



Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
2013-2014

**THE ETHICAL COMMUNITY 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	The Ethical Community Charter School (TECCS)
Board Chair(s)	Jeff Meyer
School Leader(s)	Dr. Annette Keane
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 14
Physical Address(es)	700 Park Avenue, Brooklyn 11206
Facility Owner(s)	DOE

School Profile

- The Ethical Community Charter School (TECCS) is an elementary school, which served 262 students¹ in grades K-5 during the 2013-2014 school year and is fully at scale. TECCS was authorized in 2008-2009 and opened in 2009-2010. The school is located in publicly-operated facilities in Brooklyn within Community School District (CSD) 14.²
- TECCS enrolls new students in grades K through 5. There were 157 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 94.0%.⁴
- The Ethical Community Charter School (TECCS) is in its second charter term and will be up for renewal in the 2014-2015 school year.
- The 2013-2014 school leadership team includes Dr. Annette Keane, Principal; David Rosas, Assistant Principal; Robert Holczer, Finance Director; and Frances DeWindt, Operations Manager. The Principal has been with the school since 2012.
- TECCS had a student to teacher ratio of 10:1 in the 2013-2014 school year, and served two sections across all grades, with an average class size of 20.⁵
- The lottery preferences for the TECCS'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.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 2/11/14.

⁴ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/11/14.

⁵ Self-reported information given on 9/17/14.

⁶ TECCS 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 NYS assessment, compared to CSD, NYC, and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
The Ethical Community CS (TECCS)	-	-	30.8%	17.5%
CSD 14	-	-	50.6%	25.8%
Difference from CSD 14	-	-	-19.8	-8.3
NYC	-	-	49.0%	27.7%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-18.2	-10.2
New York State	-	-	55.1%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-24.3	-13.6

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
The Ethical Community CS (TECCS)	-	-	36.5%	15.5%
CSD 14	-	-	55.4%	29.7%
Difference from CSD 14	-	-	-18.9	-14.2
NYC	-	-	57.0%	34.2%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-20.5	-18.7
New York State	-	-	64.8%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-28.3	-15.6

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

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	-	C	D
Student Progress	-	-	F	C
Student Performance	-	-	F	D
School Environment	-	-	B	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	-	1.1	1.6

Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals

- According to its 2012-2013 Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), The Ethical Community Charter School fully met one, was not able to report on six, and did not meet four of its 11 academic performance goals identified in its charter.

Responsive Education Program & Learning Environment⁷

- TECCS instituted a strategic improvement plan for the 2013-2014 academic year to address concerns regarding student academic achievement. The improvement plan included five components:
 - Instructional Coaching
 - Focus on the High-Leverage Practice of Small Group Instruction
 - Data-Driven Instruction
 - Strengthening the Core Curriculum and Practices
 - Tutoring during the Afterschool Program and Saturday Academy
- TECCS Instructional Coaching improvement plan component was implemented as follows. TECCS hired two instructional coaches (K-2 and 3-5) in 2013-14. In addition, TECCS partnered with two math consultants (K-2 and 3-5) who also served as instructional coaches.
 - In this implementation year the following was accomplished in the area of instructional coaching:
 - System for ongoing teacher reflection, growth and evaluation
 - System for coaching cycles focused on high-leverage instructional practices
 - Bi-weekly grade level team meetings
 - Monthly half day workshops
 - Planning, modeling and co-teaching exemplary lessons
 - Monitoring teacher transfer through ongoing feedback on lesson plans and ongoing feedback from observations
 - Curriculum Development
 - Resource Management
- In the 2013-2014 school year, TECCS partnered with Achievement Network to implement an interim assessment system. Following quarterly administered assessments, Grade Level Teams meet with instructional leadership for an entire school day to analyze the results and create action plans based on student gaps in understanding of the standards. In the 2014-2015 school year, TECCS will implement a daily re-teaching period to ensure students' mastery of standards between interim assessments. Grade Level teams will meet bimonthly to monitor students' progress toward mastery of standards.
- TECCS meets the needs of all students through the support of an ESL Teacher, SETSS teacher, and Speech Teacher, all employed by TECCS, in collaboration with the classroom teaching team. In the 2014-2015 school year, TECCS will convert one classroom at each grade level in kindergarten, first, and second grade to an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom. TECCS plans to expand this model until there is one ICT classroom at each grade level, K-5.

Representatives of the NYC DOE team visited the school on June 11, 2014. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- Board and school leadership reported there is a far more strategic approach towards academics from the leadership level to teaching and learning.
 - The Board Chair reported being better informed to evaluate the school's academics through school leadership's use of performance dashboards that highlight math and reading interim assessments, enrollment information, program statistics, attendance reports, disciplinary data, and waitlist data.
 - School leadership reported the year's focus was academic turnaround.
- Ten classrooms across all grade levels were observed by members of the visit team and the following was noted:

⁷ Self-reported information from school-submitted self-evaluation form on 2/11/14.

