



**RENAISSANCE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR INNOVATION
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 SCHOOL YEAR
DECEMBER 2014**

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Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Background Information

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	
Board Chair(s)	Frank Saia
School Leader(s)	Stephen Falla Riff, E.D., Terence Joseph, Principal
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 4
Physical Address(es)	410 East 100 Street, Manhattan
Facility Owner(s)	DOE
School Opened For Instruction	2010-2011
Current Charter Term Expiration Date	12/14/2014
Current Authorized Grade Span	9-12
Current Authorized Enrollment	500
Proposed New Charter Term	3.5 years [December 15, 2014 – June 30, 2018]
Proposed Authorized Grade Span for New Charter Term	9-12
Proposed Authorized Enrollment for New Charter Term	500
Proposed Sections per Grade for New Charter Term	5

Overview of School-Specific Data

School Evaluation of Academic Goals as stated in Annual Report to NYSED and Renewal Application to NYC DOE

Academic Goal Analysis					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Cumulative Charter Term Total
Total Achievable Goals	14	14	14	14	56
# Met	2	1	4	6	13
# Partially Met	0	0	0	0	0
# Not Met	0	5	6	3	14
# Not Applicable *	12	8	4	5	29
% Met	14%	7%	29%	43%	23%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Not Met	0%	36%	43%	21%	25%
% Not Applicable *	86%	57%	29%	36%	52%
% Met of All Applicable Goals	100%	17%	40%	67%	48%

* Some goals may not be applicable in all years. For example, goals related to the NYC Progress Report are not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year as Progress Reports were not issued that year.

HS Performance Compared to Peer and NYC Averages

4-year Graduation Rate				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	53%
NYC *	-	-	-	68%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-15
6-year Graduation Rate				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	-
NYC *	-	-	-	-
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-

College and Career Preparatory Course Index **				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	7.6%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	19.2%
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	10.1%

* The four and six year NYC graduation rates are determined by the New York State Education Department (SED); SED is expected to publish the 2013-2014 graduation rate in June 2015. The 2013-2014 figure(s) in the table above are projected rates determined by the NYC DOE.

** The College and Career Preparatory Course Index (CCPCI) indicates the percentage of students in the school's four-year cohort who have successfully completed approved rigorous courses and assessments after four years of high school. The CCPCI score was not introduced until the 2010-2011 school year and peer and city percent of range scores were not available until the 2011-2012 school year. A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Weighted Regents Pass Rates

2014				
	Math	Science	Global History	U.S History
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	0.56	0.76	0.60	0.86
Peer Percent of Range	34.7%	43.1%	45.0%	62.0%
City Percent of Range	13.7%	31.6%	30.4%	46.2%
2013				
	Math	Science	Global History	U.S History
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	0.76	0.94	0.74	0.72
Peer Percent of Range	51.0%	57.5%	63.8%	50.0%
City Percent of Range	29.3%	39.4%	42.0%	30.0%
2012				
	Math	Science	Global History	U.S History
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	1.22	1.17	1.45	-
Peer Percent of Range	55.5%	43.8%	59.9%	-
City Percent of Range	46.6%	37.2%	56.3%	-
2011				
	Math	Science	Global History	U.S History
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	-
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	-
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	-

The Weighted Regents Pass Rate measures students' progress since the corresponding eighth grade test, with more weight given to students with lower proficiency based on eighth grade test results.

A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Credit Accumulation

% 1st-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	83.5%	76.9%	73.7%	80.4%
Peer Percent of Range	83.0%	75.2%	70.1%	75.9%
City Percent of Range	69.7%	53.7%	41.9%	56.1%
% 2nd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	60.6%	73.1%	63.1%
Peer Percent of Range	-	53.7%	84.7%	55.3%
City Percent of Range	-	27.4%	48.3%	30.5%
% 3rd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	66.7%	70.9%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	72.9%	82.0%
City Percent of Range	-	-	38.9%	48.4%

A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Closing the Achievement Gap

4-year Weighted Diploma Rate*				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities **	-	-	-	222.9%
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	214.3%
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	157.8%
College and Career Preparatory Course Index ***				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
School's Lowest Third	-	-	-	1.3%

* The weighted diploma rate assigns a weight to each type of diploma based on the relative level of proficiency and college and career readiness indicated by the diploma type and based on certain student demographic characteristics.

** Defined as students with a placement in Self-Contained, ICT, or SETSS

*** The College and Career Preparatory Course Index score for the school's lowest third was not introduced until the 2011-2012 school year.

II. Renewal Recommendation and Rationale

Based on the evidence presented herein and detailed below in Part II, the NYC DOE recommends a 3.5 year short term renewal.

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has partially demonstrated academic success.

New York Charter Schools Act

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include:

§ 2850 (2)

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

Data available for Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation indicates that the school has made progress towards meeting these objectives.

Mission and Vision

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's mission is to develop leadership through innovation. Student-innovators will achieve academic excellence by setting self-created goals within a three tiered educational model of core classroom instruction, portfolio-based annual individual projects, and hands-on, experiential learning.

School Specific Academic Performance

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the 2014-2015 academic year. As a result, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has three years of New York State (NYS) assessment data, one year of graduation and closing the achievement gap data, and four years of other academic indicator(s), such as data obtained through internal assessments and attendance information, with which to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation.

For the 2013-2014 school year, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's four-year graduation rate was 52.9%. This rate was lower than the citywide average by approximately 15 percentage points in 2013-2014. Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's four-year graduation rate was higher than only 16% of high schools citywide. However, when compared to high schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools) Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation outperformed 44% of similar schools.

The school's overall credit accumulation rates have been higher than the average credit accumulation rates of its peer groups schools over the charter term, though they have generally been lower than the citywide credit accumulation averages. The Peer Percent of Range for first, second and third year students has been above 50% in all years (as applicable), meaning that the school has outperformed its peer group average along each metric. However, the City Percent of

Range for second and third year students has been below 50% in all years (as applicable), meaning that Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation scored below the citywide average along each of these metrics. In addition, the City Percent of Range for first year students has been below 50% in two of the four years of the current charter term.¹

In the most recent school year, 2013-2014, 80.4% of first year students at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation earned 10+ credits, placing the school in the 84th percentile of its peer group schools and the 43rd percentile of all high schools citywide. Additionally, 63.1% of second year students at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation earned 10+ credits, placing the school in the 45th percentile of its peer group schools and the 16th percentile of all high schools citywide. Finally, 70.9% of third year students at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation earned 10+ credits; placing the school in the 94th percentile of its peer group schools and the 41st percentile of all high schools citywide.

Weighted Regents pass rates in Math, Science and Global History declined at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. However, the weighted Regents pass rate in U.S. History rose over the same period. The school generally compares favorably against its peer group schools when analyzing weighted Regents pass rates over the course of the current charter term, though citywide comparisons show that the school achieved weighted Regents pass rates below the citywide average across all subjects in all years (with the exception of the 2011-2012 Global History Regents exam).²

Over the four years that data is available for the retrospective charter term, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has met 48% of its applicable academic charter goals.³ Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation met six of nine applicable academic performance goals in its most recent year. The school has demonstrated a trend of increased achievement of its stated charter goals over the last three years of the charter term under review.

