core skills, literacy acquisition across the curriculum, prepare students for critical and higher order thinking, employ standards-based and research-proven curriculum, and implement best educational practices. PPA will meet or exceed New York State Learning Standards, align student learning to those standards, and use a variety of assessments to measure student progress in skills and content learning. The school will support teachers with professional development opportunities aligned to the instructional program and will engage parents and the community as partners.

The mission statement is expressed slightly differently on the school's web site as:

The mission of Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School (PPA) is to provide meaningful opportunities for each child to develop the desire to learn and reach high levels of achievement in a safe positive, nurturing learning environment that encourages creativity, respect, positive self-esteem and the sense that all dreams are possible. PPA strives to become one of the finest public schools in America. Our school is built on the philosophy that ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN and we will ensure that students meet or exceed New York State performance standards.

The school's vision is expressed in both the charter and the web site as:

Our vision is to create a school that has high expectations for every child and challenges each child to surpass all State learning standards. In order for our vision to be realized, we believe philosophically that every child must be provided first with a strong foundation in the "three R's" - reading, writing, and arithmetic. Our children learn by doing (performance-based instructional model). Students are required to prove, through their projects and presentations, that they have mastered skills and gained knowledge in language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science. Once the basics have been mastered, the child will have a strong foundation from which to tackle higher order skills, and to achieve at high levels. Our goal is for every child to become a critical thinker and life-long learner.

The school was founded in 2004 by New York State Senator Malcolm Smith and Congressman Gregory Meeks. Senator Smith served as the school's board chair for the first three years of the school's operation. In 2007, the board's vice chair, Rosalind O'Neal, stepped into the role of board chair. She resigned from this role in the spring of 2008, and Jeany Persaud stepped up as board chair in the fall of 2008.

The school has signed a contract with Victory Schools, Inc., (VSI) for support services including, but not limited to: designing the educational programs and programs of instruction; selecting and acquiring on behalf of PPA instruction and curriculum materials, equipment and supplies; recruiting, interviewing, and supervision of most of the school staff aside from the principal;

managing the business administration; and designing and implementing PPA’s student recruitment and enrollment procedures.

In its first year of operation, PPA served Kindergarten, first grade and second grade. The school experienced significant attrition in its first year and struggled to maintain its enrollment. After the first year, the board of trustees terminated the first principal and all teachers who were uncertified in order to comply with the New York State Charter Schools Act (NYS Education Law §2854). In August 2005, Judith Tyler, the school’s current principal, was hired. In August 2008, an Assistant Principal, Marvin Griffin, was hired. The board also decided in the summer of 2008 that they would adjust the school’s budget to ensure one teaching assistant could be hired for each classroom. Since the school’s second year of operation, teacher attrition has been modest, not exceeding 35%.

During the first four years of operation, the school shared space with a middle school near the center of Far Rockaway (MS 54). Teachers, students and parents all disliked sharing the space as they felt that the middle school students negatively impacted the education climate they were trying to create. Now, PPA is temporarily located in two double-wide trailers in an isolated area near the beach in Arverne by the Sea that is currently under development and will be the future site of a new housing area complete with a town center and a school.

The tables below provide demographics for the student body at the school. This data should be used to understand the context in which the school has operated during this chartering period.⁵

Ethnicity

Race/ ethnicity	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	# of students	% of enrollment						
American Indian, Alaskan, Asian, or Pacific Islander	0	0%	0	0%	1	<1%	6	2%
Black (Not Hispanic)	123	96%	184	96%	216	86%	258	86%
Hispanic	5	4%	6	3%	20	8%	24	8%
White (Not Hispanic)	0	0%	2	1%	12	5%	12	4%

⁵ Source: New York State Report Cards, 2004-05; 2005-06; 2006-07; and Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School Renewal Application: Part I.

Other Demographics

	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	# of students	% of enrollment						
Limited English Proficient	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Free Lunch Eligible	65	51%	141	73%	149	60%	193	64%
Special Education	8	6.2%	13	6.5%	19	7.6%	24	8%

Enrollment

School Year	Grade Levels	Chartered Enrollment	Total Student Enrollment
2004-05	K,1,2	150	127
2005-06	K,1,2,3	200	195
2006-07	K,1,2,3,4	250	249
2007-08	K,1,2,3,4,5	300	298
2008-09	K,1,2,3,4,5	300	300

Oversight History

School Year	Year of Operation	Oversight Visit	Feedback to School
2004-05	1	11/17/04 and 5/23/05: NYCDOE	Two reports, indicating that the school address issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fingerprinting ▪ Title I funding ▪ providing related services to students with disabilities ▪ recruitment of English language learners ▪ teacher certification ▪ instructional leadership capacity
2005-06	2	6/9/06: NYCDOE	Report from NYCDOE
2006-07	3	3/29/07 and 4/12/07: NYSED	Report from NYSED requesting the school address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop expertise and diversity of board of trustees ▪ Professional development services and coordination ▪ Securing adequate facilities for 2007-08 school year and beyond ▪ Purchase an Automated External Defibrillator ▪ Strengthen parental and family engagement ▪ Revisions to the charter not approved by charter entity
2007-08	4	4/10/08: NYCDOE with Cambridge Education	Report from NYCDOE suggesting the school improve the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combine the different sources of data available into a format that teachers will find easier to use. ▪ Use the available data to understand the performance of different groups and cohorts of students, such as by gender or ethnicity. ▪ Create more opportunities for liaison between teachers and teaching assistants so that they can maximize the effectiveness of their respective roles. ▪ Provide continuing support that helps sustain and improve the developing skills of the newest teachers, particularly in terms of classroom management. ▪ Continue to develop teachers' effectiveness in differentiating instruction. ▪ Create external partnerships to promote the artistic and personal growth of the students.
2008-09	5	10/14/08-10/16/08: NYCDOE with NYSED and Cambridge Education	This report constitutes feedback and renewal recommendation from the visit.

Challenges

According to the school, some of the challenges PPA faced over the course of this first charter include:

- Having to start from scratch in year two with a new school leader and many new staff
- Locating as an elementary school in a middle school building created challenges for recruitment and enrollment stability since many families in the community did not have a high opinion of the middle school.
- Maintaining high attendance due to significant problems with transportation and the climate conditions of being located on the Far Rockaway peninsula.
- Difficulty in working with the Committee on Special Education to get services to students in a timely fashion; and
- Transitioning to new board leadership twice in two years.

III. Findings and Recommendation

A. Findings

Recommendation: NYCDOE-OCS recommends that the State Board of Regents approve the application for renewal of the Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School for a period of **3 years with conditions** consistent with the terms of the renewal application.

In order for the NYCDOE-OCS to recommend that a Chancellor-authorized charter school be awarded a five-year renewal of its charter, a school must show that it has met its goals as outlined in the charter or at least made consistent and meaningful progress towards meeting those outcome measures and goals. The NYCDOE-OCS has found Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School to be an academically successful school that is organizationally viable and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations pertaining to its current charter.

Based on the findings delineated below, Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School is an educationally and fiscally stable organization, has some potential to improve student learning and achievement, and meets the requirements of the Charter Schools Act and applicable law.

1. Has the School Been an Academic Success?

Finding 1:

NY State ELA and Math assessment results from 2006-2008 data for grades 3-5.

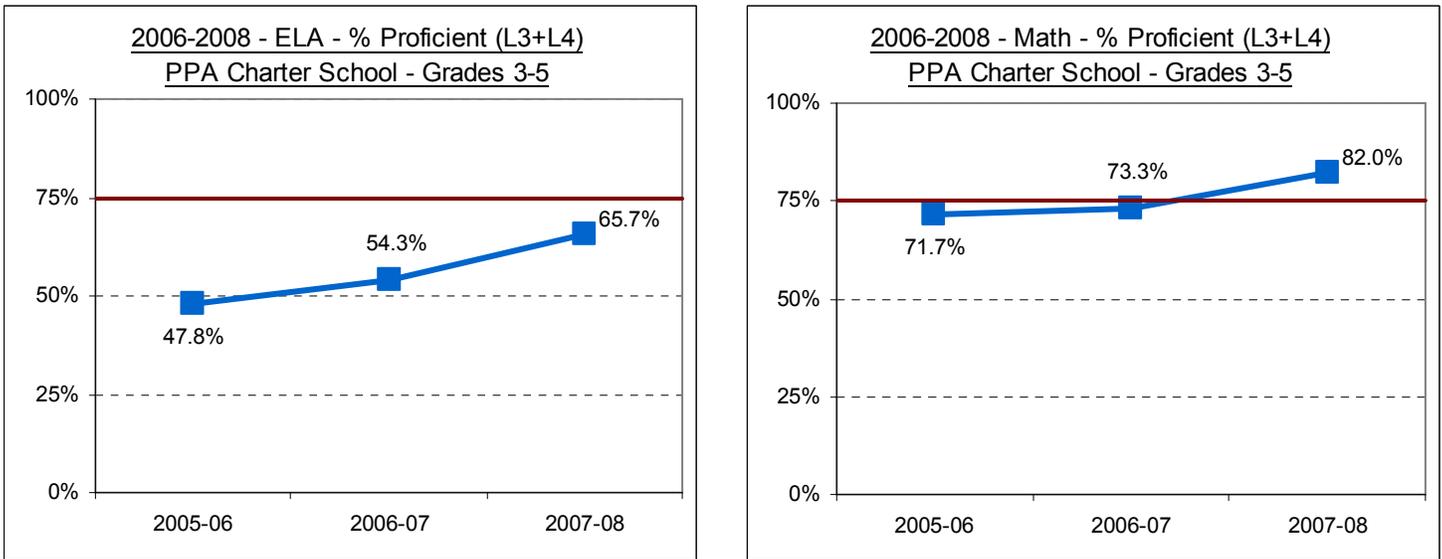


Table 1

In absolute terms, PPA has demonstrated consistent overall progress in its math and ELA scores, exceeding the NYCDOE-OCS standard for high performing charter schools of 75% proficiency in math. In comparative terms, the school has consistently underperformed CSD 27, the geographic district in which the school is located. However, in looking at comparable schools in the Far Rockaway community, the school's performance has been on par or slightly above these schools in some grades. The school has lagged on individual student progress measures as indicated by the NYCDOE Progress Report, particularly in math where only 45.7% of PPA's students made at least one year of progress in math last year. In social studies and science, the school has fared far better than its neighboring schools, the city, and CSD 27.

