



Charter School Renewal Report
Charter Schools Office
2011-2012

HYDE LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

MAY 2012

Part 1: Executive Summary

School Overview and History:

Hyde Leadership Charter School is an elementary/middle/high school serving approximately 877 students from kindergarten through eleventh grade in the 2011-2012 school year.¹ The school opened in 2006 with kindergarten and grade 6. The school is under the terms of its second charter and is projected to expand to its full grade span, K-12, during its current term, which expires June 30, 2015.² The school is currently housed in 2 locations: grades K-8 are located in a Department of Education (DOE) facility in District 8, which is co-located with P.S. 168, The Vida Bogart School for All Children, and The Hunts Point School.³ Grades 9-11 are located in a private facility in District 8.

The school typically enrolls new students in kindergarten, but students were accepted from the waitlist in kindergarten through eighth grade in the 2011-12 school year. There were 493 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2011 lottery.⁴ The student body includes 84.7% Free and Reduced Lunch students, compared to 70.2% in the district; 12.8% special education students, compared to 19.3% in the district; and 6.3% English language learners (ELL), compared to 11.6% in the district.⁵ The average attendance rate for the school year 2011-2012 to date was 95.8%.⁶ The school scored Average on the Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety & Respect sections of the NYC DOE School Survey in 2010-2011; 72% of the school's parents responded to the survey, 96% of the school's teachers, and 95% of the school's students.⁷

The school earned a 'B' grade on the Elementary/Middle School NYC DOE Progress Report in 2010-11, a 'C' in 2009-10, and an 'A' in 2008-09. The school has not yet earned a grade on the High School NYC DOE Progress Report.⁸ The school outperformed its Community School District in two of the last three years on the state ELA exam, and in each of the last three years on the state Math exam. The school underperformed the city averages in two of the last three years on the state ELA and Math exams.⁹ In 2010-2011, 67% of tested students passed the Integrated Algebra Regents exam, 75% passed the Global History exam, 89% passed the Living Environment exam, and 47% passed the Earth Science exam.¹⁰ The high school has not yet had a graduating cohort. Based on 2010-11 state exam results, the school has been newly identified as being in Improvement status under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The school's current status is Improvement School: Year 1 – Basic, with its Areas of Identification being Elementary-Middle Level English Language Arts.¹¹

Annual Review Process Overview:

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) conducts an annual site visit of charter schools authorized by the NYC DOE. The site visit is designed to address three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization; and is the school in compliance with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations? To ascertain matters of sustainability and strategic planning, we also ask about the school's plans for its next charter term. The visits are conducted by representatives of the CSAS and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the school leadership team. Afterward, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators and

¹ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 3/29/2012

² NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

³ NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

⁴ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 3/29/2012

⁵ NYC DOE ATS system as of 4/3/2012

⁶ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 3/29/2012

⁷ NYC DOE School Survey – <http://schools.nyc.gov/survey>

⁸ NYC DOE Progress Report – <http://schools.nyc.gov/progressreport>

⁹ NYC DOE website – <http://schools.nyc.gov/> (search: test results); District and city averages are for the grade levels corresponding to the school's testing grades in specified years

¹⁰ New York State Report Card – <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>

¹¹ New York State Education Department - www.nysed.gov

teachers. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security. The site visit is intended to provide a snapshot of the school and reflects what was observed at the time of the visit.

The following experts participated in the review of this school on May 1, 2012:

- Sonia Park, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Bertram Wyman, Analyst, NYC DOE CSAS
- Jessica Fredston-Hermann, Analyst, NYC DOE CSAS
- Jaclyn Leffel, Chief of Staff, NYC DOE CSAS
- Lynnette Aqueron, Senior School Improvement Specialist, NYC DOE Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

Part 2: Findings

Areas of Strength:

- Hyde Leadership has enacted measures in order to be in full compliance with the 2010 amended Charter School Act. Targeted populations for enrollment and retention, Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) students are higher than the school's community school district, CSD 8.
 - The school has a population of 84.7% FRL students¹², higher than CSD 8's FRL rate of 70.2%¹³.
- Hyde Leadership has established a strong culture that promotes academic success.
 - On the day of the visit, no significant behavioral issues were observed and transitions were orderly and quiet.
 - In observed classrooms, a majority of students were on task and exhibited high levels of engagement with their work.
 - Classroom routines were evident in classrooms observed such as Do Now's to start class and Exit Tickets at the end of class.
 - Teachers were observed using positive reinforcement to promote appropriate behaviors.
 - The school utilizes teacher and student orientations and trips to build a positive culture. The school holds a week long "Hyde 101" new student orientation and conducts a camping trip for all rising ninth-graders.
 - The school's leadership promotes specific "Hyde" values to promote character development.
 - The school provides a variety of extracurricular activities to keep students engaged, including athletics, drama, music, Latin and Spanish.
 - Technology was utilized in several classrooms to differentiate the presentation of instruction.
- Hyde Leadership has developed several initiatives to support staff and further student achievement.
 - The school increased the number of Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms and hired an Assistant Director of Special Education.
 - The school has all new teachers visit the Hyde campus in Maine to learn about the Hyde philosophy and culture.
 - Teachers reported that they receive detailed and specific feedback from leadership after classroom observations.
 - Teachers reported that they receive supplies quickly when requested.
 - The school encourages teachers to apply for professional development (PD) outside of school-sponsored PD.
 - Interviewed teachers stated that they felt supported by school leadership and endorsed the school's character driven mission.
 - School leadership established a Latin program to advance ELA proficiency.
 - Child Study Teams meet to assess each student's academic and social issues. This team discusses these needs prior to making a referral for an IEP (Individualized Education Plan).
- Student's families are actively engaged in the school community.
 - The school holds monthly "Discovery" nights and mornings for parents to learn about curriculum, meet with school staff and attend seminars.
 - Parents are invited to attend workshops on financial aid to prepare for college.
 - High School parents receive school information through the website eChalk.
 - The school has a high attendance rate of 95.8%, improved from last year's 94.1%.¹⁴