The school has shown evidence towards a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school indicate that in the first two years of the charter, the school devoted significant attention to the individual needs of its students. In a visit to the school in May 2011, reviewers noted that the school, “employs a co-teaching model with three adults per core class (a subject-specific teacher, a special education teacher, and a learning specialist), which supports the inclusion model and allows for accommodations and modifications within the general education classroom. Further, in a NYC DOE visit to the school in March 2013, it was observed that the school uses differentiation strategies such as small group instruction or individualized instruction for students in the Learning Center.

Closing the Achievement Gap

Schools are also assessed based on their ability to close the achievement gap for specific student populations. In school years prior to the 2013-2014 school year, schools received additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, charter schools will be assessed on the actual performance as well as the academic growth of students in these populations compared with

¹ A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A City Percent of Range of 50.0% represents the average and indicates that the school's credit accumulation rate was equal to the average score for all high schools Citywide. In comparison, a percentile rank provides the percentage of schools that score the same or lower than the school under consideration. A Citywide percentile of 43%, for example, indicates that the school's credit accumulation rate was equal to or above 43% of high schools Citywide.

² In addition, the school outperformed over 50% of all high schools Citywide in the English Regents exam over each of the past two years. The Weighted Regents English Exam scores are not provided in the table.

³ This calculation does not include goals which have not been evaluated (not applicable) either as a result of the goal no longer being measurable (e.g. NYC DOE Progress Report grades for 2013-2014 school year forward) or the goal not yet measurable for the school at the time of the annual reporting (e.g. high school graduation rate for an academic year in which the school was not serving grade twelve students).

public school students in the CSD and throughout New York City. As Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation did not have a graduation class until 2013-2014, the school did not and will not receive any NYC DOE Progress Reports. All evaluations of closing the achievement gap during the charter term are based on four-year diploma rates⁴ and the College and Career Preparatory Course Index (CCPCI).

As the school has had only one graduating class in the retrospective charter term, closing the achievement gap data is available for only 2013-2014 performance. Students in the lowest third citywide at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation had a four-year weighted diploma rate of 157.8%. This rate was associated with a City Percent of Range of 58.1%, i.e. above the citywide average. However, only 1.3% of his same group of students met the requirements for the CCPCI. As the school graduates additional classes, the performance for students in the lowest third citywide can be compared year over year to determine growth and academic success with this population.

In 2013-2014, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's students with disabilities had a four-year weighted diploma rate of 222.9%. This rate was associated with a City Percent of Range of 53.1%, i.e. above the citywide average. As the school graduates additional classes, the performance for students with disabilities can be compared year over year to determine growth and academic success with this population.

In 2013-2014, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's English Language Learner students had a four-year weighted diploma rate of 214.3%. However, the school did not serve the minimum percentage of students designated as English Language Learners to receive peer or city percent of range data.⁵ As the school graduates additional classes, the performance for ELLs can be compared year over year to determine growth and academic success with this population.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation is a partially operationally sound and fiscally viable organization. This assessment was made based on a review of the following indicators of operational and fiscal viability:

- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's FY11, FY12, FY13, and FY14 independent financial audits;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's FY15 budget;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's 2014-2015 staff handbook;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's 2014-2015 student/family handbook;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's Board of Trustees financial disclosure forms;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's Board of Trustees minutes;
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's Board of Trustees bylaws; and
- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's self-reported staffing data.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. The founding Board Chair has been with the

⁴ The data presented in the Closing the Achievement Gap table reflects four-year weighted diploma rates that are limited to students in each of the specified groups. This measure assigns a weight to each type of diploma based on the level of proficiency and college and career readiness indicated by the diploma type. GEDs and IEP Diplomas, which are not included in the non-weighted graduation rates, can contribute to this measure. In addition, diploma weights can also be multiplied based on certain demographic characteristics. These include classifications of overage, long-term ELL, high-need ELL, students in temporary housing, students participating in a DOE program for incarcerated students, and students with disabilities defined as students with placements in SETSS, ICT or SC. The weighted diploma rate for the school is the average of all the individual diploma weights of its students (non-graduates contribute 0.0). The four-year weighted diploma rate evaluates the same cohort of students as the four-year graduation rate.

⁵ For a school to be included in the NYC DOE's calculation of peer and city averages for Closing the Achievement Gap metrics and, thus, for the school to receive peer and city percent of range data for Closing the Achievement Gap metrics, the school's population percentage for the relevant special population must be at least 25% of the City percent of range.

Board since the school's inception. Although the founding Principal, Nicholas Tishuk, resigned mid-school year in January 2014, the school had a strong and effective school leadership structure in place, which fostered a smooth transition during this time. In 2013-2014, the school also established a new position of Executive Director to manage all non-instructional matters and to support the Principal and the rest of the school management team regarding instructional matters.

School leadership, as defined by the school, experienced abrupt turnover in January 2014. As noted above, the founding Principal resigned at this time and Terence Joseph, the former Director of Teaching and Learning who had been at the school since the 2011-2012 school year, was named Acting Principal. Mr. Joseph was named Principal beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

Over the past year, instructional staff turnover declined below previous levels, though the rate of staff turnover did not fall below the rate achieved in the school's first year of operation. In year 1, year 2, and year 3 of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013), the percentage of staff who did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year was 17%, 39%, and 37%, respectively. However, for the most recent period, instructional staff turnover was down to 21%.⁶ This represents 12 instructional staff members who either resigned or were terminated.

Based on NYC School Survey results, only 53% of teachers at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation agree or strongly agree that the Principal communicates a clear vision for the school, and this rate has fallen over the past three years. This level of agreement is 35 percentage points below the citywide average of 88%,⁷ suggesting that school culture is only partially developed.

Additionally, responses on key questions from parents and students had mixed results when compared with citywide averages and the response rate of parents has been far below citywide averages for each year of the charter term.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations. The school has at least 156 days of unrestricted cash on hand to meet obligations totaling \$3,258,121.

Overall, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

There was no material weakness noted in the four independent financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the retrospective charter term, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has been compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. The Board currently has five members, which is the minimum number of Board members per the bylaws; the Board is taking measures to increase the number of Board members. The Board of Trustees makes board minutes and meetings agendas available upon request to the public prior to or at Board meetings by posting them on the school's website. The Board has held the minimum number of Board meetings of at least 6 meetings per year, as outlined in the bylaws in the 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. Based on self-reported data, the Board held 10 meetings in the 2011-2012 school year, 10 meetings in the 2012-2013 school year, and nine meetings in the 2013-2014 school year. Quorum was reached at all but three of these meetings, all of which were in the 2013-2014 school year. Therefore, effectively the Board held only six meetings in the 2013-2014 school year.

All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.

⁶ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form in November 2014

⁷ The percentage of teachers at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "The Principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school" has fallen from 79% in the 2011-2012 school year to 65% in the 2012-2013 school year to 53% in the most recent school year, 2013-2014. The Citywide average of 88% reflects 2013-2014 NYC School Survey results.

The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30 percent of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.

The school has submitted the required safety plan. 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 submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

Terence Joseph, Innovation's Principal, was trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department. Mr. Joseph received a Certificate of Completion and he was issued a Certificate of Fitness for Fire and Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC K-12 Schools (D-10).

Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation intends to no major modifications to its programs and/or operations to support school improvement that have not already been implemented or will be implemented during the 2014-2015 academic year. For instance, the establishment of the new Executive Director position has been previously approved by NYC DOE as a material change to the charter. Although some of the school's initiatives are or will be launched prior to the end of the first charter term, they will be further reviewed, modified (as necessary) and possibly expanded upon during the next charter term.