Finding 2:

PPA's curriculum is provided by Victory Schools and relies heavily on purchased materials such as Scott Foresman Math and Reading and Core Knowledge for social studies. Teachers are provided curriculum binders and a great deal of long term planning is conducted at the school. Teachers and teaching assistants plan together to inform small group interventions. DIBELS coordinators work well with the rest of the teaching staff to plan strategic interventions for struggling readers. Beyond DIBELS data, the use of data to plan and adjust lessons is relatively limited. This means that academic rigor is sometimes lacking since lessons are not adjusted for the needs of students seeking higher levels of challenge. While most teachers have only a few years of teaching experience, they find that the school provides them with a great deal of support for their professional growth. Overall, the school provides a thorough standards-based curriculum that prepares students well to excel in science and social studies, but could be adjusted to better serve students in ELA and math.

Finding 3:

Staff and leadership at PPA have created a safe, positive environment for learning. Students and staff are respectful of one another and monitor each other's needs through effective 'Responsive Classroom' techniques such as the morning meeting. The school is trying to move to a more achievement-focused culture and has begun this shift by changing the way they address their students to 'scholars', a practice used at many high performing charter schools. The school is bright and print-rich with an abundance of high quality student work posted in hallways and classrooms.

2. Has the School Been a Viable Organization?

Finding 1:

Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School's board has committed board members who are passionate about the mission and vision of the school. There has been a high turnover in the board leadership over the past two years and the current board is still struggling to find its niche. The board lacks long-term strategic goals, basic understanding of their role as the school's governing body, and knowledge of their role in holding the school leader and Victory Schools, the partner organization, accountable. There are board members who are knowledgeable in their area of expertise but may require further board development to better understand the roles and responsibilities of a governing board at a charter school. This may occur through discussions with other charter school boards. The board continues to publicize its membership by attaching names of elected officials that are not officially part of the governance structure of the school to the list of board members. Overall, the board needs extensive board development to govern in an effective manner. In addition, the board may benefit from adding additional board members that may have charter school governance experience as well as diverse skill sets beyond educational expertise.

Finding 2:

Peninsula Preparatory Charter School spends a good portion of its revenue on educational programs (78.8%) and overall, the state of finances at the school remains stable. The school lacks private donations or other endowments to further solidify its financial position given the current and continuing economic downturn. According to the June 30, 2008 audit reports, the school had over \$700,000 in liquid assets ready for use within 90 days. The school continues to maintain good internal controls in collaboration with Victory Schools, its partner organization.

Finding 3:

In general, parent satisfaction at the school is high as indicated by the school's internal surveys as well as the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey. The board of trustees has a mechanism in place to survey parents on their experience each time they come to the school to meet with staff, and the school maintains an active Parent Teacher Organization. Student attrition, however, has been somewhat high at the school (between 25-32%).

3. Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

Finding:

PPA has consistently complied with applicable laws and regulations, and has remedied most compliance related concerns in a timely manner. The school has submitted all Annual Reports and financial audits on time. Compliance with IDEA and Title I regulations has been consistent, and the school has notified the authorizer of all changes made to the charter.

B. Conclusion and Recommendation

The Department of Education Office of Charter Schools recommends that Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School, as an educationally and fiscally stable organization that will likely improve student learning and achievement, and meets the requirements of the Charter Schools Act and applicable law, be renewed for a term of **3 years with conditions** to serve grades K-5. No two consecutive short term renewals shall be granted. If approved by the Board of Regents of the State of New York, the school will have three years to clearly demonstrate its ability to meet the conditions of this renewal and the goals in its charter agreement.

The School will be offered this renewal with the following conditions:

Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School board of trustees must:

1. Ensure all board members undergo board development to better understand the roles and responsibilities of a charter school governing board;
2. Create a long term strategic plan with benchmarks and timelines for achieving these goals
3. Diversify the skill sets of members serving on the school's board;
4. Create a plan to hold the school leader accountable for student progress and performance at the school, including increasing academic rigor;
5. Demonstrate how it plans to track the school's charter performance against the goals in the charter as they relate to services provided by the management organization; and
6. Ensure that the percent of students making at least one year's progress in math increases from 45.7% to *at least* 61% of students by the end of the chartering period in the 2011-2012 academic year.

III. Discussion of Findings by Benchmark

A. Renewal Question #1: Has the School Been an Academic Success?

Benchmark 1A:

An academically successful school can demonstrate outstanding student performance outcomes according to the following statistical analyses:

1. Absolute
2. Comparative
3. Value-Added
4. NCLB

Discussion of Benchmark 1A:

As stated in Finding #1 (pg. 7), the School has not met all of the academic goals that it set for itself in its application.

Academic Goals:

1. All students at will become proficient in reading and writing of the English language;
2. All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematics computation and problem solving;
3. All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning; and
4. All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of social, geographical, civic, and world issues.

Below is the list of the twelve “geographically similar” schools which PPA is compared with throughout the report. For the purpose of analysis on the following pages, PPA’s performance is compared with only the performance of the same grades served at the schools listed below (3-5).

DBN	School Name	Neighborhood	Distance from PPA (mi.)
27Q253	PS 253	Far Rockaway	0.2
27Q197	THE OCEAN SCHOOL	Far Rockaway	0.5
27Q215	LUCRETIA MOTT SCHOOL	Far Rockaway	0.5
27Q104	THE BAYSWATER SCHOOL	Far Rockaway	0.8
27Q106	PS106	Far Rockaway	1.1
27Q043	PS43	Far Rockaway	1.4
27Q105	THE BAY SCHOOL	Far Rockaway	1.7
27Q333	GOLDIE MAPLE ACADEMY	Far Rockaway	2.5
27Q042	R. VERNAN SCHOOL - PS42	Arverne	3.0
27Q183	DR. RICHARD R. GREEN SCHOOL	Far Rockaway	3.1
27Q225	SEASIDE SCHOOL	Rockaway Park	4.6
27Q114	THE BELLE HARBOR SCHOOL	Rockaway Park	5.7

Academic Goal 1:

All students at PPACS will become proficient in reading and writing of the English language.

Analysis of ELA Test Scores^{6 7}

General Analysis:

Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School - English Language Arts Goals						
	Goals	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
Absolute	The school will make Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”) in New York State ELA exams, as defined by the State Education Department in accordance with NCLB.	n/a	In Good Standing	In Good Standing	In Good Standing	n/a
Comparative	A greater percentage of students enrolled in the school for two or more years will perform at or above level 3 on the New York State ELA assessments than will students at similar schools as defined by the New York State Department of Education (grade 4 assessment in Year 1, grades 3-5 thereafter). Compared to 12 similar schools in CSD 27.	n/a	PPA = 47.8% 12 SIM = 62.1% DIF = -14.3% No	PPA = 54.3% 12 SIM = 52.7% DIF = 1.6% Yes	PPA = 65.7% 12 SIM = 60.3% DIF = 5.4% Yes	n/a
Value Added	Each cohort of students will improve in reading skills by an average of 3 percentiles per year in national rank, according to the reading battery of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Cohorts will include the scores of all eligible students in grades K-8.	4.7 Yes	-16.1 No	-3.4 No	-1.5 No	n/a

Table 2

As shown in Table 2, PPA has met 6 of 10 English language arts goals established in its original charter.

⁶ NYC Department of Education Results of the City CTB-Reading Tests Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (2004-05) and NY State Assessment (2005-08)

⁷ The City CTB assessment given in 2004-05 cannot be directly compared to the scores achieved on the NY State Assessments given between years 2005-08.

1A.1 - Absolute:

Over the course of the school’s charter, PPA has made Adequate Yearly Progress in English language arts each year under the NY State accountability system. Although this is a worthy goal, the NYCDOE-OCS requires all new and renewed charter schools to adopt the goal that 75 percent or more of the student body attain proficiency (L3+L4) annually on the NY State ELA assessment.

ELA	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Grade 3	47.8%	61.2%	61.1%
Grade 4	-	46.7%	73.9%
Grade 5	-	-	62.8%
TOTAL	47.8%	54.3%	65.7%

Table 3

Table 3 shows the performance of students at Levels 3 and 4 in grades 3-5 at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School on the NY State ELA assessment over the past three years. The NY State ELA data over the past three years shows a trend of continued and consistent school wide progress towards the 75 percent threshold of proficiency standard for high performing charter schools as outlined in the NYCDOE-OCS Accountability Handbook Performance and Compliance Standards. However, by the end of the first four years, the school had still not attained this benchmark.

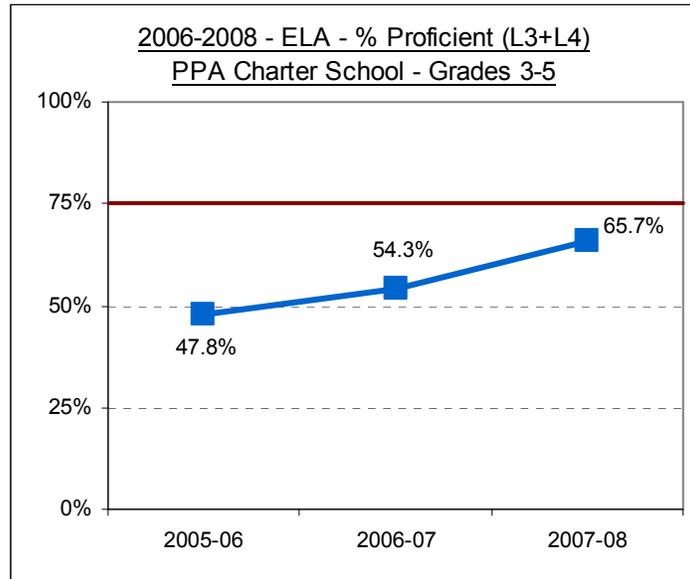


Figure 1

Figure 1 illustrates the performance of all students in grades 3-5 at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School on the NY State ELA assessment over the past three years as detailed in Table 3.

