



Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships  
2013-2014

**ACHIEVEMENT FIRST CROWN HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOL  
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT**

**2013 – 2014 SCHOOL YEAR**

## Part 1: School Overview

### School Information for the 2013-2014 School Year

Name of Charter School	Achievement First Crown Heights CS
Board Chair(s)	Gabe Schwartz
School Leader(s)	Camilla Lopez (K-4), Kevin Anderle (5-8), Paul Adler (9-12)
Management Company (if applicable)	Achievement First
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 17
Physical Address(es)	790 East New York Ave, Brooklyn 11203 (K-8)
	1485 Pacific Street, Brooklyn 11216 (9-12)
Facility Owner(s)	DOE (high school site is a charter partnership building)

### School Profile

- Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School (AF Crown Heights) is an elementary, middle, and high school which served 943 students<sup>1</sup> in grades K-12 during the 2013-2014 school year and is fully at scale. It opened in 2005-2006, and is under the terms of its second charter. The school is located in each a DOE operated and non-DOE operated facility in Brooklyn within Community School District (CSD) 17.<sup>2</sup>
- AF Crown Heights Charter School enrolls new students in kindergarten, but backfills empty seats in all grades. There were 6,530 students on the school's waitlist after the Spring 2013 lottery.<sup>3</sup> The average attendance rate for the 2013-2014 school year to date as reported in March 2014 was 99%.<sup>4</sup>
- AF Crown Heights Charter School was renewed during the 2009-2010 school year for a period of 5 years, and is consistent with the terms of its renewal application.
- The principal for the elementary school, Camilla Lopez, has been at the school for 6 years. Kevin Anderle, the middle school principal, began at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. The principal for the high school, Paul Adler, has been with the school since its founding.
- AF Crown Heights Charter School is part of the Achievement First (AF) Network, a Charter Management Organization (CMO). The CMO provides a Chief Academic Officer and a Regional Superintendent, school support, teacher and staff recruitment, talent development, back office support, and curriculum and assessment, among other services to all schools in the AF Network. The school pays a management fee of 10% of its public revenue to the CMO for these services.
- AF Crown Heights Charter School had a student to teacher ratio of 19:1 in the 2013-2014 school year, and served 42 sections across all grades, with an average class size of 23.<sup>5</sup>
- The lottery preferences for the AF Crown Heights Charter School's 2013-2014 school year included the New York State Charter Schools Act required preferences of returning students, students residing in the community school district of the school's location and siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Enrollment reflects ATS data from 10/31/13.

<sup>2</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System database.

<sup>3</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 3/25/14.

<sup>4</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 3/25/14.

<sup>5</sup> Self-reported information given on 9/26/14.

<sup>6</sup> Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School's 2013-2014 application.

## Part 2: Summary of Findings

### Essential Question 1: Is the school an academic success?

#### Overview of School-Specific Data through 2012-2013

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	41.9%	53.5%	60.0%	29.3%
CSD 17	33.7%	37.0%	38.7%	17.1%
Difference from CSD 17	8.2	16.5	21.3	12.2
NYC	42.4%	43.9%	46.9%	26.4%
Difference from NYC	-0.5	9.6	13.1	2.9
New York State	53.2%	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	-11.3	0.7	4.9	-1.8

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	70.4%	83.1%	89.0%	42.2%
CSD 17	42.7%	47.1%	50.5%	17.5%
Difference from CSD 17	27.7	36.0	38.5	24.7
NYC	54.0%	57.3%	60.0%	29.6%
Difference from NYC	16.4	25.8	29.0	12.6
New York State	61.0%	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%
Difference from New York State	9.4	19.8	24.2	11.1

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

#### HS Performance Compared to Peer and NYC Averages\*

4-year Graduation Rate				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	-	-	-	83.8%
NYC	65.1%	65.5%	64.7%	66.0%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	17.8
6-year Graduation Rate				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	-	-	-	-
NYC	69.2%	70.9%	73.2%	73.0%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-	-
College Readiness Index** - 4 years				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	-	-	-	13.5%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	5.7%
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	29.0%

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 or city.

\* Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School is one of four AF charter schools, which are DOE authorized, that feeds into Achievement First High School located at 1485 Pacific Street in Brooklyn. The graduation rate and college readiness data presented above reflects high school students from all four feeder schools.

\*\* The College Readiness Index score was not introduced until the 2011-2012 school year.