Part 2: School Overview and History

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation is a high school serving 447 students⁸ in grades nine through twelve during the 2014-2015 school year. It opened in the 2010-2011 school year with grade nine and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's authorized full grade span is for grades nine through twelve, which it reached during the 2013-2014 school year. The school's current charter term expires on December 14, 2014.⁹ The school does not currently offer a public universal Pre-Kindergarten program in New York City. The school is located in a New York City Department of Education¹⁰ (NYC DOE)-operated facility in Community School District 4 in Manhattan and is co-located with M.S. 224 Manhattan East School for Arts and Academics, Success Academy Charter School – Harlem 3, and Harlem Prep Charter School.¹¹

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation is a coed high school located in East Harlem, New York. The school sets out to provide a culture, curriculum and community that promote "leadership through innovation." The school's programs are designed to build and reinforce the skills, attitudes, habits and content knowledge that support innovative thinking, creative problem-solving and lifelong learning. The school's goals, programs and culture promote the following five core values: a) Academic Excellence; b) Accountability; c) Systemic Innovation; d) Collaboration; and e) Culture of Inquiry. The school established a College Bound program for all students in all grades. The College Bound program helps increase student awareness of the importance of college, builds students' writing skills, and provides hands-on support to students as they learn about, visit and prepare to apply to colleges. Additionally, students that have earned the required ELA and math credits and required ELA and math Regents scores can enroll in college level courses at Hunter College through the College Now Program.

To reach its goals, the school partners with Charter School Business Management. Charter School Business Management provides, via contract with the school, financial support services, student record audits, and professional development to the school's operational staff. Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation manages student information via the DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system and invoices through the NYC DOE vendor portal. The annual budget is created by the Board of Trustees of the school. Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's Board of Trustees is solely responsible for complying with all requirements of grants for the School, the School's governing charter, and all applicable laws.

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation's Board of Trustees is led by chair Frank Saia, who has been Board Chair since the school's inception. The school's founder and former Principal, Nicholas Tishuk, is no longer employed by the school as Principal and is no longer a member of the school's Board. Nicholas Tishuk resigned from the school and Board of Trustees in January 2014. The high school is currently led by Principal Terence Joseph, who has been at the school since the 2011-2012 school year and was formerly the Director of Teaching and Learning at the school. The school also has an Executive Director, Stephen Falla Riff, who has been with the school since its inception, initially as outside counsel and, later, as a staff member in the role of General Counsel and Director of Operations.

Although the founding Principal resigned in January 2014, the school had a strong and effective school leadership structure in place to support the transition of the former Director of Teaching and Learning to Principal. In addition, in 2013-2014, the school established the new position of Executive Director to manage all non-instructional matters and to support the Principal and the rest of the school management team regarding instructional matters.

The school typically enrolls new students in grades nine through twelve. There were 304 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2014 lottery.¹²

⁸ ATS data as of October 31, 2014

⁹ NYC DOE internal data

¹⁰ NYC DOE internal data

¹¹ NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System

¹² Self-reported information collected through the 2014-2015 DOE Annual Charter School Survey

Over the charter term, the school enrolled and served students as follows with average class size and section count noted for the most recently completed school year, 2013-2014.

Enrollment

Grade-Level Annual Enrollment *	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grade 9	138	125	117	136
Grade 10	-	116	109	124
Grade 11	-	-	108	80
Grade 12	-	-	-	95
Total Enrollment	138	241	334	435

* Enrollment figures reflect ATS data as of October 31st for each school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

Additional Enrollment Data

School Year 2013-2014 Information	Section Count	Average Class Size
Grade 9	5	27
Grade 10	5	25
Grade 11	5	16
Grade 12	5	19
Students Admitted Through The Lottery	123	

* Lottery and section count information are based on self-reported data from the 2013-2014 DOE Annual Charter School Survey. Average Class Sizes were determined by dividing ATS enrollment as of October 31, 2013 by the appropriate grade-level section count.

Please see additional demographic data in Section 4 of this report for information regarding the enrollment of special populations at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation. This information includes enrollment data for the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities as compared to the CSD and citywide averages as well as targets proposed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).¹³

¹³ Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Board of Regents authorized charter schools, including those authorized by NYC DOE, will be held accountable to enrollment targets once established by NYSED for students with disabilities, English Language Learner students, and students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch.

Part 3: Renewal Report Overview

Renewal Report

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the NYC DOE regarding the charter school's application for charter renewal. This report is based on a cumulative record of the school's progress during the current charter term, including but not limited to oversight visits, annual reports, and formal correspondence between the school and its authorizer, the NYC DOE, all of which are conducted in order to evaluate and monitor the charter school's academic, fiscal, and operational performance. Additionally, the NYC DOE incorporates into this report its findings from the renewal application process, which includes a written application, a report on student achievement data and a school visit by the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) and other staff from the NYC DOE.

Upon review of all the relevant materials, a recommendation is made to the NYC DOE Chancellor. The Chancellor's determination, and the findings on which that decision is based, is then submitted to the New York State Board of Regents.

Is the school an academic success?

To assess whether a school is an academic success, the NYC DOE considers performance measures, including, but not limited to the following (as appropriate for grades served):

- New York State ELA and Math assessment absolute results; New York State Regents exams passage rates;
- Comparative proficiency for elementary and middle schools, including growth rates for ELA and Math proficiency;
- Comparative graduation rates and Regents completion rates for high schools;
- Closing the achievement gap performance relative to CSD or New York City public schools;
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) or other approved alternate assessments; and
- Performance data pertaining to college and career readiness.

Academic success is rated as **Demonstrated, Partially Demonstrated, or Not Yet Demonstrated**.

Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?

To assess whether a school is a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization, OSDCP focuses on three areas: Governance Structure & Organizational Design, School Climate & Community Engagement, and Financial Health. This includes an analysis of the school's audited financial statements, based on the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Core Performance Framework.¹⁴

The NYC DOE considers a variety of supporting materials and data, including but not limited to the following:

- Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Annual Reports submitted by schools to New York State Education Department (NYSED);
- NYC DOE School Surveys;
- Data collection sheets provided by schools;
- Student, staff, and Board turnover rates;
- Audits of authorized enrollment numbers; and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed, Partially Developed, or Not Yet Developed**. A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

¹⁴ Please refer to the following website for more information:
http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/126547/q/%20q=performance*20framework&c=82

Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?

As it pertains to compliance, the NYC DOE identifies areas of compliance and noncompliance with relevant laws and regulations as identified in the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework.

Staff Representatives

The following experts participated in the review of this school, including the renewal visit to the school conducted over two separate occasions: June 4, 2014 and September 18, 2014.

- DawnLynne Kacer, Senior Executive Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Sonya Hooks, Senior Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Andrea McLean, former Director of Oversight, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Meera Jain, Director of Evaluation and Policy, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Kim Wong, Director of Operations, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Caitlin Robisch, Director of Analytics, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Paul Yen, Data Analyst, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Hector Calderon, Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Mariama Sandi, Chairperson, Committee on Special Education

Part 4: Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

At the time of this school's renewal, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

High Academic Attainment and Improvement

- The school has three years of New York State (NYS) Regents exam data, one year of graduation data, and four years of other academic indicators at the time of this report. For additional data on academic indicators, please see Appendix A.

