

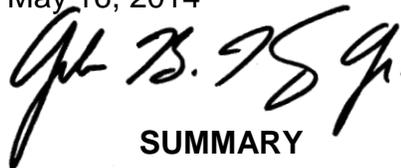


THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Ken Slentz   
**SUBJECT:** Charter Schools: Charter Renewal Recommendations for Four Charter Schools Authorized by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)

**DATE:** May 16, 2014

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

  
**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Decision**

Should the Regents approve the proposed renewal charters for four charter schools authorized by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)?

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State Statute.

**Proposed Handling**

This issue will be before the Regents P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at the May 2014 Regents meeting.

**Procedural History**

The Chancellor of the NYCDOE approved these four renewal charters and submitted them to the Regents for approval and issuance of the renewal charters as required by Article 56 of the Education Law, the New York State Charter School Statute.

**Background Information**

I recommend that the Board of Regents approve the proposed renewal charters for the following charter schools as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) in her capacity as a charter school authorizer under

Article 56 of the Education Law, and that the charters be extended for the terms indicated.

The letter from the NYCDOE Chancellor submitting the proposed renewal charters to the Board of Regents and the Summary of the NYCDOE's 2013 Renewal Recommendation Report for each school are attached to this item. Links to the full Renewal Reports on the NYCDOE website are provided below:

- **Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School**

The Chancellor recommends that Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School be granted a full five-year renewal expiring June 30, 2019. The School currently serves 938 students in Grades K-10. The School will continue to add approved grades during its next charter term, reaching its approved maximum grade span and enrollment of 1,100 students in Grades K-12 during its next charter term. The School is located in space not operated by NYCDOE in NYC CSD 5.

Full Renewal Report:

[http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/833ED7C8-1085-4F70-84B9-3069D151D243/0/HCZPromiseAcademyCharterSchoolRenewalReport\\_FINAL.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/833ED7C8-1085-4F70-84B9-3069D151D243/0/HCZPromiseAcademyCharterSchoolRenewalReport_FINAL.pdf)

- **Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School**

The Chancellor recommends that Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School be granted a full five-year renewal expiring June 30, 2019. The School currently serves 364 students in Grades K-5. The School will continue to add approved grades during its next charter term and will serve 572 students in Grades K-10 by the last year of its renewal charter term, 2018-19. The School is located in space not operated by NYCDOE in NYC CSD 7.

Full Renewal Report:

[http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/16D4B022-8651-4125-AAFB-438415EE21DD/0/MetLCSRRenewalReport201314\\_FINAL.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/16D4B022-8651-4125-AAFB-438415EE21DD/0/MetLCSRRenewalReport201314_FINAL.pdf)

- **New York French American Charter School**

Citing some concerns about student academic achievement at the School, the Chancellor recommends that New York French American Charter School be granted a short-term three-year renewal expiring June 30, 2017. The School was originally approved to be a K-12 school but has decided to halt growth at this time and will continue to serve 183 students in Grades K-5. The School is located in space not operated by NYCDOE in NYC CSD 3.

Full Renewal Report:

- <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/4597FBA2-757F-4224-81BA-8ED505E3FE4B/0/NYFACSRenewalReport201314.pdf>

- **Williamsburg Charter High School**

The Chancellor recommends that Williamsburg Charter High School be granted a full five-year renewal expiring June 30, 2019. The School currently serves 944 students in Grades 9-12. The proposed renewal includes approval to allow the School to expand enrollment to serve 963 students. The School is located in private space in NYC DOE 14.

Full Renewal Report:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/27666C94-5C2F-4530-B0EC-D622AB80D208/0/WCHSRenewalReport201314.pdf>

### **Recommendation**

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2019.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2019.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **New York French American Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education,

and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2017.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Williamsburg Charter High School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2019.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

The Regents action for the above named charter schools will become effective immediately.

Attachment

## Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

### I. Charter School Overview:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Name of Charter School  | Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy Charter School  |
| Current Board Chair(s)  | Kenneth Langone  |
| School Leader   | Geoffrey Canada, School Superintendent; Marquitta Speller, High School Principal; Shakira Petit, Middle School Principal; Achil Petit, Upper Elementary Principal; Tonya White, Lower Elementary Principal |
| Management Company (if applicable)                            | N/A  |
| Other Partner(s)  | Harlem Children's Zone   |
| District(s) of Location                                       | NYC Community School District 5  |
| Physical Address  | 245 West 129th Street, New York, NY 10027  |
| Facility  | Non-DOE Operated (as of 2013-2014)   |
| School Opened For Instruction                                 | 2004   |
| Current Charter Term Expiry Date                              | 8/10/2014  |
| Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date              | K-10/ 938  |
| Proposed Charter Term   | Full term  |
| Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date | K-12 / 1,100   |

### II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

#### Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report: High School

| Progress Report Grade              | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Grade                      |           |           | A         | A         |
| Student Progress                   |           |           | A         | A         |
| Student Performance                |           |           | A         | A         |
| School Environment                 |           |           | B         | B         |
| College and Career Readiness**     |           |           | A         | A         |
| Closing the Achievement Gap Points |           |           | 3.1       | 4.0       |

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

#### Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report: Elementary / Middle School

| Progress Report Grade              | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Grade                      | B         | C         | B         | C         |
| Student Progress                   | C         | C         | C         | C         |
| Student Performance                | C         | B         | B         | B         |
| School Environment                 | A         | A         | B         | C         |
| Closing the Achievement Gap Points | 2.0       | 3.5       | 1.7       | 2.0       |

## HS Performance<sup>1</sup> Compared to Peer and NYC Averages

| 4-year Graduation Rate              |           |           |           |           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                     | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School  | -         | -         | 98.4%     | 98.5%     |
| NYC                                 | 65.1%     | 65.5%     | 64.7%     |           |
| Difference from NYC                 | -         | -         | 33.7%     |           |
| 6-year Graduation Rate              |           |           |           |           |
|                                     | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School  | -         | -         | -         | -         |
| NYC                                 | 69.2%     | 70.9%     | 73.2%     |           |
| Difference from NYC                 | -         | -         | -73.2%    |           |
| College Readiness Index** - 4 years |           |           |           |           |
|                                     | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School  |           |           | 46.0%     | 60.0%     |
| Peer Percent of Range               |           |           | 85.8%     | 100.0%    |
| City Percent of Range               |           |           | 100.0%    | 100.0%    |

\* 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.