### Credit Accumulation\*

% 1st-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	90.5%	77.4%	86.2%	95.7%
Peer Percent of Range	66.7%	20.7%	45.7%	84.5%
City Percent of Range	83.2%	58.5%	72.3%	90.5%
% 2nd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	-	74.1%	84.5%	90.4%
Peer Percent of Range	-	16.9%	44.6%	67.0%
City Percent of Range	-	55.8%	71.5%	81.5%
% 3rd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Achievement First Crown Heights CS	-	-	90.5%	90.0%
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	74.2%	74.3%
City Percent of Range	-	-	83.9%	82.0%

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 or city.

\* Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School is one of four AF charter schools, which are DOE-authorized, that feeds into Achievement First High School located at 1485 Pacific Street in Brooklyn. The credit accumulation data presented above reflects high school students from all four feeder schools.

### Performance on the NYC Progress Report – Elementary and Middle School Grades

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	C	A	A	C
Student Progress	C	A	A	C
Student Performance	B	B	A	B
School Environment	A	A	A	C
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	0.5	3.5	3.1	2.9

### Performance on the NYC Progress Report – High School Grades\*

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	-	-	B
Student Progress	-	-	-	A
Student Performance	-	-	-	C
School Environment	-	-	-	A
College and Career Readiness**	-	-	-	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	-	-	0.1

\* Achievement First Crown Heights Charter School is one of four AF charter schools, # of which are DOE-authorized, that feeds into Achievement First High School located at 1485 Pacific Street in Brooklyn. The Progress Report data presented above reflects high school students from all four feeder schools.

\*\* The College and Career Readiness grade was not introduced until the 2011-2012 school year.

## **Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals**

- AF Crown Heights, according to its 2012-2013 Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), met two of eight of its elementary/middle school grades-specific academic performance goals identified in its charter. Of the other six goals, it partially met one, did not meet four, and one was not determined because data was not available by time of submission.
- According to the same report, the school met three of five of its high school grades-specific academic performance goals identified in its charter. One goal was not applicable and one was not determined because the high school had its first graduating class in the 2012-2013 school year.

## **Responsive Education Program & Learning Environment<sup>7</sup>**

- AF Crown Heights ELA and math curricula have been adjusted to include greater amounts of complex problem solving and close reading to help students perform better on state assessments and to increase their critical thinking abilities.
- The school continues to program two hours of math instruction per day, featuring critical thinking, inspired instruction, and continuous spiral review.
- The school continues to use a guided reading program for low-level readers, featuring the Wilson Language Program.
- The school's use of Fountas & Pinnell testing was adjusted based on trends that showed results were not predictive. Previously, assessment of students' reading levels was conducted four times a year in trying to assess the students' growth. The school decreased this to three times for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school reported that interim assessments (IAs) were administered to students twice in the 2013-2014 school year, by the time of document submission, to predict performance against the NYS assessments. The results are tabulated in a proprietary analytical web-based program to drive instruction. The school holds an entire day of professional development devoted to examining student work and data to identify students' strengths, gaps, and adjust upcoming instructional plans after each IA.
- The school reported that they continue to automatically trigger intervention for students who perform below level, in order for these students to get extra support with programs targeted to their learning needs.
- The school has a co-teaching model in Literacy, Composition, and math sections in each grade. These classes include a general education teacher paired with a Learning Specialist to provide differentiated instruction. This can either be in the form of push-in inclusion, as well as pull-out intervention.
- The school reported that they continue to have a weekly schedule that allows a half day of common planning time every Friday.
- The school still utilizes an After School Intervention Program in math and ELA for struggling students. Additionally the school has a Saturday Academy for students in need of further academic support that provides small group assistance in the form of a 1:5 teacher-to-student ratio.

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

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

### **Governance Structure & Organizational Design**

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

- The Board has seven Board members, all voting, including the family representative and the Achievement First representative. The Board Chair, Gabe Schwartz, has been on the Board since January 2008.
- As evidenced by a review of the school's Board roster, there was no Board turnover during the 2013-2014 school year.
- As recorded in the Board's minutes, there is a clear reporting structure with school leadership from the elementary and middle school academies providing regular updates on academic and operational performance to the Board and its committees. The Board also holds Joint High School Committee meetings, where the Achievement First High Schools, Achievement First Brooklyn High School and Achievement First University Prep, school leadership provides regular updates on academic and operational performance.

### **School Climate & Community Engagement**

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

- The school has experienced leadership turnover, with seven staff from the leadership team leaving after the 2012-2013 school year, including three Academic Deans, one Director, one Associate Director, and one Dean of Students. Most of the turnover came from the middle school academy, which also hired a new principal at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.
- Instructional staff turnover was 40% with 20 out of 71 instructional staff that chose not to return this school year from last year, and nine instructional staff who were not asked to return. As of March 2014, during the 2013-2014 school year, three teachers had left the school.<sup>8</sup>
- As of March 2014, average daily attendance for students during the 2013-2014 school year was at 99%, which is higher than the school's charter goal of at least 95%.<sup>9</sup>
- Student turnover was 6.4% of students from last school year who did not return at the start of the 2013-2014 school year, and 2% of the students left the school between the start of the school year and March 2014.<sup>10</sup>
- The school reported having a parent organization, called the PLC, as evidenced in the school's Board minutes.