HS Performance Compared to Peer and NYC Averages

4-year Graduation Rate				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	53%
NYC *	-	-	-	68%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-15%
6-year Graduation Rate				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	-
NYC *	-	-	-	-
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-
College and Career Preparatory Course Index **				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	7.6%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	19.2%
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	10.1%

* The four and six year NYC graduation rates are determined by the New York State Education Department (SED); SED is expected to publish the 2013-2014 graduation rate in June 2015. The 2013-2014 figure(s) in the table above are projected rates determined by the NYC DOE.

** The College and Career Preparatory Course Index (CCPCI) indicates the percentage of students in the school's four-year cohort who have successfully completed approved rigorous courses and assessments after four years of high school. The CCPCI score was not introduced until the 2010-2011 school year and peer and city percent of range scores were not available until the 2011-2012 school year. A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation did not receive high school progress reports during school years 2010-2011 through 2012-2013. Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

Mission and Academic Goals

According to the school's Renewal Application submitted to the NYC DOE, as well as annual reports submitted to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), over each of the four years in the charter term during which the school was open, the school achieved/met academic goals as follows:

- 2 of 2 applicable charter goals in the first year of the charter,
- 1 of 6 in the second year,
- 4 of 10 in the third year, and
- 6 of 9 in the fourth year.

Progress Towards Academic Charter Goals *

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. By the end of year 4, 75% of the first cohort will have scored at least 65 on the Regents exams in ELA.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Met
2. By the end of year 4, 75% of the first cohort will have scored at least 65 on the Regents exams in Intermediate Algebra.	N/A	Not Met	Not Met	Met
3. By the end of year 4, 75% of the first cohort will have scored at least 65 on the Regents exams in Living Environment.	N/A	Not Met	Met	Met
4. By the end of year 4, 75% of the first cohort will have scored at least 65 on the Regents exams in Global History.	N/A	Not Met	Not Met	Met
5. By the end of year 4, 75% of the first cohort will have scored at least 65 on the Regents exams in Geography/U.S. History.	N/A	N/A	Not Met	Not Met
6. The school will be "In Good Standing" each year.	Met	Met	Met	N/A
7. By year four of the Charter, 75% of twelfth grade students will apply and be accepted to post-secondary institutions, colleges or universities. This goal will be measured by a review of the school's roster of twelfth grade students and their letters of admission or acceptance.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Met
8. By the end of year 4, twelfth grade students attending college level courses through approved programs will demonstrate their preparation for post-secondary success by passing such courses at a rate of 75%.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Met
9. The school will have an average daily student attendance rate of at least 95%. ¹⁵	Met	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met

¹⁵ Progress towards this goal was determined by attendance data from the NYC DOE ATS system.

Academic Goals		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
10.	The percentage of students in the NYC DOE high school accountability cohort passing an English Regents exam with a score of 65 or above by the end of their fourth year will exceed that of the students in the high school accountability cohort from a group of similar schools as determined by the NYC DOE Progress Report peer schools.	N/A	N/A	Met	N/A
11.	The percentage of students in the NYC DOE high school accountability cohort passing an Integrated Algebra Regents exam with a score of 65 or above by the end of their fourth year will exceed that of the students in the high school accountability cohort from a group of similar schools as determined by the NYC DOE Progress Report peer schools.	N/A	N/A	Met	N/A
12.	The school will earn a score sufficient to place it in the 75th percentile of all schools on the citywide Progress Report.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
13.	The school will earn a score sufficient to place it in the 75th percentile of all high schools in credit accumulation as measured by the citywide Progress Report. ¹⁶	N/A	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
14.	At least 75% of each student cohort, as defined by the New York State Education Department (“SED”) graduates within four years. Each year, at least 80% of each student cohort, as defined by SED, graduates within five years.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Not Met

* Goals were self-reported by the school in the school’s Renewal Application submitted to NYC DOE and 2013-2014 Annual Report documentation submitted to NYSED.

Responsive Education Program

Over the course of the first charter term, the school administered STAR Literacy assessment at the beginning of the year to determine each student’s level of proficiency in phonic, comprehension, fluency and vocabulary. The school also administered “mock” Regents exams twice annually.

- STAR assessments were administered across the school, with each student taking the exam for 45 minutes, one-on-one with the examiner.
 - Early findings from these assessments were that a significant percentage of Innovation students were entering the school reading and writing at second or third grade levels.
 - These assessment results influenced staffing and professional development decisions—i.e. additional literacy teachers were hired and additional professional development initiatives for teachers focused on the effective use of assessment data.
 - They were also used to inform the curriculum and the design and programming of supplemental instructional supports such as LEAP and the Learning Center.
- “Mock” Regents exams are aligned to the content tested in each Regents exam and are scored using item analysis and internal keys that are consistent with the NYS rubrics.
 - Analysis of these results led to changes in English courses to increase rigor. These changes were designed to more effectively focus on student writing skills to be assessed through the Regents exams, including an increased focus on writing in experiential learning and project-based learning activities, an increased emphasis on writing in the College Bound program, and increased cross-curricular collaboration in planning among teachers of Regents-tested courses to better infuse writing instruction into Global History, Living Environment and U.S. History.
- A key decision made during the charter term was that the STAR assessment, while enormously helpful over the school’s first three years, would be re-considered and replaced with one that is more closely and effectively aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).

¹⁶ Progress towards this goal was determined by data from the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Reports.

- Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation will now administer the Northwest Evaluation Association – Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA-MAP) at the beginning of each year.
- The school will not administer the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) beginning in 2015-2016 because the NWEA-MAP provides an adequate assessment of student performance and an equivalent learner profile.

As part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE visited the school on June 4, 2014 and September, 18 2014. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- **Alignment with Common Core:**

- School leadership reported, through a process facilitated by the then-Director of the Teaching and Learning (now Principal), that teachers worked independently and in Professional Learning Communities to improve and better align standards to the curriculum. Teachers in all subjects established curriculum maps, and CCLS competencies were integrated into ELA and Integrated Algebra classes. School-wide efforts to align the entire curriculum and support teachers in implementing it are ongoing.

- **Addressing the Needs of All Learners:**

- For students who are at-risk of academic failure, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has established an effective Student Support Team (SST) program that is in keeping with school's collaborative approach to supporting its students. The policies and practices of the SST evolved over the course of the charter, and the SST is currently focusing on supporting the academic and social/behavioral development of students whose behavior is negatively impacting their academic success.
 - The SST comprises three specialists—a Restorative Justice Specialist, a Positive Behavior Specialist and a Case Management Specialist—who meet daily and work collaboratively to address student needs. Innovation has also developed a series of incentives and “rewards” for positive behaviors.
- The result of these modifications to the SST program has been fewer absences and suspensions and improved academic achievement for students who had been struggling in the past. Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation also created the LEAP program to support students who, even if successful in accumulating high school credits, have struggled to pass the required Regents exams.
 - The objective of LEAP is to provide intensive instructional, motivational and social/developmental support to help students prepare for the Regents exams.
 - LEAP provides personalized instruction with a 5:1 student-teacher ratio, and it focuses on increasing students' content knowledge, retention and test-taking skills.
 - It is data-driven, with teachers and students monitoring efforts, achievements and credits using “data walls”—i.e. large posters posted around the classroom with frequently updated data regarding attendance homework completion, Regents exam progress and comparison analysis, weekly progress percentages and other data that provide students and teachers with “real-time” progress reports.
 - LEAP also provides after school support, and each student is matched with a LEAP staff member who serves as an academic counselor.
- In an internal analysis of LEAP program student data for 2013-2014, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation found that 63% of LEAP program students increased their score on the January 2014 Regents ELA, Global History, Living Environment and/or Integrated Algebra exam by an average of 23% over their score on the June 2013 Regents exam. In keeping with Innovation's commitment to ensuring that its students are accepted into and succeed in colleges and other post-secondary educational institutions,

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has established a College Bound program for all students in all grades.