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

The graduation rate for NYC as of the 2012-2013 school year was not available during this report's publication.

## Credit Accumulation

| % 1st-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School      | 78.7%     | -         | -         | 87.7%     |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | 53.4%     | -         | -         | 61.0%     |
| City Percent of Range                   | 62.4%     | -         | -         | 72.8%     |
| % 2nd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School      | 89.6%     | 88.6%     | -         | -         |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | 78.4%     | 76.2%     | -         | -         |
| City Percent of Range                   | 82.5%     | 80.5%     | -         | -         |
| % 3rd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School      | -         | 96.9%     | 97.0%     | -         |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | -         | 100.0%    | 93.8%     | -         |
| City Percent of Range                   | -         | 96.7%     | 95.7%     | -         |

\* 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.

<sup>1</sup> HCZ Promise I CS originally accepted new students in kindergarten and middle school but revised its charter to have kindergarten to be their primary intake grade, discontinuing recruitment of new classes of the middle schoolers in 2009. The 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 graduating classes entered as middle schoolers. As a result there will be a two-year gap before the school's next graduating cohort in 2015-2016.

Students scoring at or above Level 3, compared to CSD, NYC, and State averages

| % Proficient in English Language Arts |           |           |           |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                       | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School    | 38.4%     | 39.8%     | 42.8%     | 21.7%     |
| CSD 5                                 | 29.8%     | 29.6%     | 29.1%     | 13.4%     |
| Difference from CSD 5                 | 8.6       | 10.2      | 13.7      | 8.3       |
| NYC                                   | 44.6%     | 45.7%     | 46.9%     | 26.4%     |
| Difference from NYC                   | -6.2      | -5.9      | -4.1      | -4.7      |
| New York State                        | 52.5%     | 54.8%     | 55.2%     | 31.2%     |
| Difference from New York State        | -14.1     | -15.0     | -12.4     | -9.5      |

| % Proficient in Math               |           |           |           |           |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                    | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| HCZ Promise Academy Charter School | 60.2%     | 69.3%     | 67.6%     | 28.1%     |
| CSD 5                              | 38.5%     | 39.6%     | 39.0%     | 13.1%     |
| Difference from CSD 5              | 21.8      | 29.7      | 28.6      | 15.0      |
| NYC                                | 56.3%     | 58.3%     | 60.0%     | 29.6%     |
| Difference from NYC                | 3.9       | 11.0      | 7.6       | -1.5      |
| New York State                     | 64.6%     | 64.6%     | 65.7%     | 28.9%     |
| Difference from New York State     | -4.4      | 4.7       | 1.9       | -0.8      |

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

| Academic Goal Analysis by Category (based on School's submission) |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |                            |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
|   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Year<br>2009-2010 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year<br>2010-2011 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year<br>2011-2012 | 4 <sup>th</sup> Year<br>2012-2013 | Cumulative 4<br>Year Total |
| Total Achievable Academic Goals                                   | 13                                | 14                                | 15                                | 12                                | 54                         |
| # Met   | 8                                 | 9                                 | 8                                 | 10                                | 35                         |
| # Partially Met   | 0                                 | 0                                 | 1                                 | 0                                 | 0                          |
| # Not Met   | 5                                 | 5                                 | 6                                 | 2                                 | 19                         |
| % Met   | 62%                               | 64%                               | 53%                               | 83%                               | 65%                        |
| % Partially Met   | 0%                                | 0%                                | 7%                                | 0%                                | 0%                         |
| % Not Met   | 38%                               | 36%                               | 40%                               | 17%                               | 35%                        |

### **III. Rationale for Recommendation**

#### **A. Academic Performance**

At the time of this school's renewal, Harlem's Children Zone Promise Academy I Charter School (HCZ Promise I) has demonstrated academic achievement and progress. After a successful first charter term, HCZ Promise I has continued its success through its second charter term with graduation rates above 98% in its first two graduating cohorts. The school earned overall grades of A on both of its graded New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) High School Progress Reports. In its elementary and middle school grades, HCZ Promise I has consistently surpassed its Community School District (CSD) proficiency levels in both ELA and math in each year of the current charter term.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." School graduation rates, state assessment data and NYC Progress Report results show that HCZ Promise I has demonstrated success through its second charter term in fulfilling its primary objectives.

The mission of the HCZ Promise Academy is to provide high quality, standards-based academic programs for students, grades K-12, from underserved communities and underperforming school districts, and to provide students with the skills they need to be accepted by and succeed in college. HCZ Promise I promotes high achievement in all subjects through a demanding curriculum, the use of data-driven teaching methods, and, uniquely, extensive support services through its institutional partner, the Harlem Children's Zone.

HCZ Promise I entered the fifth year of its second charter term with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. For the current charter term, the NYC DOE has four years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic performance of the school. In addition, the school has received four graded NYC DOE Elementary-Middle School Progress Reports and two graded High School Progress Reports during this term. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an overall grade of A, B, C, D, or F and are based on the school's performance in each of these categories: Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment, with additional points for Closing the Achievement Gap contributing to the overall grade. High School Progress Reports also include a College and Career Readiness section. Grades are based on comparing school results in each category to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to school results citywide.