1A.2 - Comparative:

% Proficient (L3+L4) - NY State ELA Assessment - PPA vs. 12 Geo. Similar vs. CSD 27 vs. City												
Grade Level	2005-06				2006-07				2007-08			
	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY
Grade 3	47.8%	62.1%	70.8%	61.5%	61.2%	54.3%	61.4%	56.4%	61.1%	56.9%	65.8%	59.9%
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	46.7%	51.2%	59.3%	56.0%	73.9%	58.0%	65.2%	61.3%
Grade 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62.8%	66.2%	73.3%	69.2%
All Grades	47.8%	62.1%	70.8%	61.5%	54.3%	52.7%	60.4%	56.2%	65.7%	60.3%	68.0%	63.5%

Table 4

Table 4 compares the percent of OCS, host CSD 27 and NY City students attaining proficiency (L3+L4) on the NY State ELA assessment over the past three years.

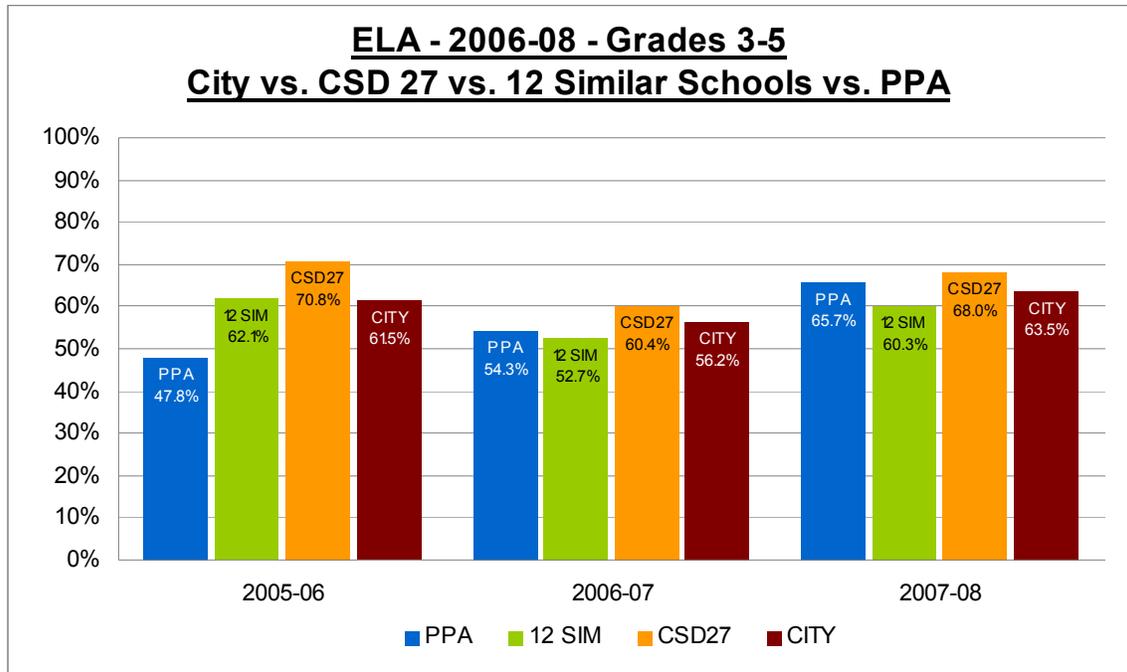


Figure 2

Figure 2 visually depicts the percent of PPA (blue), 12 geographically similar schools serving the same testing grades (green), host CSD 27 (orange), and NY City students attaining proficiency (L3+L4) on the NY State ELA assessment over the past three years. Over the past three years, PPA has steadily improved its performance on the NY State ELA assessment. Comparatively, in 2006-07 and 2007-08, PPA has surpassed the 12 geographically similar public schools in its region and in 2007-08 PPA eclipsed the City’s performance on the NY State ELA assessment.

1A.3 - Value-Added:

PPA Annual Goals Data- Aug2008 Update.xls
GoalIMI-ITBS Reading

	ITBS Reading Results							
	2004-2005 Cohort		2005 - 2006		2006 - 2007		2007 - 2008	
	Sept. 2004	May 2005	May 2005	May 2006	May 2006	May 2007	May 2007	May 2008
Mean NCE	38.4	34.0	70.8	33.0	62.8	43.5	56.4	44.2
Grade 1								
N	30	30	34	34	41	41	21	21
NCE Gain	-4.3		-37.7		-19.3		-12.2	
Mean NCE	37.2	39.4	47.8	42.7	33.3	41.0	46.2	46.6
Grade 2								
N	28	28	28	28	29	29	39	39
NCE Gain	2.1		-5.0		7.6		0.4	
Mean NCE	Only Grades 1-2 tested in 2004-2005		40.7	42.2	45.5	46.5	46.3	44.3
Grade 3								
N			24	24	31	31	38	38
NCE Gain			1.5		1.0		-2.0	
Mean NCE	Only Grades 1-2 tested in 2004-2005		Only Grades 1-3 tested in 2005-2006		40.4	44.0	46.4	48.2
Grade 4								
N					28	28	37	37
NCE Gain					3.6		1.8	
Mean NCE	Only Grades 1-2 tested in 2004-2005		Only Grades 1-3 tested in 2005-2006		Only Grades 1-4 tested in 2006-2007		46.8	46.7
Grade 5								
N							32	32
NCE Gain							-0.03	

Notes:
 Data source for 2006-2007 data is PPA ITBS Longitudinal Analysis2006-May2007
 Data source for 2005-2006 data is PPA ITBS Longitudinal Analysis2005-May2006
 Data source for 2004-2005 data is school's records

Figure 3

	ITBS Reading Results							
	2004 – 2005 Cohort		2005 – 2006 Cohort		2006-2007 Cohort		2007-2008 Cohort	
	Sep-04	May-05	May-05	May-06	May-06	May-07	May-07	May-08
Mean NCE	37.5	42.2	54.9	38.7	47.1	43.8	47.7	46.2
N	58	58	86	86	129	129	167	167
NCE Gain	4.7 (Grades 1 – 2)		-16.1 (Grades 1 – 3)		-3.4 (Grades 1-4)		-1.5 (Grades 1-5)	

Table 5

According to the results submitted by PPA in Figure 3 and Table 5, the school has only met its value-added goals twice English language arts during the four years of data with the 2nd and 4th grade in 2006-07. ITBS results raise some concern because across all grades and years, zero grades have mean NCEs at or above 50, which means that on average, students are below the national average for their grade level performance.

Academic Goal 2:

All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of mathematics computation and problem solving.

Analysis of Math Test Scores⁸⁹

General Analysis:

Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School - Math Goals						
	Goals	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
Absolute	The school will make Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”) in New York State Math exams, as defined by the State Education Department in accordance with NCLB.	n/a	In Good Standing	In Good Standing	In Good Standing	n/a
Comparative	A greater percentage of students enrolled in the school for two or more years will perform at or above level 3 on the New York State mathematics assessments than will students at similar schools as defined by the New York State Department of Education (grade 4 assessment in Year 1, grades 3-5 thereafter). Compared to 12 similar schools in CSD 27.	n/a	PPA = 71.7% 12 SIM = 75.8% DIF = -4.1% No	PPA = 73.3% 12 SIM = 77.8% DIF = -4.5% No	PPA = 82.0% 12 SIM = 78.1% DIF = 3.9% Yes	n/a
Value Added	Each cohort of students will improve their math skills by an average of 3 percentiles per year in national rank, according to the math battery of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). Cohorts will include the scores of all eligible students in grades K-8. (The math battery includes computation and problem solving subtests.)	13.2 Yes	-12.0 No	2.6 No	0.5 No	n/a

Table 6

As shown in Table 6, PPA has met 5 of 10 mathematics goals established in its original charter.

⁸ NYC Department of Education Results of the City CTB-Math Tests Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 (2004-05) and NY State Math Assessment (2005-08).

⁹ The City CTB assessment given in 2004-05 cannot be directly compared to the scores achieved on the NY State Assessments given between years 2005-08.

1A.1 – Absolute:

Over the course of the school’s charter, PPA has consistently made “Adequate Yearly Progress” according to the NYS Accountability System in math for every time that the school has been considered. Although this is a worthy goal, the NYCDOE-OCS requires all new and renewed charter schools to adopt the goal that 75 percent or more of the student body attain proficiency (L3+L4) annually on the NY State Math assessment.

Math	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Grade 3	71.7%	81.8%	90.4%
Grade 4	-	64.3%	89.1%
Grade 5	-	-	63.4%
TOTAL	71.7%	73.3%	82.0%

Table 7

Table 7 shows the performance of students at Levels 3 and 4 in grades 3-5 at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School on the NY State Math assessment over the past three years. The school shows a trend of continued and consistent school wide progress and in 2007-08 it surpassed the 75 percent threshold of proficiency standard for high performing charter schools.