- The College Bound program team comprises a full-time college counselor and two part-time college counselors who work with all of Innovation's students.
 - At the ninth grade level, the College Bound program provides students with information about college to build student awareness of the importance of college and of the school's commitment to helping them prepare for and get accepted into colleges. The College Bound Program also helps freshmen transition into the high school program.
 - At the tenth grade level, the program focuses on building students' writing skills, with emphasis on personal and academic essays.
 - At the eleventh grade level, the program focuses on providing hands-on support to students as they learn about, visit and prepare to apply to specific colleges.
 - At the twelfth grade level, the program focuses on helping students apply to and prepare to attend college.
 - Additionally, eleventh and twelfth grade students are enrolled in college level coursework at Hunter College through the College Now Program.

- **Instructional Model and Classroom Instruction:**

- During the renewal visit, 27 classrooms across grades nine through twelve were observed with the school's Principal/Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Instructional Support.
- In all observed classes, teachers were following the school's co-teaching model, which includes team teaching, parallel teaching, one teach and one assist, and alternative teaching.
- Class-sizes ranged from 10 to 25 students in size, with two to three teachers in all classrooms.
- Forms of questioning identified during the classroom observations included some basic fact recall, but mostly challenged students to demonstrate understanding or to analyze and apply. In an Algebra 2/Trigonometry class, a small group of students were leading the class through a lesson on Compound Continuous Annual Rates for the teacher to assess content comprehension.
- In most rooms, checks for understanding that included questioning, polling, classwork, teacher observation, and frequent use of student turn and talk, were observed.
- In some observed classrooms, differentiation of materials, tasks, and products through small group instruction or independent practice was observed. These were consistent with the school model. In a Global History class students were able to decide on the final product based on the project options.
- In most observed classes, students were responsive to teacher directions and instruction.
- In all observed classes, students were either fully on task or mostly on task.
- Based on debriefs with the school's leadership team members after classroom visits, most classrooms had instruction that aligned with the instructional model and current academic goals of the school.

Learning Environment

NYC DOE representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with twelve teachers. The following was noted:

- All interviewed teachers reported that they received school-based professional development and have Individual Professional Growth Plans. They also reported being encouraged by the school administration to get further professional development outside of the school through their My 40 program, in which teachers may seek 40 hours of internal and outside professional development over the course of the year.

- All of the interviewed teachers mentioned being observed frequently and receiving both formal and informal feedback throughout the school year.
- All interviewed teachers reported that they use data in the classrooms through both formal (i.e. STAR assessment data, class exams and “mock” Regents) and informal assessments (i.e. observational notes, exit slips assessments).
- NYC DOE representatives also conducted one-on-one interviews with nine students. The following was noted:
 - Students reported that teachers were supportive and encouraging.
 - Students also reported that the curriculum was challenging and college and career preparatory.
- According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, most parents agree “that the school has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss [their] child” and most parents who responded to the survey agree “that the school has high expectations for [their] child.”¹⁷
- According to the 2013-2014 School Environment Survey, only 18% of teachers agree that “order and discipline are maintained at the school” and 41% agree with the statement that “at my school students are often harassed or bullied in school.”¹⁸

¹⁷ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 48% of parent respondents strongly agree that Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss their child; another 46% agree with the statement. Similarly, 52% of parent respondents strongly agree that Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has high expectations for their child; another 42% agree with the statement.

¹⁸ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 0% of teacher respondents strongly agree that order and discipline are maintained at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation; only 18% agree with the statement. Of teacher respondents, 12% marked that they strongly agree that students are often harassed or bullied in the school; another 29% of teacher respondents marked ‘agree’ to the statement.

Essential Question 2: Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has developed its governance structure and organizational design.

On September 15, 2014, as part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE attended a meeting of the school's board of trustees and met with a representation of the school's Board of Trustees independent of the school leadership team. Based on document review and observation, the following was noted:

- The Board currently has five active members. This level of membership is consistent within the minimum of five members and maximum of 15 members established in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board's Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, specified positions in the bylaws are currently filled with no vacancies.
- The current and founding Board Chairman has been with the Board since the school's inception.
- The Board has not consistently achieved quorum, as recorded in meeting minutes. Across 29 meeting minutes reviewed, the board did not achieve quorum at three of these meetings (January, February and March 2013).
- The Executive Director updates the Board on academic progress/operations/financial standing at the school, as recorded in 29 meeting minutes reviewed. The Executive Director updates the Board at standing monthly meetings.
- There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school's organizational chart and school leadership's monthly updates on academic, financial and operational performance to the Board and its committees, as recorded in Board meeting minutes.
- The Board's bylaws reference active functioning committees, including an Executive Committee, Finance and Audit Committee, and Personnel Committee. According to the minutes, these committees are active.
- The school's founder, Nicholas Tishuk, resigned from the school and the Board in January 2014.
- The current high school leader is Principal Terence Joseph, who was named Acting Principal in January 2014. He has been at the school since the 2011-2012 school year and was formerly the Director of Teaching and Learning at the school.
- To minimize the potential effects of conflicts of interest occasioned by the dual positions of Board Trustee and staff member, the school adopted a conflict of interest policy and adopted a new set of bylaws, which specifically states that no staff member may serve on the Board of Trustees.

School Climate & Community Engagement

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture.

- Except for the first year of the charter term, the school has not met its charter goal of having an annual average student attendance rate of at least 95%. Average daily attendance for students over the four year charter period is 91.4% according to the data in the table below.¹⁹

¹⁹ The table reflects attendance data taken from the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system. Please note that the school self-reported different attendance rates than those recorded in ATS in its Renewal Application to the NYC DOE. The school self-reported attendance rates of 90.0%, 89.0%, 87.0% and 83.7%, respectively.

Average Attendance

High School Attendance				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	100.0%	91.5%	87.7%	86.3%
NYC	85.5%	86.2%	86.1%	86.5%
Difference from NYC	14.5	5.3	1.6	-0.2

* Attendance reflects ATS data for each school year.

** NYC attendance figures reflect average attendance across all general education district schools as reflected in ATS.

- Over the past year, instructional staff turnover declined below previous levels, though the rate of staff turnover did not fall below the rate achieved in the school's first year of operation. In year 1, year 2, and year 3 of the charter term (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013), the percentage of staff who did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year was 17%, 39%, and 37%, respectively. However, for the most recent period, instructional staff turnover was down to 21%.²⁰ This represents 12 instructional staff members who either resigned or were terminated.
- Student mobility is presented below for the charter term without comparison to other schools, the CSD or NYC as final student retention goals were not established by the New York State Education Department for the retrospective charter term. Based on the NYC DOE's evaluation and not in comparison to any other school, the CSD or NYC averages, the school has not had challenges with retaining students.