Over the course of its second charter term, HCZ Promise I earned an overall grade of A on the NYC DOE High School Progress Report in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The school earned alternating overall grades of B, C, B and C on the NYC DOE Elementary-Middle School Progress Reports during the term.

As it had done in its first charter term, HCZ Promise I levels of proficiency (percent of students scoring Level 3 or 4) on NYS ELA and math assessments have surpassed those of its district of location, CSD 5, in both subjects and all years overall proficiency. While its percent proficient has not surpassed the city or state in ELA, in math the school's results surpassed the city in three of the four years of the term and the state in two of the four years. Its high school four-year graduation rates have exceeded the performance of over 96% high schools within its peer group and the city.

HCZ Promise I has consistently scored positive grades on the Student Performance section of its Progress Report. The High School Progress Report uses two metrics to measure Student Performance, Graduation Rates and the type of diploma students receive (greater value is allotted to diplomas that indicate higher levels of proficiency and college readiness—so a Regents diploma

is weighted more than a local diploma and an Advanced Regents diploma more than Regents and so on.) On both years it has received graded HS Progress Reports, HCZ Promise I has earned a grade of A for Student Performance.

For Elementary-Middle School Progress Reports, Student Performance looks at two types of metrics: proficiency in ELA and math and the percent of students passing core courses. After a Student Performance grade of C in 2009-2010 for its Elementary-Middle School Progress Report, HCZ Promise I has earned three consecutive Bs for Student Performance.

The Student Progress grade of the HS Progress Report looks at two metrics, the percent of students earning 10 or more credits in each of the first, second and third year of their enrollment and how students are progressing in passing Regent exams required for a Regents diploma. HCZ Promise I has received an A for Student Progress on each of its graded Progress Reports.

For Elementary-Middle School Progress Reports, the primary growth metrics for Student Progress are Median Adjusted Growth Percentiles (MAGP)<sup>2</sup> for ELA and math. During the current charter term, HCZ Promise I has earned Cs for Student Progress each year of the term.

Based on an analysis of applicable academic charter goals, over the course of its second charter term HCZ Promise I has cumulatively met 65% of its applicable goals. In 2009-2010, the school met 62% of its academic goals, in 2010-2011 it met 64%, in 2011-2012 it met 53%, and in its most recently completed year it met 83% of its academic charter goals<sup>3</sup>. In addition to goals related to ELA and math proficiency compared to the district and to high school graduation rates, the school has achieved its goals related to 75% of its students reaching proficiency on 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade NYS science exams every year of the term, with the exception of 8<sup>th</sup> grade science in 2011-2012.

Over the course of the charter term, the NYC DOE has conducted four site visits: a one-day Annual Visit in the Spring of 2011, a one-day Annual Visit in the Spring of 2012, a partial day Board observation and financial compliance focused visit in the spring of 2013, and, as part of the renewal process, a two-day visit in the March of 2014, with additional visits in March to meet with HCZ staff. As evidenced by site visit reports, HCZ Promise I has developed a responsive educational program and supportive learning environment.

HCZ Promise I utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to support academic intervention and progress monitoring for all students at risk of academic failure. The primary means for delivery of special education academic services is Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS). The school's Student Support Team manages the RTI program and student referral process, and also provides direct support to students according to their IEPs. The school also provides counseling and works with the NYC DOE to provide additional related services such as physical and occupational therapy. HCZ Promise I offers a structured English language immersion program for English Language Learner (ELL) students that includes push-in and pullout support during the instructional day. All teachers receive professional development training on strategies for teaching ELL students.

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<sup>2</sup> This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis.

HCZ Promise I serves a comparable percentage of students receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRL), a slightly smaller but increasing percentage of Students with Disabilities 11.6% in 2009-2010 to 14.9% in 2012-2013, less than two percent below the CSD average, and a much smaller percentage of ELL students compared to CSD 5. As it pertains to increasing the percentage of ELL students, please see page 25.

#### **B. Governance, Operations & Finances**

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school and its Board of Trustees have demonstrated a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board's membership has been stable over the course of the term. It currently has nine members, which is more than the minimum number of seven members and fewer than the maximum number of seventeen established in its bylaws. Five of the nine have been on the Board since 2004; eight of nine have been on the Board throughout the current term with one member joining in 2012. Current Board Chair Kenneth Langone has been serving in this position throughout the current charter term.

The school has had stable leadership not only at the Board level but also at the institutional partner level with Geoffrey Canada serving as the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HCZ Promise I and II. While there has been turnover at the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) level, HCZ's comptroller, Director of Student Support Services, and Director of Educational Research, and other school support leadership have been in place for all or most of the current term.

Over the course of the school's current charter term, HCZ Promise I has established a stable school culture, despite turnover among teaching staff over the course of the term. The school has consistently met its charter goals for parent participation and satisfaction on the NYC DOE School Survey, though struggled with its goals for student and teacher satisfaction. It has met its goals for student enrollment and retention each year. NYC DOE survey results have consistently been Average to Above Average across all four categories (Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety & Respect) over the course of the term, with the exception of Academic Expectations in 2012-2013, which was Below Average. School Survey participation rates have been above city averages for all constituencies for all years of the term.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on its current practices, however there were material weaknesses noted in the past three independent financial audits for FY2013, FY2012 and FY2011.

#### **C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations**

Over the course of the charter term, the school has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations but not with others. The school has approximately seven more uncertified teachers than the limit allowed by the NY State Charter Schools Act; however four of these are pending reciprocity from outside of New York State. Additionally the school submitted the independent financial audits for its 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years after the November 1 deadline established in state charter law. However, this was largely due to financial staffing changes and the school's 2012-2013 financial audit was submitted by deadline.

