



Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
2013-2014

MANHATTAN CHARTER SCHOOL
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT

2013 – 2014 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview

School Information for the 2013-2014 School Year

Name of Charter School	Manhattan Charter School
Board Chair(s)	Paul O'Neill
School Leader(s)	Genie DePolo (Chief Academic Officer and Principal); Sonia Park (Executive Director)
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 1
Physical Address(es)	100 Attorney Street, New York 10002
Facility Owner(s)	DOE

School Profile

- Manhattan Charter School (MCS) is an elementary school, which served 274 students¹ in grades K-5 during the 2013-2014 school year and is fully at scale. It opened in 2005-2006, and is under the terms of its second charter. The school is located in DOE-operated facilities in Manhattan within Community School District (CSD) 1.²
- MCS enrolls new students in kindergarten, and backfills in first and second grades. There were 491 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2013 lottery.³ The average attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year to date, as reported in February 2014, was 93.3%.⁴
- MCS was renewed during the 2009-2010 school year for a period of five years, and is consistent with the terms of its renewal application.
- The academic leadership has remained stable, with Genie DePolo as the Chief Academic Officer and Principal of the school since July 2007. Operational leadership shifted, with the departure of the Chief Operations Officer in October 2013. The operations work was divided between the Director of Finance and Human Resources, Taylor Bernal, and the Operations Manager, Sarah Olle; both have been on staff for over two years and were promoted from operations positions within the school. In addition, the Board of Trustees voted to return to an organizational structure that included an Executive Director, who oversees both the operations and academics of Manhattan Charter School and its replicated school, Manhattan Charter School II. Sonia Park joined as the Executive Director in February 2014.
- MCS has one teacher and one assistant in each K-2 class as well as shared assistants for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classes as well as specials teachers (art, two for music, science, physical education). There were 12 sections of primary classes across all grades, with an average class size of 22 students.⁵
- The lottery preferences for MCS's 2013-2014 school year included the New York State Charter Schools Act required preferences of returning students, students residing in the community school district of the school's location and siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school, as well as allocating 18% of the available seats in each grade that is open for enrollment for applicants who indicate on their admissions application that they speak primarily a language other than English at home.⁶

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

² NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System database.

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

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

⁵ Self-reported information given on 9/16/14.

⁶ Manhattan Charter School's 2013-2014 application.

Part 2: Summary of Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the school an academic success?

Overview of School-Specific Data through 2012-2013

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Manhattan Charter School	59.3%	67.2%	67.5%	28.4%
CSD 1	47.8%	53.7%	53.7%	33.2%
Difference from CSD 1	11.5	13.5	13.8	-4.8
NYC	46.1%	49.4%	51.2%	28.0%
Difference from NYC	13.2	17.8	16.3	0.4
New York State	53.2%	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	6.1	14.4	12.4	-2.7

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Manhattan Charter School	69.2%	78.2%	79.4%	35.9%
CSD 1	60.2%	63.8%	65.0%	38.7%
Difference from CSD 1	9.0	14.4	14.4	-2.8
NYC	57.4%	60.0%	62.6%	32.7%
Difference from NYC	11.8	18.2	16.8	3.2
New York State	61.0%	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	8.2	14.9	14.6	4.8

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

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	B	A	B	C
Student Progress	B	B	C	F
Student Performance	B	A	A	A
School Environment	A	B	B	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.5

Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals

- According to its 2012-2013 Annual Report to New York State Education Department (NYSED), of its 25 academic performance goals, Manhattan Charter School met six, partially met five, and did not meet 12 of its academic performance goals identified in its charter. In addition, one goal was not applicable, and one goal could not be determined as the data was not available by the time of the report's submission.

Responsive Education Program & Learning Environment⁷

- The school reported that their curriculum has been fully aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Literacy Specialists and selected teachers created Literacy Frameworks, which are thematic Common-Core aligned ELA units and unit assessments. The school also implemented the EngageNY math curriculum.
- The school piloted the Jump Math program in the 4th grade sections, as part of a Johns Hopkins University study, to supplement the Engage NY math curriculum.
- The school continued to provide a lengthened school day for grades 3 to 5 from November to April, in order to support differentiated, small group work, and more time for math instruction.
- The school provided an extended year program for kindergarten students, by providing six weeks of summer school prior to the first day of the 2013-2014 school year. Students who participated in the program improved by an average of 35.6 points (out of 125 points) on the PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) test.
- The school implemented a Student Dashboard, which reports each student's interim and summative ELA and math assessment results for all available years, since the student was enrolled at MCS.
- The school reported that they implemented the Achievement Network (ANet) ELA and math assessments four times a year, and BMAS reading level assessments two times a year, along with Achieve 3000 reading quizzes.
- The school reported that they have Academic Intervention Services that provide targeted instruction to address the needs of individual students who may be struggling with certain skills.
- The school reported that they continue to offer professional development for teachers in grades K to 5, delivered by a math consultant, which develops the teachers' expertise in the math Common Core concepts.
- The school reported that they began implementing the Kim Marshall teacher evaluation system, holding 10 observations of 10-15 minutes for every teacher, with specific, actionable feedback within 24 hours.