Mobility

Student Mobility out of Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation *				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Number of Students who Left the School	15	35	49	34
Percent of Students who Left the School	10.9%	14.5%	14.7%	12.2%

* Figures are based on student enrollment as of October 31 for each respective school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012. Students in terminal grades are not included.

- The NYC DOE has made changes to the NYC School Survey during the entirety of the retrospective charter term. Questions asked have been altered, added or deleted from year to year. Also, beginning with the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, survey categories will not be measured in total points out of 10 possible points. To allow for consistency during the evaluated charter term, selected questions, consistent with the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework were identified as relevant for charter schools. These are presented below for the duration of the retrospective charter term.
- NYC School Survey Response Rates should be comparable over time, however, as the measurement of these has remained consistent. Response rates for parents, teachers and students are presented below for each year of the charter term.
- In general, the response rates of students and teachers at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation have been higher than NYC averages for these groups, except for the 2013-2014 school year when response rates of students and teachers were on average lower than NYC averages for these groups. However, the response rates of parents at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation have been comparable to NYC averages.

²⁰ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form in November 2014

NYC School Survey Results

Percent of Respondents that Agree or Strongly Agree						
Survey Question		Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation				Citywide Average
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014
Students	Most of my teachers make me excited about learning.*	82%	79%	64%	60%	62%
	Most students at my school treat each other with respect.	63%	66%	65%	58%	60%
	I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, cafeteria, etc.	92%	89%	88%	82%	79%
Parents	I feel satisfied with the education my child has received this year.	95%	92%	96%	95%	95%
	My child's school makes it easy for parents to attend meetings.	97%	94%	89%	89%	94%
	I feel satisfied with the response I get when I contact my child's school.	91%	94%	93%	95%	95%
Teachers	Order and discipline are maintained at my school.	76%	16%	59%	18%	80%
	The principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school.	88%	79%	65%	53%	88%
	School leaders place a high priority on the quality of teaching.	94%	84%	81%	65%	92%
	I would recommend my school to parents.**	-	47%	68%	71%	81%

* This question was phrased as "My teachers inspire me to learn" in the 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 School Surveys.

** This question was not introduced until the 2011-2012 School Survey.

NYC School Survey Results

Response Rates					
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	98%	82%	93%	84%
	NYC	83%	82%	83%	83%
Parents	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	34%	42%	47%	24%
	NYC	52%	53%	54%	53%
Teachers	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	84%	95%	85%	100%
	NYC	82%	81%	83%	81%

- The school's charter goals include, "parents will express satisfaction with the school's program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect." The school met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

- The school's charter goals include, "staff will express satisfaction with school leadership and professional development opportunities as determined by the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect." The school partially met this goal in 2010-2011 but did not meet the goal in either 2012-2012 or 2012-2013.²¹ This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school's charter goals include, "students will express satisfaction with the school's program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety and Respect." The school partially met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years.²² This goal is not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

As part of the renewal process, representatives for the NYC DOE have collected evidence relevant to the school's climate and community engagement over the school's charter term. Based on discussion, document collection and review, and observation, the following was noted:

- An internal survey performed by the school during the 2013-2014 school year indicated that 95% of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their child's education. (Less than 50% of the schools families participated in the survey.)
- The school's Director of Community Engagement collaborates with parents and teachers through the school's Parent Teacher Organization. The Parent Teacher Organization engages in advocacy on behalf of the school and also supports the school through fundraising and communicating to parents about important school matters.
- Parents are invited to formal and informal events at the school and work closely with the Parent & Family Coordinator to understand their rights and voice concerns they may have about the school to teachers and school leadership.
- Strong parent engagement was noted by the school. The school based this assessment on the results of the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey - 98% of respondents felt welcome at the school, 96% felt that the school was responsive to feedback and 89% felt that the school made extra efforts to make participation in school events and meetings easy for parents. However, the school achieved only a 24% parent response rate on the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey.
- The school has developed strong partnerships and relationships with community-based organizations, agencies and institutions in East Harlem to supports its community outreach and to enhance and expand its programs.
- The NYC DOE conducted a public renewal hearing on September 18, 2014 at Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation located at 410 East 100th Street, New York, NY 10029 in an effort to elicit public comments. Approximately 40 participants attended the hearing, 10 speaking in support of the school's renewal and zero speaking in opposition.
- The NYC DOE made randomized phone calls to parents from a roster provided by the school for students of all grades. Calls to school parents/guardians were made during November 2014 until 20 phone calls were completed. Of these calls, 95% provided positive feedback and 5% provided negative feedback regarding the school.

²¹ The school partially met this goal in 2010-2011 by receiving a score of 7.5 in one of the four categories.

²² The school partially met this goal in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 by receiving a score of 7.5 in one of the four categories. The school partially met this goal in 2012-2013 by receiving a score of 7.5 in two of the four categories.

Financial Health

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations.

- Based on the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) financial audit, the school had sufficient cash to cover its operating expenses with 156 days of unrestricted cash on hand allowing for at least two months without an infusion of cash. At the conclusion of FY14, the school had \$3,258,121 on hand.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2014-2015 budget to the actual enrollment as of September 30, 2014 revealed that the school was 2% below its enrollment target, indicating a deviation from its projected enrollment based revenue.
- As of the FY14 financial audit, the school had no debt obligations.
- Based on the school's FY14 financial audit, the school had a ratio of 14.04, which indicated a strong ability to meet its liabilities in FY14. Based on the school's FY13 financial audit, the school had a ratio of 13.73, which indicated a strong ability to meet its liabilities in FY13.

Financial Sustainability

In November 2014, the school notified the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships that an officer in the accounting firm that had prepared the school's financial forms and performed the school's financial audits from FY11 to FY14 came under investigation by the United States Internal Revenue Service for alleged misconduct. The school stated that this investigation should not impact the school because another officer in the accounting firm had prepared the school's forms and conducted the school's financial statements and because the firm plans to sever professional relationships with the officer who is under investigation.

Overall, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY14, the school generated an aggregate surplus over these audited fiscal years, and in FY14 the school operated at a surplus.
- Based on the financial audits from FY11 through FY14, the school generated overall positive cash flow from FY11 to FY14, and the school had positive cash flow in each measurable year.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio of 0.06 indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.

There was no material weakness noted in the four independent financial audits.

Essential Question 3: Is the School Compliant with its Charter and All Applicable Law and Regulations?

As of the review on November 2014, the Board of Trustees for Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation is in compliance with:

- **Membership size.** Over the charter term, the Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of five and maximum of 15 members.
- **Submission of all required documents.** All current Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. The documents submitted do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.²³
- **Posting of minutes and agendas.** The Board has consistently made all board minutes and agendas available upon request to the public prior to or at Board meetings by posting on the school's website.
- **Notification of Board Member Resignations/Submission of New Board Members for Approval.** The board has consistently submitted board resignation notices or new board member credentials within the required five days of change to OSDCP for review and if necessary, approval.
- **Required number of monthly meetings.** The school's bylaws indicate that the Board is to hold 6 meetings a year. In years 2, 3 and 4 (2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014) of the charter term, the Board held the required number of monthly meetings, as evidenced by the posted meeting minutes and school reported data. Required meetings are those which met quorum.
- **Timely submission of documents.** The Board did consistently submit the Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term. The school has posted to its website its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law. The FY14 audit has not been posted to its website.