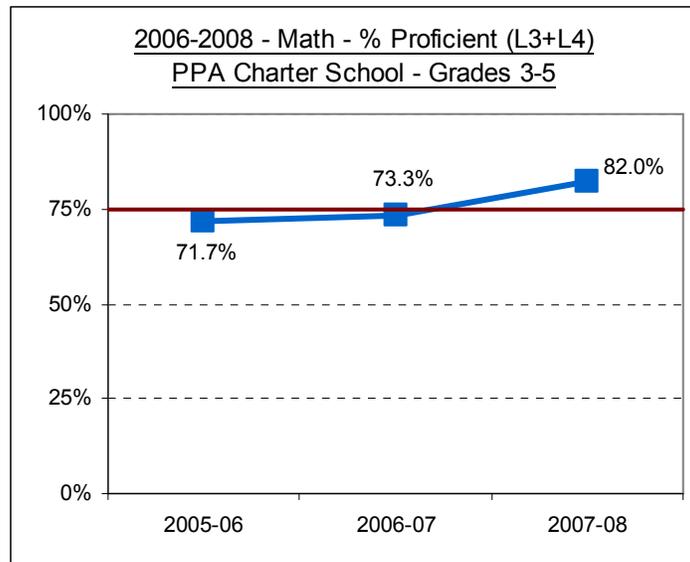


Figure 4

Figure 4 illustrates the performance of all students in grades 3-5 at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School on the NY State Math assessment over the past three years as detailed in Table 7.

1A.2 - Comparative:

% Proficient (L3+L4) - NY State Math Assessment - PPA vs. 12 Geo. Similar vs. CSD 27 vs. City												
Grade Level	2005-06				2006-07				2007-08			
	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY
Grade 3	71.7%	75.8%	82.6%	75.3%	81.8%	81.5%	85.8%	82.2%	90.4%	82.9%	90.1%	87.2%
Grade 4	-	-	-	-	64.3%	74.1%	80.3%	74.1%	89.1%	74.3%	83.8%	79.6%
Grade 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63.4%	76.9%	85.2%	79.2%
All Grades	71.7%	75.8%	82.6%	75.3%	73.3%	77.8%	83.1%	78.2%	82.0%	78.1%	86.4%	82.0%

Table 8

Table 8 compares the percent of PPA, host CSD 27 and NY City students attaining proficiency (L3+L4) on the NY State ELA assessment over the past three years.

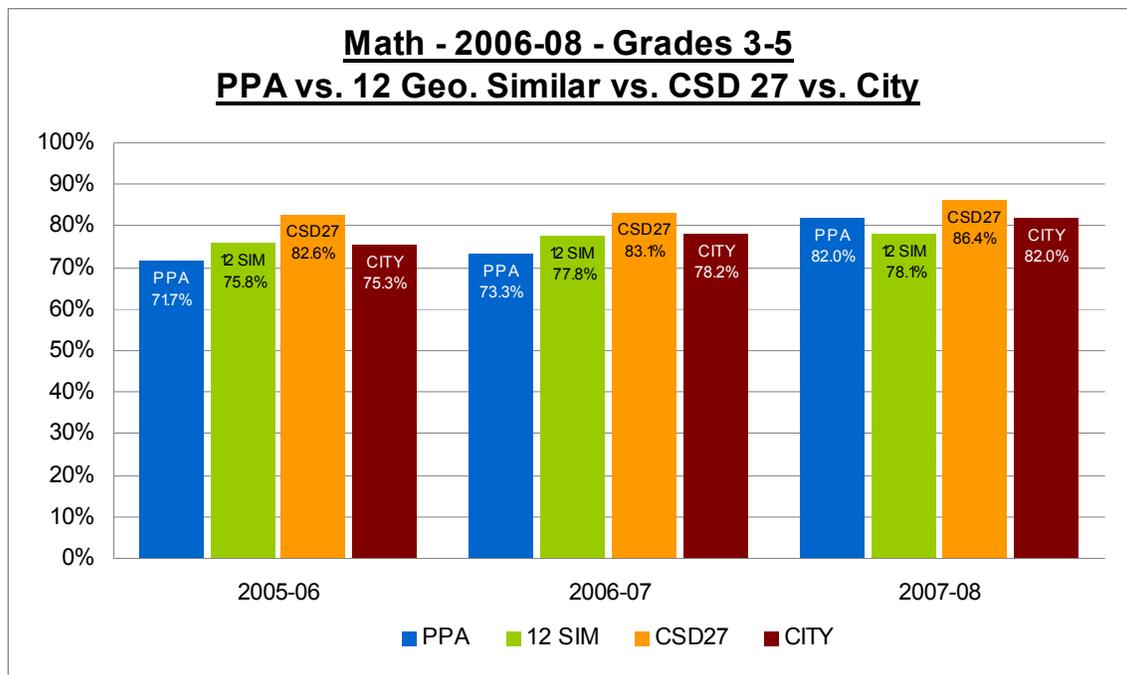


Figure 5

Figure 5 visually depicts the percent of PPA (blue), 12 geographically similar schools serving the same testing grades (green), host CSD 27 (orange), and NY City students attaining proficiency (L3+L4) on the NY State Math assessment over the past three years. Over the past three years, PPA has steadily improved its performance on the NY State math assessment. Comparatively, in 2007-08, PPA has surpassed the 12 geographically similar public schools in its region and it has tied the City on the NY State math assessment.

1A.3 - Value-Added:

Goal2M1-ITBS Math

		ITBS Math Results							
		2004-2005 Cohort		2005 - 2006		2006 - 2007		2007 - 2008	
		Sept. 2004	May 2005	May 2005	May 2006	May 2006	May 2007	May 2007	May 2008
Mean NCE	Grade K	29.4	63.6	Only Grades 1-3 tested in 2005-2006		Only Grades 1-4 tested in 2006-2007		Only Grades 1-5 tested in 2007-2008	
N		35	35						
NCE Gain		34.1							
Mean NCE	Grade 1	41.1	34.0	63.9	32.6	47.0	37.9	41.1	40.0
N		32	32	34	34	42	42	41	41
NCE Gain		-7.0		-31.3		-9.1		-1.1	
Mean NCE	Grade 2	27.9	36.4	39.0	41.6	33.3	37.4	41.4	40.8
N		29	29	27	27	30	30	35	35
NCE Gain		8.5		2.6		4.1		-0.6	
Mean NCE	Grade 3	Only Grades K-2 tested in 2004-2005		38.8	38.8	42.1	59.4	42.2	44.8
N				22	22	31	31	41	41
NCE Gain				0.0		17.3		2.6	
Mean NCE	Grade 4	Only Grades K-2 tested in 2004-2005		Only Grades 1-3 tested in 2005-2006		43.8	46.0	60.3	58.4
N						21	21	36	36
NCE Gain						2.2		-1.9	
Mean NCE	Grade 5	Only Grades K-2 tested in 2004-2005		Only Grades 1-3 tested in 2005-2006		Only Grades 1-4 tested in 2006-2007		48.0	51.6
N								31	31
NCE Gain								3.6	

Notes:
 Data source for 2006-2007 data is PPA ITBS Longitudinal Analysis2006-May2007
 Data source for 2005-2006 data is PPA ITBS Longitudinal Analysis2005-May2006
 Data source for 2004-2005 data is school's records

		ITBS Math Results							
		2004 – 2005 Cohort		2005 – 2006 Cohort		2006 – 2007 Cohort		2007- 2008 Cohort	
		Sep-04	May-05	May-05	May-06	May-06	May-07	May-07	May-08
Mean NCE		32.3	45.5	49.1	37.1	41.9	44.5	46.3	46.8
N		94	94	83	83	124	124	184	184
NCE Gain		13.2 (Grades K – 2)		-12 (Grades 1 – 3)		2.6 (Grades 1-4)		0.5 (Grades 1- 5)	

Table 9

According to the results submitted by PPA in Table 9, the school has only met its value-added goals in math once during the four years of data. According to the breakdown by grade table above Table 9, the school has met their goal 5 out of the 11 times.

Academic Goal 3:

All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of scientific reasoning.

Analysis of Grade 4 Science Test Scores¹⁰

1A.1 – Absolute:

In 2006-07, 87.5% of students at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School scored at level 3 or above on the NY State Grade 4 Science assessment. In 2007-08, 88.4% of students at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School scored at level 3 or above on the NY State Grade 4 Science assessment.

1A.2 - Value-Added:

N/A

1A.3 - Comparative:

<u>% Proficient (L3+L4) - NY State Grade 4 Science</u>				
<u>PPA vs. 12 Geo. Similar vs. CSD 27 vs. City</u>				
	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY
2007-08	88.4%	66.4%	79.5%	74.7%
2006-07	87.5%	70.6%	79.9%	73.4%

Table 10

Table 10 shows that in the two years that PPA had a 4th grade, (06-07 & 07-08), the school outperformed the twelve geographically similar schools, CSD 27 schools and citywide schools on the NY State Grade 4 Science assessment.

¹⁰ Results of the NY State Grade 4 Science assessment (2005-08).

Academic Goal 4:

All students will demonstrate competency in the understanding and application of social, geographical, civic, and world issues.

Analysis of Grade 5 Social Studies Test Scores¹¹

1A.1 – Absolute:

In 2007-08, 88.6% of students at Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School scored at level 3 or above on the NY State Grade 5 Social Studies assessment.

1A.2 - Value-Added:

N/A

1A.3 - Comparative:

<u>% Proficient (L3+L4) - NY State Grade 5 Social Studies</u> <u>PPA vs. 12 Geo. Similar vs. CSD 27 vs. City</u>				
	PPA	12 SIM	CSD 27	CITY
2007-08	88.6%	76.4%	83.3%	74.3%

Table 11

Table 11 shows that in its first year serving grade five, (2007-08), the school outperformed the twelve geographically similar schools, CSD 27 schools and citywide schools on the NYS Grade 5 Social Studies assessment.

¹¹ Results of the NY State Grade 5 Social Studies assessment (2005-08).