#### **D. Plans for Next Charter Term**

In its next term, HCZ Promise I will serve the complete span of grades as a full K-12 school beginning in 2015-2016—though it will not serve any grades it hasn't already served during its current charter term. Because the charter school is an integral part of Harlem's Children Zone's overall community development plan, the organization will continue to provide financial and in-kind support to Promise Academy I in its next term.

Geoffrey Canada's retirement as CEO of Harlem's Children Zone is set to take place in the summer of 2014. Mr. Canada will retain his title of President and will continue to serve both on HCZ's and HCZ Promise I's Board of Trustees. Anne Williams-Isom, who has been the Chief

Operating Officer (COO) of HCZ, will assume responsibilities as CEO. The Board and CEO will also be hiring a Superintendent for HCZ Promise I who will be overall school leader of the four "schools within a school" of HCZ Promise I.

**For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a full-term renewal, expiring on June 30, 2019.**

The NYC DOE will continue to monitor the school's academic intervention supports and strategies throughout the course of its next charter term.

## Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

### I. Charter School Overview:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Name of Charter School  | Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School (MetLCS) |
| Current Board Chair(s)  | Anne Laraway                                    |
| School Leader   | Courtney Russell, Principal                     |
| Management Company (if applicable)                            | Lighthouse Academies, Inc.                      |
| Other Partner(s)  | N/A   |
| District(s) of Location                                       | NYC Community School District 8                 |
| Physical Address  | 500 Courtlandt Avenue Bronx, NY 10451           |
| Facility  | Non-DOE Operated                                |
| School Opened For Instruction                                 | 2010  |
| Current Charter Term Expiry Date                              | 9/14/2014                                       |
| Maximum Grade Levels/Enrollment at Expiry Date                | K-6 / 364                                       |
| Proposed Charter Term   | Full term                                       |
| Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date | K-10 / 572                                      |

### II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

#### Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

| Progress Report Grade              | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Grade                      | -         | -         | C         | A         |
| Student Progress                   | -         | -         | C         | A         |
| Student Performance                | -         | -         | C         | A         |
| School Environment                 | -         | -         | B         | B         |
| Closing the Achievement Gap Points | -         | -         | 3.0       | 2.3       |

#### Students scoring at or above Level 3, compared to CSD, NYC\*, and State averages

| % Proficient in English Language Arts  |           |           |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|  | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School | -         | -         | 28.3%     | 28.3%     |
| CSD 8                                  | -         | -         | 27.6%     | 9.6%      |
| Difference from CSD 8                  | -         | -         | 0.7       | 18.7      |
| NYC                                    | -         | -         | 49.0%     | 27.7%     |
| Difference from NYC                    | -         | -         | -20.7     | 0.6       |
| New York State                         | -         | -         | 55.2%     | 31.2%     |
| Difference from New York State         | -         | -         | -26.9     | -2.9      |

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

| % Proficient in Math                   |           |           |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|  | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School | -         | -         | 53.3%     | 50.0%     |
| CSD 8                                  | -         | -         | 36.4%     | 12.0%     |
| Difference from CSD 8                  | -         | -         | 16.9      | 38.0      |
| NYC                                    | -         | -         | 57.0%     | 34.2%     |
| Difference from NYC                    | -         | -         | -3.7      | 15.8      |
| New York State                         | -         | -         | 65.7%     | 28.9%     |
| Difference from New York State         | -         | -         | -12.4     | 21.1      |

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

| Academic Goal Analysis (based on school's submission) |                       |                       |                       |                                    |                               |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|   | 1st Year<br>2009-2010 | 2nd Year<br>2010-2011 | 3rd year<br>2011-2012 | 4th Year <sup>1</sup><br>2012-2013 | Cumulative<br>4 Year<br>Total |
| <b>Total Achievable<br/>Academic Goals</b>            | 0                     | 1                     | 5                     | 5                                  | 11                            |
| # Met   | 0                     | 1                     | 2                     | 4                                  | 7                             |
| # Partially Met                                       | 0                     | 0                     | 0                     | 1                                  | 1                             |
| # Not Met   | 0                     | 0                     | 3                     | 0                                  | 3                             |
| <b>% Met</b>  | N/A                   | 100%                  | 40%                   | 80%                                | 64%                           |
| <b>% Partially Met</b>                                | N/A                   | 0%                    | 0%                    | 20%                                | 9%                            |
| <b>% Not Met</b>                                      | N/A                   | 0%                    | 60%                   | 0%                                 | 27%                           |

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis.

### **III. Rationale for Recommendation**

#### **A. Academic Performance**

At the time of this school's renewal, Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School (MetLCS) has demonstrated academic achievement and progress. The school, in its first charter term, has only two years of New York State assessment results and New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Progress Report results. The school earned an Overall grade of C in 2011-2012 but an Overall grade of A in 2012-2013, showing remarkable improvement in its second year of accountability results. MetLCS was ranked in the bottom quartile of Early Childhood Schools based on its 2011-2012 results but in the 88<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2012-2013. It has surpassed its district in both years of ELA and math proficiency results; surpassed the city in ELA and math proficiency in the second year of results and NYS's math proficiency results in its second year.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." State assessment data available for MetLCS indicate that the school has demonstrated partial success through its first charter term in fulfilling its primary objectives.

MetLCS's mission is to prepare all scholars for college through a rigorous arts-infused education program. To accomplish this mission, MetLCS has partnered with Lighthouse Academies (LHA), a charter management organization operating one other charter school in NYC and approximately twenty charter schools in other parts of the United States, particularly in the Midwest. In the 2013-2014 school year MetLCS serves students in grades K-5.

MetLCS entered its fourth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. For the current charter term, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic performance of the school. In addition, MetLCS has received one graded NYC DOE Early Childhood Progress Report and one NYC DOE Elementary School Progress Report during this term, beginning in 2011-2012. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an overall grade of A, B, C, D, or F and are based on the school's performance in each of these categories: student progress, student performance, school environment, with additional points for closing the achievement gap contributing to the overall grade. Grades are based on comparing school results in each category to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to school results citywide.