⁷ Self-reported information from school-submitted ACR self-evaluation form on 2/18/14.

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

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

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

- The Board has nine voting board members. The Board Chair, Paul O'Neill, has served on the Board since June 2006.
- As recorded on Board rosters, two members who were serving as of March 2011 and December 2011 no longer served on the Board as of March 2014 and January 2013, respectively. The Board added three new Board members in May and June 2014.
- As recorded in the Board's minutes, there is a clear reporting structure with school leadership providing regular updates on academic and operational performance to the Board and its committees.

School Climate & Community Engagement

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

- The school experienced leadership turnover with the Chief Operating Officer departing in October 2013. The school had prepared for the transition, and reassigned the responsibilities between the Director of Finance and Human Resources and the Operations Manager. In addition, the Board of Trustees voted to return to an organizational structure that included an Executive Director, who oversees both the operations and academics of Manhattan Charter School and its replicated school, Manhattan Charter School II. Sonia Park joined as the Executive Director in February 2014.
- Instructional staff turnover was 28.9%; with 10 out of 38 instructional staff choosing not to return and one staff member was asked not to return for the 2013-2014 school year from the prior year. As of February 2014, during the 2013-2014 school year, one instructional staff member had left the school.⁸
- As of February 2014, average daily attendance for students during that school year was at 93.3%, which is lower than the school's charter goal of at least 95%.⁹ The school reported that they began working with the Family Association and their YMCA after-school provider in efforts to increase the student daily attendance.
- Student turnover was 2.6% of students from last school who did not return at the start of the 2013-2014 school year, and 3% of the students left the school between the start of the school year and February 2014.¹⁰
- The school reported having a parent organization, called the MCS Family Association.¹¹

⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/14/14.

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

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

¹¹ Self-reported information from school-submitted ACR self-evaluation form on 2/18/14.

2012-2013 NYC School Survey Results¹²

Categories	Result		Community	Response Rate	Citywide Rate
Academic Expectations	Average		Parents	96%	54%
Communication	Average		Teachers	100%	83%
Engagement	Average		Students	N/A	83%
Safety & Respect	Above Average				

Financial Health

Near-term financial obligations:

- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's current ratio indicated a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school had sufficient unrestricted cash to cover its operating expenses for at least four months without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2013-14 budget to the actual enrollment at the end of the school year indicated that the school had met its enrollment target, supporting its projected revenue.
- As of the FY13 financial audit, the school had no debt obligations.

Financial sustainability based on current practices:

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

Annual Independent Financial Audit

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

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

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

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

Board Compliance

The Board is in compliance with:

- Currently, all officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled.
- The Board's membership size meets the required number of nine members, as outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.

The Board is out of compliance with:

- The Board has not held the required number of Board meetings of 12, as outlined in its bylaws. Based on submitted Board minutes, the Board held nine meetings for the 2013-2014 school year, in which quorum was reached.
- The Board approved two new Board members at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. However, they did not submit the Board members for NYC DOE approval until April 2014, which is well past the five business days that schools are mandated to provide notification, as outlined in the school's monitoring plan.

School Compliance

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

- All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification.
- The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- The school has posted its 2012-2013 NYSED Annual Report and annual audit to its website, as specified in charter law.
- The school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 3, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

The school is out of compliance with:

- The school leader was not trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC as of May 2014, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

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

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

- Manhattan Charter School 2 opened in August 2012. MCS is evaluating the possibility of merging MCS and MCS 2, since the schools share leadership, operations, academic intervention, and special education staff. MCS is also considering the benefits to expanding from a K-5 to a K-8, since high performing middle schools have been identified as a need in CSD 1.

Enrollment and Retention Targets

As a reminder regarding accountability in the next charter term:

- Amendments to Article 56 of the New York State Consolidated Laws: Education, which relates to Charter Schools, call for charter schools, as a consideration of renewal, "to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets" for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The amendments further indicate "Repeated failure to comply with the requirement" as a cause for revocation or termination of the charter.
 - The law directs schools to demonstrate "that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students" in the event it has not yet met its targets.
 - The NYC DOE, as authorizer, will annually monitor the school's performance against these targets and the efforts it makes to meet this state requirement.
- While Manhattan Charter School served a higher percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced price lunch compared to CSD 1 and citywide averages in school year 2013-2014 (as well as during the prior four years), the school served a smaller percentage of English Language Learner students and students with disabilities compared to CSD 1 and citywide averages.

Special Populations

	Free and Reduced Price Lunch					Students with Disabilities					English Language Learners				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
School	75.7%	78.0%	81.5%	81.5%	81.0%	14.0%	14.4%	14.1%	13.1%	13.5%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.8%
CSD 1	61.7%	65.2%	63.7%	63.8%	67.0%	19.6%	19.6%	19.4%	20.6%	22.8%	9.5%	9.6%	9.3%	8.7%	8.0%
NYC	62.1%	65.3%	68.1%	69.8%	73.5%	15.9%	15.9%	15.7%	16.1%	17.1%	16.1%	16.1%	15.5%	15.0%	14.7%

Additional Enrollment Information					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5
CSD(s)	1	1	1	1	1

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