Additional Data & Analysis¹²

2007 NYCDOE Progress Report: Student Progress Section:

	Your School's Score:	Your School	Peer Horizon:		Your School	City Horizon:	
	This Year	Relative to Peer Horizon	Minimum	Maximum	Relative to City Horizon	Minimum	Maximum
3 Student Progress (55%)							
English Language Arts							
Percent of Students Making at least 1 Year of Progress	61.6%	91.9%	41.1%	63.4%	84.5%	39.2%	65.7%
Average Change in Student Proficiency	0.06	53.4%	-0.07	0.17	54.3%	-0.09	0.19
Average Change in Proficiency in School's Lowest 1/3 of Students			0.13	0.44	NA	0.06	0.48
Mathematics							
Percent of Students Making at least 1 Year of Progress	21.4%	-36.6%	33.1%	65.1%	-37.9%	34.2%	68.0%
Average Change in Student Proficiency	-0.21	-19.0%	-0.15	0.18	-22.1%	-0.14	0.20
Average Change in Proficiency in School's Lowest 1/3 of Students			-0.12	0.44	NA	-0.07	0.47
<i>Student Progress Score:</i>	11.9						

Figure 6

The 2007 NYCDOE Progress Report for PPA (Figure 6) revealed that from 2006 to 2007, 61.6% of students at the school made one year’s progress in ELA and only 21.4% of students made one year’s progress in math. In math, this put the school significantly behind its peer schools and the city in terms of the progress it was making with students. The school has argued that a small sample size of 27 students hurt them in this measure, and that one use of assessment data is to make inferences about the quality of their performance in educating students, based on USDOE’s definition of statistically valid and reliable evaluation of public schools which forbids the use of groups smaller than 30 to evaluate a school. However, the NYCDOE Progress Report uses a methodology that only requires 20 students to evaluate progress. While the degree of confidence decreases as the sample size decreases, the progress of 27 students still provides interesting insight to a segment of the school.

¹² Results of NYCDOE – Progress Report – 2006-07 & 2007-08.

2008 NYCDOE Progress Report: Student Progress Section:

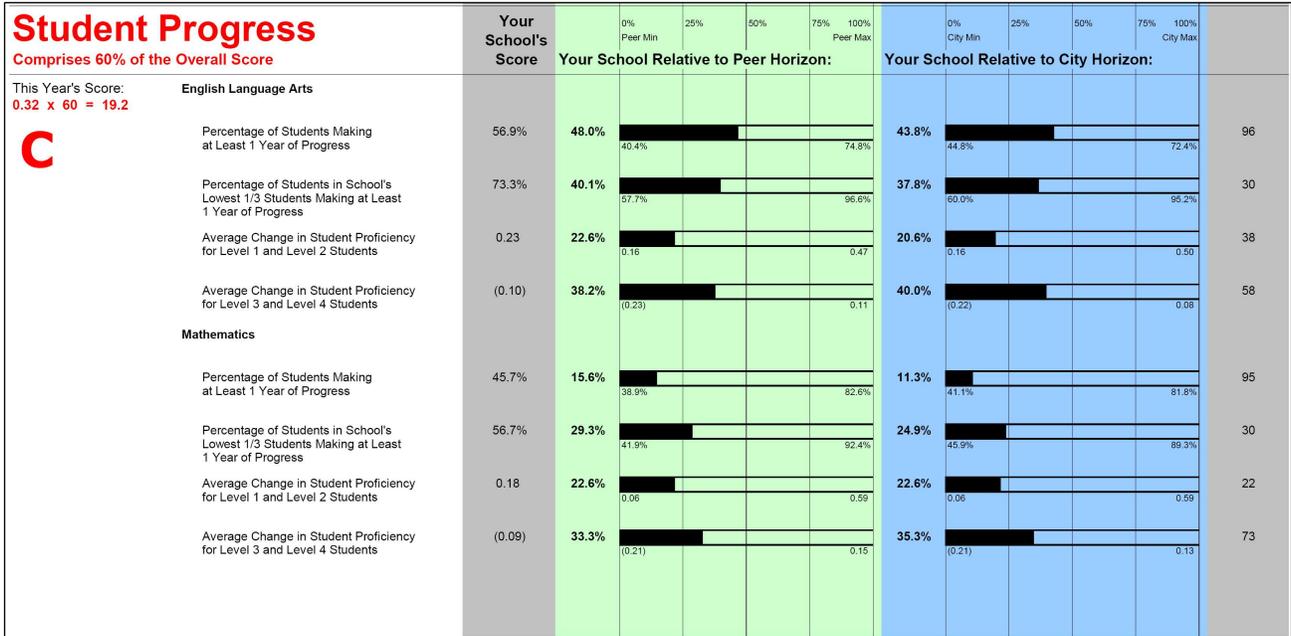


Figure 7

The 2008 NYCDOE Progress Report (Figure 7) showed that the school more than doubled the number of students making one year of progress in math from 21.4% to 45.7%, however this was still significantly less than the average percent of students making one year's progress in math at PPA's peer schools and schools across the city. In ELA, fewer students made one year's progress than had the previous year, and fewer students at PPA made one year's progress in ELA than students at other similar schools and schools across the city.

1 Year of Progress in ELA	
Top 2/3	49.1%
Bottom 1/3	73.3%
General Ed.	53.2%
Special Ed. ¹³	87.8%
All	56.9%

Table 12

1 Year of Progress in Math	
Top 2/3	38.8%
Bottom 1/3	56.7%
General Ed.	47.3%
Special Ed. ¹⁴	30.8%
All	45.7%

Table 13

Tables 12 and 13 show the percent of students making one year of progress on the NY State ELA and Math assessments from 2007 to 2008. It is clear from Table 12 that between the 2007 and 2008 NY State ELA assessments, PPA had a greater percentage of its special education students and those students in the school's bottom 1/3 of performance making one year of progress as measured by the state assessment than the percentage of general education students and those students in the top 2/3 of the school's population. It is also evident that on Table 13 that between the 2007 and 2008 NY State Math assessments, PPA had a greater percentage of its general education students and those students in the school's bottom 2/3 of performance making one year

¹³ Only ten students are included in this group.

¹⁴ Only ten students are included in this group.

of progress as measured by the state assessment than the percentage of special education students and those students in the bottom 1/3 of the school's population.

Benchmark 1B:

In addition to outstanding student performance outcomes, a school that is an academic success has the following characteristics:

1: A Rigorous Instructional Program that includes:

- Clearly-defined essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn, and that are aligned with state standards
- Curriculum that is organized coherently across subjects and grades, and reflects the school's mission and goals
- Academic expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students
- Classroom lessons with clear goals aligned with the curriculum
- Classroom practices that reflect competent instructional strategies
- Assessments and data that the school systematically generates and uses to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning, and that has led to increased student performance
- Formal and successful strategies to identify and meet the needs of students at-risk of academic failure, students not making acceptable progress towards achieving school goals, students who are ELL, and special education students

Discussion of Benchmark 1B¹⁵:

Clearly-defined essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn, and that are aligned with state standards

Victory Schools, Incorporated (VSI) provides a standards based curriculum with *Core Knowledge* as the centerpiece. The school also implements *Everyday Mathematics* and *Scott Foresman Reading*. In general, VSI takes responsibility for making sure that the curriculum is aligned to New York State Standards, however the principal says that she often supplements the curriculum to ensure deeper alignment. Augmentation of packaged curricula is done sporadically, however most teachers trust that what they receive in their curriculum binders is sufficient and they adjust lessons as needed. Reviewers saw this evidenced by the lack of revision on past lesson plans after they had been taught and the school wide practice of planning lessons up to six weeks prior to instruction, which leaves little room for teachers to re-teach concepts or revise lessons based on demonstrated student needs. Teachers create binders on grade level teams and VSI often provides some of the pacing guides for these binders. This planning is helpful in that teachers and leaders are aware of the plan for the year and the skills and concepts that must be covered to ensure students acquire the requisite skills in time for state assessments. However, work done to ensure pacing can sometimes hinder true differentiation because lessons are planned so far in advance. This means that through a strict pacing plan, it is inevitable that some children's needs may not be met unless teachers are given opportunities to revise the lessons and pacing according to the needs of students in their classroom. Reviewers saw evidence of this in some classrooms where pacing may have been too slow for the students who required acceleration. Likewise, interviews with students revealed that much of the work they had covered recently was review of things they already knew.

¹⁵ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08-10/16/08

Curriculum that is organized coherently across subjects and grades, and reflects the school's mission and goals

The school's mission states:

The goal of PPA is to prepare students for entry to the best high schools in New York City. The school will emphasize core skills, literacy acquisition across the curriculum, prepare students for critical and higher order thinking, employ standards-based and research-proven curriculum, and implement best educational practices.

In keeping with this mission, the school employs the VSI curriculum, much of which is planned and organized by staff from VSI. Because the same programs are used across grades, students become familiar with the structure of lessons, textbooks, and the Core Knowledge sequence. A great deal of professional development that teachers receive is structured around implementing the curricular programs adopted by the school. Core Knowledge is strong, as evidenced by the school's social studies scores and the great deal of project based learning on display in the school. Teachers, however, expressed difficulty executing and understanding the complex Core Knowledge curriculum, especially those teachers who are newer to the profession. Some teachers, however, said that one of the reasons they enjoyed working at the school was because of the curriculum, which has helped them grow as practitioners.

Academic expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students

Academic expectations are varied throughout the school. While the school is looking to raise expectations for students, academic rigor is lacking in many classrooms and higher performing students are not always given appropriate levels of challenge. Classrooms are print rich with evidence of student understanding of the curriculum, but some teachers expressed difficulty integrating Core Knowledge into the larger curriculum framework. Most students interviewed felt that the work they were given at school was often easy. Reviewers saw evidence of this in classrooms where some lessons were not paced quickly enough to meet the needs of students who had already mastered the concept being reviewed.

Classroom lessons with clear goals aligned with the curriculum

The quality of lesson plans is strong, primarily because they are provided by Victory Schools, Inc. In addition, through a new system of teacher evaluation being implemented this year, there is a clear evaluation rubric for lesson plans and teachers receive feedback on their planning via walkthroughs and formal observations. Detailed long term plans exist for almost all courses at the school, which while helpful, sometimes prevent teachers from being able to easily manipulate the lesson plans in order to foster student engagement and increase student performance based on individual need. Reviewers observed that learning objectives varied from class to class. In some classrooms, teachers articulated learning objectives by posting what students would learn or be able to do by the end of the lesson (i.e. Students will be able to identify the four layers of the earth). In other classrooms, lesson objectives were stated as tasks or activities, without a specific purpose for learning, or were posted without purpose and more to ensure that something was posted for compliance purposes (i.e. one objective read: Students will read Scramble States of America, which is really an activity and not a learning objective explaining the purpose behind the read-aloud).