As of the review on November 2014, the charter school is in compliance with:

- **Application and Lottery.** For the 2014-15 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 7, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1. Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently adhere to this requirement.
- **Fingerprint clearance.** All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- **Teacher certification.** The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30 percent of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.
- **Safety Documents.** The school has submitted the required safety plan. The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- **Immunization.** The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- **Insurance.** The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.
- **Timely Submission of Invoicing and Reconciliation Documents.** Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.
- **Student Discipline Plan.** The school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of their Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year. This policy was determined to be compliant with federal law regarding disciplining students with disabilities and due process.
- **Fire Emergency.** Terence Joseph, Innovation's Principal, was trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

²³ Source: New York State Education Department Annual Report

Mr. Joseph received a Certificate of Completion and he was issued a Certificate of Fitness for Fire and Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC K-12 Schools (D-10).

Enrollment and Retention Targets

- 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.
 - As of November 1, 2014, charter school enrollment and retention targets as required by the NYS Charter Schools Act are still in a *proposed* status. The information presented below for enrollment is compared to NYC CSD and NYC averages, however, these averages should not be assumed to be similar to the final enrollment targets to be released by NYSED.²⁴
- In school year 2013-2014, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation
 - served a lower percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch compared to the CSD 4 percentage, though it served a higher percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch than the Citywide percentage;
 - served a higher percentage of students with disabilities compared to both the CSD 4 and Citywide percentages; and
 - served a higher percentage of English Language Learner students compared to the CSD 4 percentage, though it served a lower percentage of English Language Learner students than the Citywide percentage.

²⁴ Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

Enrollment of Special Populations²⁵

Special Population		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 State Enrollment Target (Proposed)
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	81.2%	81.7%	82.6%	83.4%	89.2%
	CSD 4	80.3%	85.0%	87.4%	86.9%	
	NYC	74.6%	76.6%	76.6%	75.9%	
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	42.0%	35.3%	33.2%	36.1%	10.2%
	CSD 4	15.1%	14.0%	14.4%	13.4%	
	NYC	19.4%	17.8%	17.4%	17.3%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	10.1%	6.2%	7.2%	6.9%	9.9%
	CSD 4	7.3%	5.2%	5.7%	6.0%	
	NYC	13.8%	14.0%	13.1%	12.4%	

Additional Enrollment Information				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	9	9-10	9-11	9-12
CSD(s)	4	4	4	4

²⁵ Comparisons of a charter school's special populations to the CSD and City are made relative only to the grades served by the school. For example, if a charter school serves grades kindergarten through five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to grades kindergarten through five in the CSD and citywide. CSD comparisons are particular to the grades served in each CSD each year. Enrollment rates reflect demographic characteristics as of June 1st and enrollment as of October 31st for each given school year, with the exception of enrollment in the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26th, 2012.

State enrollment targets were generated by a calculator developed by the State Education Department (SED). Once a school's CSD, total enrollment and grade span are entered, the calculator generates a school-specific enrollment target. The CSD for a multi-district school is the primary CSD as determined by each school. The enrollment is determined by the total number of students enrolled as of October 31st, 2013. Any school with an unusual grade configuration (i.e. K, 6-9) should use an available grade configuration provided by SED that is most aligned as determined by the NYC DOE, otherwise a school's actual grade span is used. For more information regarding SED's methodology behind the calculation of charter school enrollment and retention targets, please refer to the memo at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/July2012/712brca11.pdf>.

Essential Question 4: What are the School's Plans for the Next Charter Term?

As reported by school leadership and the school's Board, the following was noted:

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation intends to make no major modifications to its programs and/or operations to support school improvement that have not already been implemented or will be implemented during the 2014-2015 academic year. For instance, the establishment of the new Executive Director position has been previously approved by NYC DOE as a material change to the charter. Although some of the school's initiatives are or will be launched prior to the end of the first charter term, they will be further reviewed, modified (as necessary) and possibly expanded upon during the next charter term.

Part 5: Background on the Charter Renewal Process

Renewal Process

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

The NYC DOE does not automatically grant charter renewal, and no charter operator is entitled to renewal. Rather, a school must prove that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City public school students. To make such determinations, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) renewal team performs a comprehensive review of the school's academic, operational and fiscal performance over the course of the charter which includes an analysis of the school's renewal application. This application is built around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and includes a retrospective analysis of the school's prior track record as well as a prospective plan for the school. In reviewing this information, a school must be able to demonstrate that it can satisfy the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework:

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

The school presents evidence to support its application for renewal by providing a compelling response to these overarching questions that demonstrates its students have made significant academic progress, is serving students equitably, has sustainable operations to be successful in the next charter term, and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its current 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.

While the academic performance of students is the foremost determining factor of a school's success, a school's ability to demonstrate an effective educational program, a financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are also important factors that inform a renewal decision. For more information on how OSDCP makes renewal recommendations to the Chancellor, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework overview in Part 6 of this report.

Statutory Basis for Renewal

The New York State Charter Schools Act ("the Act") authorizes the creation of a system 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:

§2850:

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and

- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

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.²⁶

The Act states the following regarding the renewal of a school's charter:

§2851.4:

Charters may be renewed, upon application, for a term of up to five years in accordance with the provisions of this article for the issuance of such charters pursuant to section twenty-eight hundred fifty-two of this article; provided, however, that a renewal application shall [also] include:

- (a) A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in the charter.
- (b) A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private. Such statement shall be in a form prescribed by the board of regents.
- (c) Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school required by subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-seven of this article, including the charter school report cards and the certified financial statements.
- (d) Indications of parent and student satisfaction.
- (e) The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable, of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal. When developing such targets, the board of regents and the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall ensure (1) that such enrollment targets are comparable to the enrollment figures of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the charter school is located; and (2) that such retention targets are comparable to the rate of retention of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the proposed charter school would be located.

Such renewal application shall be submitted to the charter entity no later than six months prior to the expiration of the charter; provided, however, that the charter entity may waive such deadline for good cause shown.

The determination of whether to approve a renewal application rests in the sole discretion of a charter school's authorizer.

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.²⁷ As one such charter entity, the New York City Department of Education ("NYC DOE") 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;

²⁶ See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

²⁷ See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

- 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; and
- The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal.²⁸

Where the NYC DOE 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.²⁹

²⁸ § 2851(4)(e) added with the 2010 amendments to the Act.

²⁹ See § 2852(5).

Part 6: NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) team may recommend to the Chancellor three potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal (with or without conditions), short-term renewal (with or without conditions), or non-renewal.

After the OSDCP renewal site visit, the OSDCP team incorporates their findings from the visit into this renewal report. The evidence and findings sought align to the four essential questions of our accountability framework and may include classroom observations, leadership interviews, assessment results, School Survey results, public hearings and other community feedback, as well as a variety of other data. Schools will be given the opportunity to correct factual errors in this report. If the OSDCP renewal team determines that renewal is not warranted, the school will be informed in writing of the reasons for the non-renewal. If OSDCP approves the renewal application and the Chancellor recommends renewal for the school, prior to the school's charter expiration date, OSDCP will send the renewal report and recommendation along with the school's renewal application and other supporting evidence to the Board of Regents for its approval.