Over the course of its first charter term, MetLCS earned an overall C grade on the NYC DOE Early Childhood Progress Report in 2011-2012 and an overall A on the NYC DOE Elementary School Progress Report in 2012-2013. Based on its Progress Report scores, MetLCS was in the bottom quarter of early childhood schools in 2011-2012 but, after a strong second year performance, in the top twelve percent of elementary schools in 2012-2013.

MetLCS has seen improved grades in the subsection of Student Performance, increasing from a C in 2011-2012 to an A in 2012-2013. The Student Performance grade looks at the number of students who have reached proficiency on NYS ELA and math assessments, comparing the school's average proficiency to that of its peer group and to all schools citywide. Importantly, it also looks at average student proficiency ratings, comparing school averages to peer and city results.

The main metrics contributing to the Student Progress subsection are Median Adjusted Growth Percentiles, which measures how much students grow relative to all students in the city who

received the same proficiency score the year before<sup>2</sup>. Similar to its Student Performance grades, MetLCS improved its Student Progress grade from a C in 2011-2012 to an A in 2012-2013.

In both years for which there is NYS assessment data, MetLCS has outperformed its district of location, CSD 8, in ELA and math when comparing common tested grades. In addition, MetLCS surpassed citywide proficiency averages in both ELA and math in 2012-2013, significantly so in math. Unlike schools statewide, with the switch to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) assessments, MetLCS's proficiency scores barely changed—its ELA average proficiency was literally the same, 28.3% both years, and in math proficiency, where declines were sharpest statewide, MetLCS only declined from 53.3% to 50%. Additionally, as noted above, its proficiency rates remained above the CSD average in 2012-2013, but by a much wider margin, and exceeded the city average in ELA narrowly and in math significantly.

Based on an analysis of applicable academic charter goals<sup>3</sup>, over the course of its first term MetLCS has cumulatively met 64% of its applicable goals, partially met an additional 9% of its goals, and failed to meet 27% over the course of the term. In its first year, when there were only one applicable academic goal, based on the grades the school served at the time, MetLCS met 100% of its goals. Beginning in 2011-2012, when the school reached grade spans that took NYS assessments for the first time, MetLCS met 40% (two of five goals) of its academic goals that year and 80% (four of five goals) the following year.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the NYC DOE has conducted four site visits: Annual Visits in the Spring of 2011 and 2012, an Annual Comprehensive Review visit in the Spring of 2013, and, as part of the renewal process, a two-day visit in the Spring of 2014. Based on a visit in May of 2011, it was noted that "the school provides a strong and consistent academic program for its primary grade students, one that strives for rigor and that evidences differentiation of instruction, a blend of instructional approaches, routine use of assessment data, and effective planning practices." This observation was confirmed in subsequent visits; however, it was also noted in the feedback that the school needed greater consistency in implementation of its instructional approach and individual teacher ownership of data use and additional support for adjusting instruction in response to formative assessment data. In response to this feedback, the school made structural adjustments to the school's intervention program, collaboration between the intervention team and general education teachers, and a greater role in unit planning by the school's instructional leadership to strengthen Common Core alignment and to allow teachers, particularly new teachers, to focus instructional planning at the lesson level. The school, still only in its fourth year of operation, has a developing responsive education program.

MetLCS offers comprehensive support for students at-risk of academic failure; these supports include staffing, scheduling, grouping, curricula, a Response to Intervention program, and IEP defined special education services through its Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS). The school revised its charter to include two instructors in all core classrooms, a lead teacher and a teacher associate. Its instructional schedule includes a "Power Hour" for ELA and math that allows for additional, targeted instruction and independent practice in small group setting. Its SETTS program is primarily pull-out and the support schedule was adjusted so that pull-

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<sup>2</sup> This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are made for students with special education program recommendations anytime within the last four years, and to account for the Economic Needs index of the school. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis.

outs happened during Power Hour, not core academic instruction. The school's English Language Learner approach is a structured English immersion program with pull-out/push-in support provided.

MetLCS has served a higher percent of students eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) and a comparable percent of English Language Learners than its district but lower percentages of Students with Disabilities (see table on page 7), though the school's percentage of SwD has increased in the latter part of the current term.

## **B. Governance, Operations & Finances**

MetLCS is a fiscally sound, viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has eight members, which is more than the minimum number of five members and fewer than the maximum number of eleven members established by its bylaws. The Board has provided effective oversight of school management, having conducted structured evaluations of the school principal throughout its charter term. The Board maintains authority over school management, holding it accountable for performance and requiring a monthly Principal's Report and Dashboard from the school leader that details information related to the school's academics, operations, and culture.

The school's founding principal, Courtney Russell, has served in this role throughout the charter term.

The school's Board is currently led by Anne Laraway, who joined the Board in August 2011 and has served as Board Chair since July 2012. The school's previous President, Anne LaTarte, resigned in July 2012 after having held the position since the school's founding.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture, despite being housed in three different facilities in three different Bronx districts by the time the current term expires in September 2014. The founding school leader, Courtney Russell, continues to lead the school. After its founding Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Daniel Etcheverry, did not return for the 2012-13 school year, the school added two Directors of Teacher Leadership (DTLs) to its leadership team and retained them during the 2013-14 school year.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the three independent financial audits for FY2013, FY2012, and FY2011.

## **C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations**

Over the charter term, MetLCS has been compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. The MetLCS Board has also been compliant with all applicable laws and regulations.

## **D. Plans for Next Charter Term**

MetLCS proposes to matriculate its elementary grade students into middle school grades in its next charter term and begin its expansion into high school grades. It will expand to begin serving sixth grade at the start of the 2014-2015 school year, while still under the terms of its first charter and complete its expansion to middle school grades in year 2016-2017 and start serving ninth grade in the following year.