Classroom practices that reflect competent instructional strategies

Teaching at the school is variable, with more experienced teachers demonstrating effective practice and real signs of ineffective teaching by newer teachers who struggled with classroom management. During the visit, reviewers observed that some teachers spent a great deal of time trying to refocus the class back into the lesson. There was evidence of the issues that first year teachers typically deal with like poor time management and ineffective use of the strategies they have been taught (i.e.: counting backward from 5 to get students to pay attention). Classroom management systems are in place, but they have not been mastered by many teachers. Across the school, every teacher uses a color card behavior system and the school is becoming more focused on using the Responsive Classroom strategy to manage school culture. As one teacher explained, “classroom management here is more of an art than a science” referring to the Responsive Classroom model which often requires more thoughtfulness and experience from teachers as opposed to a merit/demerit system that many other charter schools employ. Teachers indicate that there is no school-wide, actionable discipline plan which hinders student progress. Expectations for students performance are beginning to become more clear. For example, the school is shifting its culture of expectations by changing the way that the school addresses students (from students to scholars). Through classroom observations, reviewers found little evidence of challenge or rigor. This was problematic because posted work appeared to be of the highest quality. However, in some of the posted assignments, such as literary essays, rigor was more evident. Many students were quick to answer questions, some already knew the material that had been covered and some students were completely disengaged in the class material and had taken to what they saw as more interesting work, such as independent reading. Examples of student engagement practices varied across lessons. Teachers exhibited evidence of referring to previous lessons, which is an indication that continuity of learning is clear. Yet, it is apparent that some steps are being taken to address rigor, such as training teachers to ask more open-ended questions, which one reviewer observed happening during the morning professional development.

Assessments and data that the school systematically generates and uses to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning, and that has led to increased student performance

VSI has a contract with Princeton Review for the provision of interim assessments which are given three times per year. These assessments are aligned with the NYS Standards. In addition to Princeton Review Interim Assessments, the school uses a Scott Foresman Placement Screening, ITBS in the fall and spring to measure how students are performing against a national norm, the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) three times a year and more often for those students whose skills are at the intensive level, an Everyday Math baseline is given in September, and monthly unit tests within the programs are also administered. All regular assessments are created from packaged curricula and are aligned with the materials that direct the curricula. All posted work demonstrate rubrics that outline the task and expectations for student work.

DIBELS data is used well. Two coordinators hold teachers accountable to a tight testing schedule and ensure that student grouping is decided using that data. Teachers can all speak to how DIBELS is used in their classroom to drive reading groups and interventions. While the DIBELS data is used clearly for grouping, it is less clear how teachers are using the detailed strands of the data to ensure that students master every strand and concept. Intervention logs track teacher interventions in between DIBELS testing. In some classrooms, the notes on these Intervention Logs were very specific to skills students had or had not mastered; in other classes, notes consisted of general observations but were not skill specific. The school has just begun to

conduct error analyses of the Princeton Review and at the time of the visit, did not have all the data from the first assessment. Reviewers observed two grade level meetings focused on using this data, however it was unclear that the work they are doing will help them plan for the upcoming exams and how teachers will be held accountable to ensure that children's weaker skills will be addressed.

Evidence of long term lesson planning and tight curriculum schedules suggests that the school is not monitoring or modifying the effectiveness of their programs through the use of assessments and data. Teachers use anecdotal notes in reading groups to monitor learning and Intervention logs are used effectively in some classes to ensure varying student needs are met. DIBELS is used effectively to identify at-risk readers. Students who fall into the strategic level of the program are tested more frequently than students at benchmark. Teachers are then given more updates on what skills their at-risk students need to develop in order to become better readers. DIBELS coordinators review the whole school's results for trends and share that with the principal. Teachers review data with leadership at common planning meetings each week about the grade level. However, because some of the teacher corps is in its first year of teaching and has not been provided much development on the use of data to inform instruction, using this data to maximum effectiveness is still somewhat of a struggle. There is no clear accountability structure for the use of data aside from the use of DIBELS plans, therefore teachers are not as urgently attempting to make their classrooms and curriculum data driven. However, the new teacher appraisal system rates teachers for their use of data during lessons. The school is participating in the Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) project, and through this partnership, they have developed a schedule for teacher bonuses that will be tied to student achievement in individual classrooms and school-wide performance. This system may lead to a more strategic use of data going forward.

Assessment data at the school has been communicated in distinct ways. For example, parents and the board received a presentation on the NYCDOE Progress Report and the meaning of the Progress Report, but in interviews, the parents and board members also showed a lack of understanding of the school's performance on standardized tests (parents thought that the school had outperformed most schools in the community). The school has a very effective tool for daily communication about student performance, behaviors and other details, called the "Communication Notebook" which is used across the school by each teacher to communicate with parents daily. Parents often write questions or comments to teachers through these notebooks. During the visit, parents expressed the opinion that the communication notebooks are frequently and consistently used.

Formal and successful strategies to identify and meet the needs of students at-risk of academic failure, students not making acceptable progress towards achieving school goals, students who are ELL, and special education students

The school has several formal strategies in place to identify and meet the needs of at-risk students. The school uses Response to Intervention (RTI) to identify students who are at risk or may require a referral to special education. This multi-tiered process of intervention and support before referral is well-documented at the school and teachers are clearly able to articulate the data they collect to inform this process and the ways in which they plan for and track interventions. A Pupil Personnel Committee (PPC) is in place with the articulated function of, "assessing scholars' needs, serving as a scholar advocate, recommending interventions for within the general education classroom, and acting as a motivating force in removing barriers to scholar achievement."

SETSS, push-in and pull-out groups are led by some of the school's more experienced and effective teachers, and teaching assistants are used effectively to work on reading skills with consistent groups of students. This indicates that the school is allocating resources in an effective way to ensure that the needs of the most struggling students are met well. An Academic Success Team is in place to push-in to classes to intervene with students who need the supports. The school is currently using the *Scott Foresman* program "My Sidewalks" with students who are reading below grade level. These sessions occur daily in small groups. Grade level meetings show evidence of planning and honing in on specific instructional strategies. However, reviewers observed some misalignment between the school leadership and the teachers during these meetings, in the vision of how data will be used to drive instruction. The two meetings that reviewers observed lacked a sense of strong planning and urgency. One of these meetings was ineffective largely because the data shared with teachers at the meeting were not relevant to their students, but rather were samples from another grade level.

Benchmark 1B (continued):

In addition to outstanding student performance outcomes, a school that is an academic success has the following characteristics:

2: A School Environment that Promotes Successful Teaching and Learning that includes:

- An environment where students and staff feel safe and secure
- Behavioral and cultural expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students
- Documented discipline policies and procedures for general and special education students that the school enforces fairly and consistently with appropriate due process
- A professional culture focused on teaching and learning, with a qualified and competent teaching staff
- Professional development activities at or sponsored by the school that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school, support the instructional program, meet student needs, and result in increased student achievement
- A system for ongoing teacher evaluation and improvement that builds the school's capacity to reach its academic goals, with effective strategies to assist inexperienced or struggling teachers

Discussion of Benchmark 1B¹⁶:

An environment where students and staff feel safe and secure

Teachers and students interviewed during the visit expressed how much they enjoyed being at PPA. Students shared that teachers remind them to never be ashamed to ask questions and raise their hands, and so students feel they are in an environment where they can make mistakes. Teachers shared a great deal of excitement about being in their new building, where they feel like they have been given the opportunity for a 'fresh start.' They expressed that their colleagues all have high expectations and that the collaborative environment, which includes frequent discussions about instruction over lunch, has helped them to grow as teachers and to become better in their practice. In a morning professional development session, reviewers observed newer teachers coming forward with challenges and struggles they have experienced to their

¹⁶ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08-10/16/08.

peers, and more experienced teachers offering lesson modeling or observation as support. Teachers described the PPA as a good place to be challenged and a place to learn to become better at teaching.

Behavioral and cultural expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students

All teachers employ the use of a card system for behavior management and some teachers use a countdown method to call their classes to attention. The Responsive Classroom philosophy guides the delivery of expectations for student behavior at the school. In line with this philosophy, the school prides itself on its effective school wide implementation of Morning Meetings. Students can share during this time their feelings (by rating their day from 1-10) and teachers model a respect for students. These meetings are effective in creating a trusting, community atmosphere and they help students start the day by letting the classroom community know how they are feeling so that other members of the community can respect their needs.

The new Assistant Principal, Mr. Griffin, has implemented a system of core values called REACH (Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship and Hard work). These values are posted in the hallways and classrooms, and the assistant principal is working hard to ensure these values become entrenched in the school culture, particularly in his work as the main discipline figure outside of the classroom.

Transition time from classrooms to physical education or lunch is not entirely effective because there are few clear expectations established throughout the school. Hallway transitions often take longer than they should and time is sometimes wasted setting up laptops at the beginning of technology classes.

Documented discipline policies and procedures for general and special education students that the school enforces fairly and consistently with appropriate due process

During the visit the school provided a copy of its 2008-09 Parent Handbook which clearly documents discipline policies and policies for suspension as they apply to both general education and special education students. The school documents and tracks all incidents. According to the parents and students the reviewers spoke with, the school fairly and consistently enforces the discipline policy.