### **2012-2013 NYC School Survey Results<sup>11</sup>**

Categories	Result	Community	Response Rate	Citywide Rate
Academic Expectations	Below Average	Parents	32%	54%
Communication	Below Average	Teachers	27%	83%
Engagement	Well Below Average	Students	79%	83%
Safety & Respect	Below Average			

<sup>8</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 3/25/14.

<sup>9</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 3/25/14.

<sup>10</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form on 3/25/14.

<sup>11</sup> Results are particular to the school type as identified in the 2013 School Survey.

## **Financial Health**

### Near-term financial obligations:

- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's current ratio indicated a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's unrestricted cash availability indicated a risk that the school may be unable to cover at least one month of its operating expenses without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2013-2014 budget to the actual enrollment as of the last day for the 2013-2014 school year indicates that the school had not met its enrollment target.
- As of the FY13 financial audit the school had no debt obligations.

### Financial sustainability based on current practices:

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13, the school operated at a 4% deficit, indicating that the school may not be operating within its resources at the time of the FY13 audit.
- Based on the FY13 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.
- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY13, the school had overall negative cash flow from FY11 to FY13.

### Annual Independent Financial Audit

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

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

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

#### **Board Compliance**

The Board is in compliance with:

- The Board's membership size falls within the range of no fewer than five and no greater than 15 members, as outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board has held the minimum number of Board meetings of five, as outlined in its bylaws. Based on submitted Board minutes, the Board held five meetings for the 2013-2014 school year in which quorum was reached.

The Board is out of compliance with:

- Currently, the Board does not have the officer position of Vice Chair filled, as outlined in the Board's bylaws. The Board does have the Chair and Treasurer positions filled.

#### **School Compliance**

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

- The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.
- The school has posted its NYSED Annual Report and annual audit to its website, as specified in charter law.
- The school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 8, 2014 adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

The school is out of compliance with:

- All staff members do not have appropriate fingerprint clearance as of November 2013.
- The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is not in compliance with state requirements for teacher certification, with 22 uncertified staff out of 99.
- The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is not in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization as of May 2014.
- The school leader was not trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC as of May 2014, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

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

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

- AF Crown Heights maintains its original growth plan of a K-12 school consisting of three academies.
- As part of the Achievement First network of schools, the Board of AF Crown Heights is considering a charter merger with the other Achievement First schools. Four of these schools, seven schools total, are authorized by the State University of New York.

### **Enrollment and Retention Targets**

As a reminder regarding accountability in the next charter term:

- Amendments to Article 56 of the New York State Consolidated Laws: Education, which relates to Charter Schools, call for charter schools, as a consideration of renewal, "to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets" for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The amendments further indicate "Repeated failure to comply with the requirement" as a cause for revocation or termination of the charter.
  - The law directs schools to demonstrate "that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students" in the event it has not yet met its targets.
  - The NYC DOE, as authorizer, will annually monitor the school's performance against these targets and the efforts it makes to meet this state requirement.
- In school year 2013-14 (and the prior four years), AF Crown Heights served a lower percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch compared to CSD 17, but higher than the citywide average. The school served students with disabilities and English Language Learner students at lower rates than the CSD 17 and citywide averages.

### **Special Populations**

	Free and Reduced Price Lunch					Students with Disabilities					English Language Learners				
	2009 -	2010 -	2011 -	2012 -	2013 -	2009 -	2010 -	2011 -	2012 -	2013 -	2009 -	2010 -	2011 -	2012 -	2013 -
	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014	2010 2011	2011 2012	2012 2013	2013 2014	2014
<b>School</b>	71.5%	73.2%	75.9%	73.8%	77.4%	12.5%	12.0%	11.1%	9.9%	11.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
CSD 17	80.5%	79.3%	78.2%	78.6%	81.6%	13.0%	13.4%	13.2%	13.5%	14.8%	8.7%	9.4%	9.4%	9.3%	9.0%
NYC	61.7%	64.5%	67.3%	69.3%	72.7%	14.9%	15.0%	15.1%	15.5%	16.4%	14.8%	15.0%	14.6%	14.2%	13.9%

<b>Additional Enrollment Information</b>					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-9	K-10	K-11	K-12	K-12
CSD(s)	17	17	17	17	17

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