**For the aforementioned reasons, the NYC DOE recommends a full-term renewal, expiring on June 30, 2019. The school will continue to serve its intended grade span, reaching K-10 in the final year of the new charter term.**

## Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

### I. Charter School Overview:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Name of Charter School  | New York French American Charter School   |
| Current Board Chair(s)  | Richard Ortoli                            |
| School Leader   | Edith Boncompain                          |
| Management Company (if applicable)                            | N/A                                       |
| Other Partner(s)  | N/A                                       |
| District(s) of Location                                       | NYC Community School District 3           |
| Physical Address  | 311 West 120th Street, New York, NY 10027 |
| Facility  | Non DOE-Operated                          |
| School Opened For Instruction                                 | 2010-2011                                 |
| Current Charter Term Expiry Date                              | 9/14/2014                                 |
| Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date              | K-5 / 183                                 |
| Proposed Charter Term   | Short Term                                |
| Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date | K-5/ 183                                  |

### II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

#### Performance on the NYC Progress Report

| Progress Report Grade              | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Grade                      | -         | -         | C         | B         |
| Student Progress                   | -         | -         | F         | B         |
| Student Performance                | -         | -         | C         | B         |
| School Environment                 | -         | -         | F         | C         |
| Closing the Achievement Gap Points | -         | -         | 2.1       | 1.8       |

#### Students scoring at or above Level 3, compared to CSD, NYC, and State averages

| % Proficient in English Language Arts   |           |           |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| New York French American Charter School | -         | -         | 56.4%     | 27.6%     |
| CSD 3                                   | -         | -         | 61.7%     | 46.8%     |
| Difference from CSD 3                   | -         | -         | -5.3      | -19.2     |
| NYC                                     | -         | -         | 49.0%     | 27.7%     |
| Difference from NYC                     | -         | -         | 7.4       | -0.1      |
| New York State                          | -         | -         | 55.2%     | 31.2%     |
| Difference from New York State          | -         | -         | 1.2       | -3.6      |

| <b>% Proficient in Math</b>             |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|   | <b>2009-2010</b> | <b>2010-2011</b> | <b>2011-2012</b> | <b>2012-2013</b> |
| New York French American Charter School | -                | -                | 42.9%            | 30.6%            |
| CSD 3                                   | -                | -                | 66.9%            | 52.0%            |
| Difference from CSD 3                   | -                | -                | -24.0            | -21.4            |
| NYC                                     | -                | -                | 57.0%            | 34.2%            |
| Difference from NYC                     | -                | -                | -14.1            | -3.6             |
| New York State                          | -                | -                | 65.7%            | 28.9%            |
| Difference from New York State          | -                | -                | -22.8            | 1.7              |

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

| <b>Academic Goal Analysis (based on school's submission)</b> |                               |                               |                               |                               |                                    |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|  | <b>1st Year<br/>2009-2010</b> | <b>2nd Year<br/>2010-2011</b> | <b>3rd year<br/>2011-2012</b> | <b>4th Year<br/>2012-2013</b> | <b>Cumulative<br/>4 Year Total</b> |
| <b>Total Achievable<br/>Academic Goals</b>                   | 0                             | 0                             | 3                             | 4                             | 7                                  |
| # Met  | 0                             | 0                             | 1                             | 0                             | 1                                  |
| # Partially Met  | 0                             | 0                             | 0                             | 1                             | 1                                  |
| # Not Met  | 0                             | 0                             | 2                             | 3                             | 5                                  |
| % Met  | N/A                           | N/A                           | 33%                           | 0%                            | 14%                                |
| % Partially Met  | N/A                           | N/A                           | 0%                            | 25%                           | 14%                                |
| % Not Met  | N/A                           | N/A                           | 67%                           | 75%                           | 71%                                |

### **III. Rationale for Recommendation**

#### **A. Academic Performance**

At the time of this school's renewal, New York French American Charter School (NYFACS) has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress. While NYFACS has a mixed track record of academic success, the school has demonstrated significant growth in progress, raising their New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Progress Report Student Progress section grade from an F to a B from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." Data available for New York French American Charter School indicate that the school has partially made progress towards meeting these objectives.

NYFACS's mission is to develop global citizens who are well-prepared to assume leadership in a multicultural society. The school blends the rigorous standards of learning that are characteristic of the French educational system with American approaches that value individuality and critical thinking. NYFACS is the only bilingual/bi-literate French dual language immersion charter school in New York City. In addition to receiving instruction in English and French, in additional English and Math course in grades three – five, the school provides a French and English teacher in each class. The school blends two national educational standards, the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and those of the French Ministry of Education, entitled the Common Base.

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. The school opened with grades kindergarten through second in their first year, thus, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at NYFACS. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and are based on Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment with additional points for Closing the Achievement Gap. Scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

New York French American Charter School has a mixed record of academic performance, but is demonstrating an upward trajectory. NYFACS received an overall B grade on the 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report, as well as a B grade on the Student Progress section of the report; this represents a significant three grade improvement in its Student Progress section and one grade increase in its overall grade from 2011-2012.

Contributing to this improvement is the school's math growth, specifically with the school's subgroup population. Schools receive additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. On the 2012-2013 state assessments, 64% of NYFACS's Black/Hispanic Males in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This places NYFACS in the top 25% of elementary schools citywide. Similarly, 60% of students at NYFACS in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores; placing NYFACS in the top half of elementary schools citywide.

The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report is the most heavily weighted of all sections; it constitutes 60% of a school's grade. The grade in this section is based primarily on

median adjusted growth percentiles<sup>1</sup>, which are a measure of how much a school's students perform on state tests relative to other students with the same prior score. NYFACS fared well in this section; moving from an F in 2011-2012 to a B in 2012-2013.