A professional culture focused on teaching and learning, with a qualified and competent teaching staff

Teachers and leaders at the school are very focused on teaching and learning, and everyone enjoys the development they receive to become better at their work. Morning professional development sessions are held once each week for 30 minutes, during which teachers often present a short strategy to their peers. Teachers also read professional texts and articles to help expand their understanding. All teachers at the school are certified and those teachers with more experience at the school are integral for supporting new teachers and the schools most struggling groups of students. The teaching staff, however, is very young, and most teachers have only a few years of teaching experience. This leaves the principal in a position of being both the instructional leader and the overall school leader. She often models lessons and runs professional development, but this leaves her with less time to focus on some of the other priorities at the school. Teacher salaries are relatively low at the school, and the school experienced some

attrition from last year to this year. The principal fears that the salary will not be sufficient for some of her teachers who are more experienced and looking to get married or start families. It is possible that these teachers leave for more lucrative positions in nearby districts, where many of the teachers live and teacher salaries are higher. The board understands this may be an issue, but at the time of the visit, they had not yet revisited the compensation policies of the school.

Professional development activities at or sponsored by the school that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school, support the instructional program, meet student needs, and result in increased student achievement

Much of this is provided by VSI, but reviewers observed a teacher-led PD during the visit that was focused on helping teachers maximize the effectiveness of their Morning Meeting, a component of the school's Responsive Classroom approach. Teachers, on average, seem satisfied with the professional development they receive from staff at VSI, many of whom visit their classrooms frequently and provide coaching to help them become better teachers.

A system for ongoing teacher evaluation and improvement that builds the school's capacity to reach its academic goals, with effective strategies to assist inexperienced or struggling teachers

The school has begun this year implementing a Teacher Appraisal System designed by Victory Schools, Inc. This system parses the evaluation process into four elements to help teachers develop and improve their practice: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, The Teaching and Learning Process, and Professional Responsibilities. Leaders determine how teachers are doing on each of the elements through a rubric and rating form used during walk-throughs (formal and informal). In addition, teachers complete a self-reflection, rating themselves on the different strands of the appraisal system at mid-year and at the end of the year. All of these elements aid in the creation of a Professional Improvement Plan in which teachers set three professional goals for themselves and set targets for student performance and progress for each content area they teach. This tool could be extremely effective for holding teachers accountable, but at the time of the visit, the system had only recently been implemented, and so reviewers were unable to assess the impact of the newly developed system. The school does not have a formal mentoring program for new teachers, but teachers appeared to have very supportive and collaborative relationships with one another.

B. Renewal Question #2: Has the School Been a Viable Organization?

Benchmark 2A:

A school that is organizationally viable can demonstrate outstanding non-academic performance outcomes according to the following statistical analyses:

- Absolute
- Comparative
- Value-Added

Discussion of Benchmark 2A:

Non-Academic Goal 1:

PPACS will demonstrate strong organizational viability by maintaining strong parental support and commitment to the school.

Overall, PPA has met 8 of 12 of its non-academic goals as broken down in Table 14 below.

Peninsula Preparatory Academy Charter School - Non-Academic Goals						
	Goals	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
Measure 1 Parent Satisfaction	In a yearly parent survey distributed to all parents, 70% of parents responding will report that the effectiveness of the school's academic program, communication and child's progress is "good" or "excellent" (on a scale of "excellent", "good", "satisfactory", "poor").	91.9%	94.0%	The results from the school report are invalid for the 2006-07 school year as the "number returned" (222) is less than the number that PPA reports in the breakdown of response types (234).	91.6%	n/a
		Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes	
Measure 2 Enrollment	During the school year, PPACS will maintain an enrollment level equal to or exceeding 90% capacity and a waiting list equal to or exceeding 10% of the school's population.	Enroll. = 127 Waitlist = 0 90%? = No 10%? = No	Enroll. = 195 Waitlist = 28 90%? = n/a 10%? = Yes	Enroll. = 249 Waitlist = 26 90%? = n/a 10%? = Yes	Enroll. = 298 Waitlist = 36 90%? = n/a 10%? = Yes	n/a
Measure 3 Attendance %	Each year, the average daily attendance rate of all PPACS students will be 90% or better.	89.7%	89.4%	91.2%	92.1%	n/a
		No	No	Yes	Yes	

Table 14

Measure 1 – Parent Satisfaction

According to the school’s internal parent survey, the school has demonstrated that more than 70% of parents have communicated that they view the effectiveness of the school’s academic program, communication and their child’s progress as “good” or “excellent” in three of the four possible years. The third year of data is invalid because the school has reported a discrepancy in the number of parents who responded and the number of parents who answered the question.

Measure 2 – Enrollment

PPA did not report on whether their total enrollment was maintained exceeding 90% capacity. However, because the school had zero students on the waitlist and a total enrollment of 127 with a capacity of 150 in the first year, the school did not meet this goal in 2004-05. Disregarding the 90% capacity measure, the school has met the goal of maintaining a waitlist exceeding 10% of the school’s population over the past three years, demonstrating some demand. The school has not expressed how it will work strategically to maintain demand going forward in its new site at Arverne by the Sea.

Measure 3 – Attendance %

The school failed to meet its attendance goal of 90% in the first two years of its existence. Over the course of the charter, the school has shown growth in achieving high rates of attendance and is now comfortably and consistently surpassing its goal of 90% attendance.

Benchmark 2B:

In addition to outstanding non-academic performance outcomes, a school that is a viable organization has the following characteristics:

Effective School Governance that includes:

- A clear and common understanding of the school’s mission, priorities, and challenges among all members of the board of trustees and school leadership, as evidenced by the strategies and resources used to further the academic and organizational success of the school
- An evidenced commitment to serving a student population that reflects the full range of students throughout the city.
- Policies, systems, and processes that facilitate effective governance of the school and that are followed consistently
- Meaningful opportunities for staff and parents to become involved in school governance
- Avenues of communication from the board of trustees to other members of the school community and vice-versa
- Communication between the school leadership and school staff that facilitates coordinated actions and messages toward other members of the school community
- Processes to address parent, staff, community, and student concerns appropriately and in a timely manner
- Annual evaluations of the school leadership, based on clearly-defined goals and measurements
- A board of trustees with a diversity of opinions and perspectives that promotes a healthy and vigorous dialogue of ideas
- A process for board development to build its capacity to oversee the school’s operations and to ensure the school’s continued progress
- A conflict of interest policy and code of ethics that are followed consistently
- Activities that are in substantial compliance with the Open Meetings Law and Public Officers Law
- An active and ongoing relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant documents, policies, and incidents, and makes recommendations as needed

Discussion of Benchmark 2B¹⁷:

A clear and common understanding of the school’s mission, priorities, and challenges among all members of the board of trustees and school leadership, as evidenced by the strategies and resources used to further the academic and organizational success of the school

The school’s mission lacks focus and does not lend itself to clear and measurable goal setting across the school. The lack of clarity affects the school’s ability to work towards establishing goals. The board members showed up over an hour late for the board meeting at a time when the school’s charter was up for renewal. During the visit, the majority of staff and board members were asked about the vision, goals, priorities and challenges of the school. One staff member responded by saying that the goal was to move students from 50% to 80% proficiency. During the visit, board members articulated their vision for students graduating the school was for each student to leave with portfolios of their as part of the mission of the school. Leadership cited that getting all students to proficiency was the main goal. This means that while all goals are well-intentioned, the board, leadership, and staff are not all speaking the same language about specific targets for students this year and beyond.

¹⁷ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08 – 10/16/08.

The board, however, demonstrated a willingness to align resources to best meet the school's goals, such as hiring new teaching assistants and creating an Assistant Principal position.

An evidenced commitment to serving a student population that reflects the full range of students throughout the city.

The school shared that their recruitment is done through visits to early childhood centers and through postings in *The Wave*, a local paper in the Rockaways. The school has not taken advantage of the mass mailing option provided last year by NYCDOE. Throughout the course of the charter, the waitlist has been considerably low compared to other charter schools in the city (at the time of the visit, 149 students were on the waitlist, a higher number than in past years). The school has never had any identified English language learners, despite CSD 27's ELL percentage of approximately 9%. The percent of students with disabilities is about 8%, which is approximately the same as the local district.

Policies, systems, and processes that facilitate effective governance of the school and that are followed consistently

Overall, the leadership of the board has transitioned several times, and the newly constituted board is struggling to identify its role in the school. The board has taken to getting to know the school, however, this has led to some confusion of roles, whereby the board sees itself in a position of support and day-to-day involvement rather than governance. This suggests that the board does not fully understand its role as a governing body rather than a supporting body. Yet, the transition to the private facility has complicated the board's task, and as they try to balance their attention between the new facility and the move, the focus on the academic performance has moved to the perimeters of their attention.

Meaningful opportunities for staff and parents to become involved in school governance and communication between the school leadership and school staff that facilitates coordinated actions.

Since the school's inception, there has been a parent representative on the school's board of trustees. This position is typically reserved for the school's Parent-Teacher Organization President. While this parent is actively involved in the board's membership, few parents interviewed at the school said that they had ever attended a board meeting. School leadership and school staff do interact well with the school community and exchange information frequently through communication notebooks. Within the school, it was less clear how messages and priorities for the school are communicated to staff from leadership and the board, aside from regular professional development meetings.

Annual evaluations of the school leadership, based on clearly-defined goals and measurements

There is initial evidence to suggest that goal setting is beginning to take place. One document addresses the need of evaluating the school leader moving forward. There is no evidence that this was done in the past. At the time of the visit, the board had not yet adopted a formal strategic plan, but reviewers were provided with two documents that indicated how the school leader would be evaluated going forward: a Principal Evaluation Instrument and a Strategic Goal Setting document where the principal set NYS performance targets for each grade in ELA and math. The Strategic Goal Setting document outlines the actionable steps and timeframes that the principal

and her faculty will need to take in order to meet these targets as well as some of the other school-wide objectives (such as improving the management of lessons and the use of data throughout the school).

A board of trustees with a diversity of opinions and perspectives that promotes a healthy and vigorous dialogue of ideas

The school leader appears to be struggling to manage a changing board, but conversations with the board of trustees suggest that the board is taking much of its lead from the school leader. It doesn't appear that there is much dissonance between the board of trustees. Board members appear to have very similar backgrounds, lack diversity of skills and have similar stances on the basic governance issues.