- The school utilizes a co-teaching model. All classrooms had two adults.
- Differentiated instruction was evident in most of the classrooms. For example, co-teachers worked in small groups providing tailored instruction to groups based on reading comprehension levels. The tasks appeared to be tailored to address the academic needs of the students.
- Students were engaged and on task in most classes.
- Based on debriefs with instructional leaders after classroom visits, leadership reported that all classroom lessons had instruction that is aligned with the instructional model and priorities.
- On the day of the visit, one-on-one interviews were conducted with nine teachers.
 - All teachers interviewed reported receiving informal observations on a regular basis.
 - All teachers reported the use of data collection and assessment to drive instruction.
 - The information received from teachers was consistent with what was stated at the school leadership meeting.

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 the school's website, the NYC DOE notes the following:

- The Board has nine voting board members, which is within the range of five to 15 members of its charter and bylaws. The Board Chair, Jeff Meyer, has been on the Board since the school's inception.
- As evidenced from review of Board rosters, the Board experienced no turnover during the 2013-2014 school year.
- 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.
- Board minutes have been provided via the school's website for inspection by the public. It is noted that Board minutes from September 2013, January 2014, and June 2014 are not available.

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 no turnover in leadership in the 2013-2014 school year.
- Instructional staff turnover from the 2012-2013 school year was 70%, with seven out of 27 instructional staff members choosing not to return and 10 out of 27 not being asked to return for the 2013-14 school year. As of February 2014, during the 2013-14 school year, three teachers had left.⁸
- As of February 2014, average daily attendance for students during that school year was at 94%, which is below the school's charter goal of at least 95%.⁹
- Student turnover was 16.5%, with students from the 2012-2013 school year who did not return at the start of the 2013-2014 school year, and 9.3% of students who left the school between the start of the 2013-2014 school year and February 2014.¹⁰
- The school reports having a Family and Teacher Association (FTA), as evidenced on the school's website.

2012-2013 NYC School Survey Results¹¹

Categories	Result	Community	Response Rate	Citywide Rate
Academic Expectations	Well Below Average	Parents	79%	54%
Communication	Average	Teachers	96%	83%
Engagement	Average	Students	N/A	83%
Safety & Respect	Well Below Average			

⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/11/14.

⁹ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/11/14.

¹⁰ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 2/11/14.

¹¹ Results are particular to the school type as identified in the 2013 School Survey.

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 eight months without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2013-2014 budget to the actual enrollment as of the last day for the 2013-2014 school year revealed that the school was 6% below its enrollment target, indicating a deviation from 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 to FY13, the school generated overall positive cash flow from FY11 to FY13 and the school had positive cash flow in each measurable year.

Annual Independent Financial Audit

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

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:

- The Board's membership size falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, which states there must be no fewer than five and no more than 15 members.

The Board is out of compliance with:

- Currently, officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled, with the exception of the Secretary position.
- The Board has not held the number of Board meetings outlined in its bylaws and outlined by 2010 Charter Law. As of February 2014, based on submitted minutes, the Board has held five meetings with quorum out of the required 12 meetings for the year.

School Compliance

The school is in compliance with:

- 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 the Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- The school leader was trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.
- The school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 10, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to NYC DOE.
- The school has posted its 2012-2013 NYSED Annual Report and annual audit to its website, as specified in charter law.

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:

- TECCS does not plan to expand to middle school in the next charter term and wishes to remain in the same facility.
- TECCS has taken important steps to promote organizational sustainability in the 2013-2014 school year. The implementation of instructional coaching has contributed to distributed leadership. In the 2014-2015 school year, TECCS will focus on codifying the work of administrators and instructional coaches in terms of observation, feedback, and evaluation.
- The most significant model improvement for TECCS is the opening of Integrated Co-Teaching classrooms in K-2 in 2014-2015 and further expansion until there is one ICT classroom at each grade level in grades K-5.

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.
- For the 2013-2014 school year (and all four prior years), TECCS served a higher percentage of students who qualified for free or reduced price lunch as compared to both CSD 14 and citywide averages. The school served a smaller percentage of students with disabilities and English Language Learner students compared to CSD 14 and citywide averages.

Special Populations

School	Free and Reduced Price Lunch					Students with Disabilities					English Language Learners				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	School	75.2%	79.9%	78.0%	81.4%	90.1%	7.7%	6.9%	10.2%	12.2%	10.3%	0.0%	7.5%	9.3%	7.6%
CSD 14	57.7%	60.7%	62.5%	65.8%	70.4%	17.4%	18.1%	17.6%	17.9%	18.8%	15.1%	14.4%	13.4%	12.4%	12.1%
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-1	K-2	K-3	K-4	K-5
CSD(s)	14	14	14	14	14

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.