In 2012-2013, NYFACS's English Median Adjusted Growth Percentile was 71%, an adjusted growth greater than 79% of elementary schools citywide and within Community School District (CSD) 3. In this same category, the school ranked in the top 12% of their peer group. NYFACS's Math Median Adjusted Growth Percentile was 84%, an adjusted growth greater than 99% of elementary schools citywide and an adjusted growth greater than 100% within CSD 3 and peer group.

The Student Performance grade is based on results on the state tests in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, representing 25% of a school's total Progress Report score. Over the charter term, NYFACS's Student Performance section grades were a C and a B for the years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, respectively. In 2011-2012, the school's students outperformed the city in ELA proficiency by 7.4 percentage points and NYS by 1.2 percentage points. In 2012-2013, the school's ELA proficiency was comparable to the citywide average, with a difference of less than 1%. In 2012-2013, the school outperformed New York State by 1.7 percentage points in math proficiency and was a mere 3.6 percentage points shy of the city.

Over the two years that data is available for the charter term, NYFACS has met only 20% of its academic charter goals.<sup>2</sup> No applicable charter goals were met in the first two years of the charter, as there were no attainable goals. In year three of the charter, the school met 20% of its academic goals. In the fourth year of the charter, the school met none of its applicable academic charter goals.

NYFACS offers Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS), Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. SETTTS services are provided in the form of small group, pull out or push in. The school's Special Education teachers also serve as Student Support Team (SST) members. Additional related services, such as speech and language services, occupational therapy and physical therapy are provided.

The school has shown only mixed evidence of a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school and NYC DOE School Surveys indicate that in the first years of the charter, there were concerns about the school's ability to provide a stable, environment that is conducive to learning. The school was plagued with leadership and board turnover, but has since stabilized within the last two years of the charter. The board and school leadership have implemented necessary programs and oversight mechanisms to ensure the school meets all the academic and non-academic goals.

## **B. Governance, Operations & Finances**

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has partially developed its governance structure and organizational design. After being placed on and removed from probation, the Board has worked on facilitating its own development. The Board continues to develop the tools and understanding needed to manage the school and monitor school leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and Math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture. As evidenced by the NYC DOE School Survey, throughout the charter term, the school has mixed satisfaction results from both parents and teachers. However, the school and board have actively worked on re-establishing the Francophone community many parents and teachers were first attracted to.

Overall, the school is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations. There are concerns about the financial sustainability of the school based on its current practices. There were material weaknesses noted in the FY 2013 and FY 2011 independent financial audits.

### **C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations**

Over the charter term, New York French American Charter School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others.

On August 12, 2011 NYFACS was placed on a Notice of Concern by the NYC DOE. The Notice of Concern was issued to address concerns related to operations and instruction, particularly but not limited to school governance, certified staff, its proposed academic program and financial stability. These concerns arose from the school's annual site visit in May, 2011.

On December 7, 2011 NYFACS was placed on probation by the NYC DOE for a period beginning from the date of notice through August 31, 2012. During the probationary period the school was charged to address a series of concerns related to material and substantial violations, particularly but not limited to school policies and procedures, compliance, teacher certification, financial stability and violation of N. Y. Education Law § 2853, N.Y. Education Law § 2854 (3) and N.Y. Education Law § 2855 (e) .

On October 18, 2012, NYFACS was notified of extended probation by the NYC DOE for a period beginning from the date of original probationary notice through August 31, 2013. During the extended probation period the school was charged to address continued concerns and violations related to operations and management, including teacher certification and Board governance.

As a result of success in meeting the terms of probation and remedial action plan, NYFACS was removed from its Notice of Probation on December 3, 2013. Though the school has shown improvement in some financial indicators, there are still concerns regarding its ongoing financial stability.

### **D. Plans for Next Charter Term**

The school's original charter application included plans to serve grades kindergarten through twelfth grades. The Board of Trustees of the New York French American Charter School has decided to delay planned expansion to start serving sixth grade in the Fall of 2014 and will remain serving grades kindergarten through five. This decision was made in order to concentrate on their current grade configuration.

**For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a short term charter renewal of 3 years (through June 30 of 2017).**

## Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

### I. Charter School Overview:

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Name of Charter School  | Williamsburg Charter High School |
| Current Board Chair(s)  | Lourdes Rivera-Putz              |
| School Leader   | Kathleen Gaffney                 |
| Management Company (if applicable)                            | N/A                              |
| Other Partner(s)  | N/A                              |
| District(s) of Location                                       | NYC Community School District 14 |
| Physical Address  | 198 Varet St., Brooklyn 11206    |
| Facility  | Non-DOE Operated                 |
| School Opened For Instruction                                 | 2004                             |
| Current Charter Term Expiry Date                              | 7/27/2014                        |
| Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date              | 9-12 / 944                       |
| Proposed Charter Term   | Full-term                        |
| Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date | 9-12 / 963                       |

### II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC Progress Report

| Progress Report Grade              | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Overall Grade                      | D         | C         | B         | A         |
| Student Progress                   | F         | C         | B         | A         |
| Student Performance                | D         | B         | B         | B         |
| School Environment                 | B         | C         | B         | B         |
| College and Career Readiness       |           |           | C         | C         |
| Closing the Achievement Gap Points | 0.0       | 4.0       | 4.4       | 4.1       |