¹² NYC DOE ATS system, April 2012

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 3/29/2012

- The school anticipates 80% of parents will attend 6 or more school events.
- Hyde Leadership is focused on preparing students to apply for college.
 - The high school offers a “College Bound” course, which explains the Common Application and teaches students about college application essays.
 - High school students have the opportunity to go on school-sponsored college visits.
 - The high school offers parent workshops to familiarize them with the college application process.
- Hyde Leadership employs various assessments to track student growth.
 - The school administers interim assessments and NWEA exams three times per year for students in the elementary and middle schools.
 - Exit tickets were administered across classrooms.
 - The school administers Fountas and Pinnell assessments to track progress in reading and writing.
 - The High School administers mock Regents exams to track student proficiency.

Areas of Growth:

- Hyde Leadership is encouraged to enact corrective measures in order to be in full compliance with the 2010 amended Charter School Act. Areas of concern regard meeting target rates for enrollment and retention for English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD).
 - The school is encouraged to continue to refine and document its outreach strategies for recruitment and retention of ELLs in order to be comparable to the district, CSD 8. Hyde Leadership has a population of 6.3% ELLs¹⁵, which is lower than CSD 8’s ELL rate of 11.6%¹⁶.
 - The school has a SWD population of 12.8%¹⁷, which is lower than CDS 8’s rate 19.3%.¹⁸
- Hyde Leadership is encouraged to continue to refine its data collection, storage and usage.
 - Interviewed teachers were unclear which data, including student work and behavior plans, followed students from year to year, especially from lower to upper schools. The school is encouraged to consider focusing on its use of longitudinal data.
 - Some teachers could not clearly articulate how they used data to improve their instruction.
- Hyde Leadership is encouraged to continue to focus on increasing academic rigor and improving instructional practice and effectiveness for all staff.
 - In observed classrooms, there was little evidence of higher-order thinking or extension questioning.
 - In some classrooms, teachers did not check for understanding, pacing was slow, leading to student disengagement.
 - There were few student work samples or exemplars posted in observed classrooms, and rubrics did not accompany the few samples that were posted.
 - Teachers interviewed stated that roles and responsibilities in the co-teaching model were not always clear leading to instructional inefficiencies.
- Hyde Leadership is encouraged to continue to focus on improving vertical alignment.

¹⁵ NYC DOE ATS system, April 2012

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

- Teachers interviewed stated there were not enough opportunities to communicate and collaborate between the Elementary, Middle and High schools.
- Teachers and school leadership stated the curriculum is not vertically aligned across grade spans.
- Several teachers expressed difficulty accessing students' performance data from prior years.

Part 3: Essential Questions and Accountability Framework

The CSO Accountability Framework

To help NYC DOE authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the NYC DOE's Charter Schools Office (CSO) has developed an Accountability Framework build around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

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

1. Is the School an Academic Success?

1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

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

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

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

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

1b. Mission and Academic Goals

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

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

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

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

1c. Responsive Education Program

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

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

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

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

1d. Learning Environment

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

- Have a strong culture that connects high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to give their best effort academically and socially
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Provide for safe, respectful, efficient transitions, hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Provide opportunities for students to actively engage in their own learning and in the life of the school

- Have a formal or informal character education, social development, or citizenship program that provides opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens

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

- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data
- DOE School Survey student results
- DOE School Survey parent and teacher safety and respect results
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)

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

2a. Governance Structure and Organizational Design

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

- Operate with a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly but not limited to open-meeting laws and conflict of interest regulations
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time and despite circumstance
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals; it also has clear lines of accountability for leadership roles, accountability to Board, and, if applicable, relationship with a charter management organization
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implemented a process for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's organization and leadership structure
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide regular feedback on instruction to teachers

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

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook, operations manual
- School calendar, professional development plan

2b. School Climate and Community Engagement

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

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and open to parents and community support
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, supporting, and evaluating leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- An effective way of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including the DOE School Survey
- Effective home-school communication practices to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships and advocacy for the school

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

- DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs

2c. Financial and Operational Health

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

- Consistently meet its student enrollment and retention targets
- Annual budgets that meets all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- School leadership and Board that oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Boards and school leadership that maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of chartered school design and academic program
- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations

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

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Financial audits
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational org chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan

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

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with their charter and agreement have:

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

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

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Site visits
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/board interviews

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have:

- Met all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Comparable enrollment of FRL, ELL and Special Education students to those of their district of location *or* are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages
- Implemented school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conducted independently verified fair and open lottery and manage with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employed instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and certification requirements

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

- School reporting documents
- School's Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student discipline records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have:

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

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

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

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

4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

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

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

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

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews

4b. Organizational Sustainability

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

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

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

- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organization chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

4c. School or Model Improvements

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

- Review performance carefully and even if they don't make major changes through expansion or replication, they are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success.
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission.

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

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and board interviews
- MOUs or contracts with partners