A process for board development to build its capacity to oversee the school's operations and to ensure the school's continued progress

The board lacks formal training in board governance, but they have begun development activities and have met with external consultants in order to build a strong board and culture. The board composition is currently lacking membership and skills to effectively oversee the school. At the time of the visit, the board consisted of five members: one parent, two individuals with educational expertise, one individual with legal expertise and a local parent advocate with significant experience in NYCDOE school leadership teams as a parent member. The board's lack of understanding its role as a governing body is a key contributor to the school not being a viable organization.

A conflict of interest policy and code of ethics that are followed consistently and activities that are in compliance with the Open Meetings Law and Public Officers Law

The school follows its adopted code of ethics and the conflict of interest policy. However, NYCDOE-OCS has noticed that the school continues to publicize a former board chair and a Congressman's name under the school's board of trustees. According to NYCDOE-OCS' records, these respective elected officials are no longer part of the governing board of trustees and resigned long ago. Understandably, the school wants to continue honoring the former board members and other contributors to the school, having elected public officials' name associated with the school at a time when they are not on the board may cause confusion for the general public and needs to be addressed immediately.

Parents communicated having been informed about board meetings at the school. The visiting renewal team found postings of board meeting dates at the school. The school notifies parents of board meetings via regularly published newsletters.

An active and ongoing relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant documents, policies, and incidents, and makes recommendations as needed

The school has an active relationship with an independent legal counsel that reviews relevant documents, policies, and incidents, and makes recommendations to the board.

Benchmark 2C:

In addition to outstanding non-academic performance outcomes, a school that is a viable organization has the following characteristics:

Healthy and Sound Financial Practices that include:

- A long range financial plan that guides school operations
- Realistic budgets that are monitored and adjusted when appropriate
- Effective oversight, and financial decisions that further and reflect the school's mission, program, and goals
- Internal controls and procedures that are followed consistently and that result in prudent resource management
- Capacity to correct any deficiencies or audit findings
- Financial records that are kept according to GAAP
- Adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations
- Processes that maintain and successfully manage the school's cash flow
- Non-variable income streams that support critical financial needs

Discussion of Benchmark 2C¹⁸:

The school had begun developing an initial plan around its operational and financial priorities as perceived by the board of trustees. However, it is unclear who will be carrying out some of initiatives (SWOT analysis, services provided by Victory Schools, etc.) started after the previous board chair's departure. The school does have a set of defined short-term academic goals and a developed relationship with elected officials.

The school's internal controls do not any concerns. During the renewal visit, school officials were interviewed on the procurement process, check signing, inspection of paid invoices, staff files, and fingerprinting of school based staff. All processes were found intact and the school is following its adopted financial policies. Paid invoices had the right purchase order approvals, ordering and receiving of goods, presence of packing slips and invoices along with proof of payment with proper signatories when checked in April 08'. The school has tagged its assets for inventory purposes. The teacher and staff files contained proper fingerprint clearance, W-4, I-9, and proper identification. Overall, the school has a good history of taking corrective actions on deficiencies identified in the school's audit report.

NYCDOE-OCS's review of the documents, policies and procedures and interviews with fiscal staff and board led visiting team to believe that most adopted policies are being enforced properly and the school is currently in good financial standing. The financial statements of Peninsula Preparatory were prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) acceptable in the United States of America.

According to the school's most recent audited financial statements for year ended June 30, 2008, the school possessed total assets totaling \$1,644,834 and total liabilities of \$365,845. All the total net assets totaling \$1,278,989 is unrestricted assets for use purposes. Peninsula Preparatory had over \$700,000 in liquid assets that could be converted to cash generally within 90 day period. The school spent a total of \$3,737,193 of which 78.8% was spent on educational activities and 21.1% on management and general expenses. The school has a partnership agreement with Victory

¹⁸ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08-10/16/08 and the findings of the NYC Department of Education

Schools to provide educational and fiscal services. Therefore, the 78.8% spent on educational activities is much higher. The school has not attracted significant contributions from private foundations or private donors and continues to rely solely upon governmental revenue streams. The effect of ongoing economic downturn still needs to be seen on many charter schools but more so on the schools that rely heavily on few reliable sources of funding.

The school's budgeting process is collaborative and involves principal, business manager, board members, and Victory School staff. The board receives timely financial oversight documents and updates that helps fulfill the duties outlined in the charter. The school continues to maintain the tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Benchmark 2D:

A school that is a viable organization has the following characteristics:

Parent and Student Satisfaction, demonstrated by survey results as well as other valid and reliable measures.

Discussion of Benchmark 2D¹⁹:

One hundred percent of parents at PPA participated in the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey. Overall, parents rated the school high in each of the four survey categories (Academic Expectations, Engagement, Communication, and Safety and Respect), with scores all exceeding 7.5 out of a possible 10. Comparatively, parents rated the school higher than 50% of parents in the city rated their schools.

During the visit, parents shared that they liked the school for its small class size and personal attention, for improving their children's reading levels, and for the high levels of support their children receive. Parents also cited improvements in the functioning of the PTO as a way to help them get more involved. In addition, parents were pleased with the events provided by the school, such as a "Meet the Teacher Night" and other family events.

¹⁹ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08-10/16/08

The chart below displays results from the 2008 NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey for PPA.

What do PARENTS at your school think? Each question is assigned to a category that represents an important part of a strong school learning environment. Below, you can see how parents at your school answered some of the survey questions. See page 1 for a description of each category.							
Survey Category	How satisfied are you with the following:	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied	Score	
Academic Expectations	The education your child has received this year.	47%	43%	9%	1%	7.9	
Communication	How well your child's school communicated with you.	41%	48%	10%	1%	7.7	
Engagement	Your opportunities to be involved in your child's education.	43%	51%	4%	1%	7.9	
Survey Category	How much do you agree or disagree:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Score
Safety and Respect	My child is safe at school.	49%	47%	3%	0%	1%	8.5

Parent answers on the survey determine the survey category scores from 0 to 10. These scores are used to compare schools on a scale from 0% (the lowest-rated school in the City) to 100% (the highest-rated school in the City). How do the answers of parents at your school compare to those of parents at other Elementary Schools?					
	Survey Score (0 - 10)	Progress Report City Horizon Score (0 - 100%)	Your School's Parent Scores Compared to Other Elementary Schools		Change in Score from Last Year
			0%	50%	100%
Academic Expectations	7.9	55%			N/A
Communication	7.7	57.9%			N/A
Engagement	7.1	54.5%			N/A
Safety and Respect	8.6	63.2%			N/A

How can YOU use parent survey results to help your school?
1. Review the Parent Report from your school to see how your answers match up with those of other parents at the school. Then view the results from the Progress Report and Quality Review from your school to get a full picture of your school's performance.
2. Talk with the principal, parent coordinator, your child's teacher, and other parents about ways to work together to improve your child's school.
3. Speak with your child about the results of the survey, especially if your child is in grade 6 or higher and completed a student survey.

How many PARENTS took the survey?	
Your School	Citywide
260 (100%)	347,829 (40%)

Benchmark 2E:

In addition to outstanding non-academic performance outcomes, a school that is a viable organization has the following characteristics:

Sufficient Facilities and Physical Conditions conducive to the school implementing its program and meeting its goals.

Discussion of Benchmark 2E:²⁰

Peninsula Preparatory Charter School is located in a private facility approximately 300 yards from the Far Rockaway beach. The school has adequate classroom and office space with a multipurpose room used for physical education and other activities.

²⁰ Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08 – 10/16/08

The school is temporarily housed in two double wide trailers. Across from the temporary site, there is an empty lot on which the school's permanent home is scheduled to be built. VSI staff interviewed during the visit indicated that it would be at least three years until the school could move into its permanent home.

In the current location, there appears to be sufficient classroom and office space, however, reviewers observed small reading groups that met at a large table near the rear of the second trailer, blocking one of the exits. The school should consider how to best hold this group session and keep all exits clear. Since the school has already reached full grade capacity, it appears that the current space should be sufficient until the permanent building is completed.

C. Renewal Question #3: Has the School Been in Compliance with All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

Benchmark 3A:

A school that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations has the following characteristics:

Sufficient Reporting that includes

- Annual reports and financial reports submitted completely and by deadline
- Responses to DOE's or SED's requests for information or for changes to school operations (in accordance with legal requirements) in a timely manner

Discussion of Benchmark 3A²¹:

The school has consistently submitted all Annual Reports, external audits and other requests for information in a timely fashion.

Benchmark 3B:

A school that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations has the following characteristics:

An Appropriate Admissions Policy that includes

- Opportunities for all interested parents to submit a complete application for enrollment
- A random selection process that is conducted fairly, and when a wait list is generated, it is used appropriately to ensure a fair admissions process

Discussion of Benchmark 3B²²:

The school conducts a blind lottery, giving preference to those students residing in Community School District 27. A wait list is maintained, and at the time of the visit, the number of students on the waitlist exceeded 150. The school's application is fair and was submitted to NYCDOE for approval last winter prior to making the application public to parents.

²¹ Discussion is based on review of historical documentation

²² Discussion is based on evidence gathered during the Renewal Site Visit, 10/14/08 – 10/16/08 and historical documentation.

Benchmark 3C:

A school that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations has the following characteristics:

A Record of Substantial Compliance with:

- Applicable health laws and regulations
- Title I regulations
- IDEA regulations to meet the needs of special education students

Discussion of Benchmark 3C²³:

SETSS is being provided to all students mandated to receive this support. At the time of the visit, reviewers noted that occupational therapy had begun recently after some delays in paperwork requiring completion from NYCDOE. At the time of the visit, there were 20 students with disabilities. A guidance counselor had been hired to work full time to serve both mandated students and other students requiring non-mandated counseling support. Related services are being provided according to student IEPs.

²³ Discussion is based on review of historical documentation