Full-Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school has demonstrated exceptional results with its students, a five-year renewal will be granted. A school must show that its program has clearly and consistently demonstrated high academic attainment and/or consistent and significant student academic progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has demonstrated operational viability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

Short Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has two years or fewer of state-assessment results, or where any school has demonstrated mixed academic results or has uncertain organizational or financial viability, a short-term renewal with or without conditions may be considered.

Non-Renewal

Renewal is not automatic. Schools that have not demonstrated significant progress or high levels of student achievement and/or are in violation of their charter will not be renewed.

Grade Expansions or Enrollment Changes

A school may seek material charter revisions as part of the renewal process. In the case of a grade expansion or change in authorized enrollment, these material charter revisions are considered separately from the charter renewal. Charter renewal, with or without conditions, is not a guarantee of approval for a proposed material charter revision.

The NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

To help Chancellor-authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the OSDCP team has developed an Accountability Framework built around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

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

Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of factors (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. These factors include academic, fiscal, operational and environmental indicators of a charter school's performance. Additionally, some of the indicators we evaluate relate to expected performance as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act including evidence of improved student learning and achievement, special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, use of different and innovative teaching methods, parent and student satisfaction, and enrollment and retention of special student populations. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided beginning on page 17 of the NYC DOE Chancellor-Authorized Schools Accountability Handbook for 2014-15.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what OSDCP looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions, and the duration of the charter term recommended by NYC DOE. As schools use the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so the schools are high-quality choices for families. This reminder should help a school apply this framework to its own performance analysis, underscoring the state and city's commitment to superior academic performance as the most important factor in a school's performance, while also recognizing the importance of closing the achievement gap and offering high-quality learning opportunities for all students.

1. Is the School an Academic Success?

1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

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

- Meet absolute performance goals established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- Meet other rigorous academic goals as stated on school charter
- Demonstrate increasing student achievement/growth
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing academic performance measures of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing academic performance measures compared with district/city proficiency averages

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

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- 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
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic Goals
- School-reported internal assessments
- NYC DOE Progress Reports or School Quality Reports³⁰

1b. Instructionally Sound and 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 and Common Core Learning Standards
- Use instructional models and resources that are consistent with school mission and 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
- Utilizes 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 and supporting curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

³⁰ Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-2013 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

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

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

1c. Learning Environment

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

- Provide a safe, respectful, and stable academic environment conducive to student learning (one with efficient transitions and safe hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.)
- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best effort academically and to actively engage in their own learning and the life of the school
- 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
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Have formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

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

- Classroom observations
- NYC DOE School Survey results (students, parents and teachers)
- 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 (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Interviews with school leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, students
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)
- School calendar and class schedules

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

2a. Mission and Goals

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

- Have an animated mission statement and clearly articulated goals (both academic and non-academic) that staff, students and community embrace
- Demonstrate an active self-evaluation process that involves regular monitoring, an examination of practices based on outcomes against goals, and reporting on progress towards school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

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

- Mission Statement
- School charter and external documents (student/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
- Stakeholder interviews (board, parents, staff, students, etc.)

2b. Leadership and Governance Structure

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

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly, but not limited to, Open-Meeting Law and conflict of interest laws, and is fully compliant with its Board approved bylaws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)
- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board bylaws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provides regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

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

- School charter
- Board bylaws, roster, trustee resumes, calendar of meetings, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Board resources for evaluating school leadership and staff, including rubric/performance metrics
- Board resources for self-reflection and professional growth
- Board development plan
- Board interviews
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook and core operational policies
- School calendar
- Professional development plans
- Stakeholder interviews (board, school leadership and staff)

2c. 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
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the NYC DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships that support and advocate for the school
- Engage families actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Share instructional and operational practices with the larger NYC school community and actively seek opportunities for partnering and collaboration
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives

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

- NYC 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
- Participation in NYC DOE initiatives and efforts to collaborate/partner with other NYC schools
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- School Professional Development Plan and staff feedback on professional development events
- Resources for evaluations and observations, scheduled opportunities for professional collaboration, staff feedback on professional development events
- Student/Family and Staff Handbooks

2d. Operational Health

Schools that are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Demonstrate efficient and orderly daily operations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage and insurance and facility documents
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, supporting, and evaluating school leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets as established by SED (applicable to schools renewed after 2010)
- Communications with NYC DOE are timely, comprehensive, and appropriate
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees

Evidence of an operationally viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational organizational chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan
- Immunization completion rate information
- Appropriate AED/CPR certifications

2e. Financial Sustainability

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

- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, at school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Consistently clean financial audits and compliant escrow accounts
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school's design and academic program
- School leadership and Board maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- School leadership and Board oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Demonstrate financial planning for future school years, including per-pupil and space-related cost projections

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

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Financial audits, escrow accounts and other fiscal reporting documents
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships

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

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with the school's charter and charter agreement have the characteristics below:

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

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

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Annual Comprehensive Review reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/Board and staff interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have the characteristics below:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, ELL and Special Education students to those of their community school district of location³¹ or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention
- Implement school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage enrollment process and annual waiting lists with integrity
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and meet all 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 NYSED Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student/Family Handbook
- Student discipline policy and records
- Parent complaint/grievance records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Demographic data (school, district, and other as appropriate)
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

³¹ School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from the NY State Education Department. This requirement of the New York State Charter Schools Act applies to schools renewed after 2010.

3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have the characteristics below:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and complete 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 comply with NYC DOE OSDCP's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members
- Inform NYC DOE OSDCP, and where required, receive OSDCP 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
- Stakeholder 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, a school may consider various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment, or alteration of its 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 determine community needs and to communicate regarding the school's proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

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

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Charter revision or merger applications
- 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 (for example, human resource policies for growing your own talent, 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)
- School develops contingency plans especially for facilities or financial scenarios

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

- Charter renewal application
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organizational 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 without major changes through expansion or replication, are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission

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

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with partners or important vendors

Appendix A: School Performance Data

HS Performance Compared to Peer and NYC Averages

4-year Graduation Rate				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	53%
NYC *	-	-	-	68%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-15
College and Career Preparatory Course Index **				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation	-	-	-	7.6%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	19.2%
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	10.1%

* The four year NYC graduation rate is determined by the New York State Education Department (SED); SED is expected to publish the 2013-2014 graduation rate in June 2015. The 2013-2014 figure in the table above is a projected rate determined by the NYC DOE.

** The College and Career Preparatory Course Index (CCPCI) indicates the percentage of students in the school's four-year cohort who have successfully completed approved rigorous courses and assessments after four years of high school. The CCPCI score was not introduced until the 2010-2011 school year and peer and city percent of range scores were not available until the 2011-2012 school year. A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A peer/city percent of range of 50% represents the position of the average and can be interpreted as a school outperforming 50% of their peer group/city.

Regents Pass Rates

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation			
	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Integrated Algebra	49.1%	43.0%	33.8%
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	-	-	0.0%
Comprehensive English	-	70.8%	79.2%
U.S. History	-	55.2%	62.8%
Chemistry	-	-	0.0%
Physics	-	-	0.0%
Living Environment	53.4%	55.5%	43.9%
Language Other Than English	-	-	0.0%

Appendix B: Additional Accountability Data

NYC DOE Accountability Reports

[Annual Site Visit Report May 2011](#)

[Annual Site Visit Report April 2012](#)

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2012-2013](#)