## HS Performance Compared to Peer and NYC Averages<sup>1</sup>

| 4-year Graduation Rate                         |           |           |           |                        |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|
|  | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 <sup>2</sup> |
| Williamsburg Charter High School               | 67%       | 65.1%     | 74.7%     | 79.3%                  |
| NYC  | 65.1%     | 65.5%     | 64.7%     |                        |
| Difference from NYC                            | -11.6%    | -0.4%     | 10.0%     |                        |
| 6-year Graduation Rate                         |           |           |           |                        |
|  | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013              |
| Williamsburg Charter High School               | 85.3%     | 87.7%     | 82.8%     | 79.1%                  |
| NYC  | 69.2%     | 70.9%     | 73.2%     |                        |
| Difference from NYC                            | 16.1%     | 16.8%     | 9.6%      |                        |
| College Readiness Index <sup>3</sup> - 4 years |           |           |           |                        |
|  | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013              |
| Williamsburg Charter High School               |           |           | 9.7%      | 13.7%                  |
| Peer Percent of Range                          |           |           | 33.9%     | 46.6%                  |
| City Percent of Range                          |           |           | 22.4%     | 29.4%                  |

## Credit Accumulation

| % 1st-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Williamsburg Charter High School        | 68.8%     | 73.1%     | 76.0%     | 86.2%     |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | 42.9%     | 43.8%     | 51.5%     | 75.5%     |
| City Percent of Range                   | 45.0%     | 50.6%     | 51.9%     | 69.5%     |
| % 2nd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Williamsburg Charter High School        | 59.0%     | 64.2%     | 75.1%     | 75.1%     |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | 20.5%     | 26.8%     | 55.7%     | 64.0%     |
| City Percent of Range                   | 30.9%     | 38.9%     | 54.1%     | 52.1%     |
| % 3rd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits |           |           |           |           |
|   | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
| Williamsburg Charter High School        | 61.6%     | 37.3%     | 76.5%     | 77.9%     |
| Peer Percent of Range                   | 18.0%     | 41.0%     | 66.8%     | 76.0%     |
| City Percent of Range                   | 34.4%     | 46.6%     | 58.5%     | 59.6%     |

\* 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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> The graduation rate for NYC as of the 2012-2013 school year was not available during this report's publication

<sup>3</sup> The College Readiness Index score was not introduced until the 2011-2012 school year.

| <b>Academic Goal Analysis by Category (based on School's submission)</b> |  |  |  |  |                                    |
|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
|  | <b>1<sup>st</sup> Year<br/>2009-2010</b> | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Year<br/>2010-2011</b> | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year<br/>2011-2012</b> | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Year<br/>2012-2013</b> | <b>Cumulative 4<br/>Year Total</b> |
| Total Achievable Academic Goals  | 4  | 4  | 4  | 8  | 18                                 |
| # Met  | 2  | 3  | 2  | 5  | 10                                 |
| # Partially Met  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1                                  |
| # Not Met  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 7                                  |
| % Met  | 50%                                      | 75%                                      | 50%                                      | 63%                                      | 56%                                |
| % Partially Met  | 25%                                      | 0%                                       | 0%                                       | 0%                                       | 6%                                 |
| % Not Met  | 25%                                      | 25%                                      | 100%                                     | 38%                                      | 39%                                |

### **III. Rationale for Recommendation**

#### **A. Academic Performance**

At the time of this school's renewal, Williamsburg Charter High School (WCHS) has demonstrated academic achievement and progress. After a successful first charter term, WCHS began its second term with mixed results but steadily gained ground over the charter term earning a B on the 2011-2012 New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Progress Report and an A in 2012-2013. Over the course of the charter, WCHS has surpassed the city's four and six year graduation rates by approximately 10 percentage points in 2011-2012 (the last year of data available for comparison).

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." Data available for Williamsburg Charter High School indicate that the school has made progress towards meeting this objective.

The Williamsburg Charter High School's mission is to unite youth, families, staff, teachers and the community at large in providing young people with the tools necessary to make sense of the world and prepares them in their journey to become skilled workers in and literate citizens of the world community. The school aims to accomplish this through their student's participation in a rigorous and demanding liberal arts education that includes language, literature, writing, science, history, mathematics, the arts, technology and explorations in disciplines designed to teach fairness, justice, respect and compassion for themselves and others as well as the skills of critical thinking, communication and research.

WCHS entered the fifth year of its second charter term with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. For the current charter term, the NYC DOE has four years of data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the school. WCHS has received four graded NYC DOE Progress Reports over the course of their current charter. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an overall grade of A, B, C, D, or F and are based on the school's performance in each of these categories: Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment, with additional points for closing the achievement gap contributing to the overall grade. High School Progress Reports also include a College and Career Readiness section. Grades are based on comparing school results in each category to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to school results citywide.

Over the course of its second charter term, WCHS progress report grades steadily improved year over year. In 2009-2010, WCHS earned a D grade on the NYC DOE Progress Report, in 2010-2011 it earned a C, in 2011-2012 the school earned a B, and 2012-2013 it earned an A.

The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report is the most heavily weighted of all sections; it constitutes 55% of a school's grade. The grade in this section is based on credit accumulation and weighted regents pass rates, which measure how students are progressing towards earning a Regents diploma. Over the course of the charter term, the school also demonstrated growth in this section; earning an F, a C, a B, and an A in 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013, respectively.

In 2012-2013, WCHS's Progress Report Overall Grade placed them in the top 74<sup>th</sup> percentile of the city and top 85<sup>th</sup> percentile for their peer group. WCHS also did well when compared to the city, borough, and their peer group for four year and six year graduation rates. In 2012-2013, WCHS had a 79% four year graduation rate, placing them in 64<sup>th</sup> percentile of the city, 73<sup>rd</sup> percentile for the borough, and 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of their peer group. WCHS's six year graduation rate in 2012-2013 was also 79%, placing the school in the upper half of the city and the 63<sup>rd</sup> percentile for the borough and peer group.

Over the four years that data are available for the charter term, WCHS has met or partially met 62% of its academic charter goals.

The school has shown evidence of a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school indicate the school provided a safe environment, conducive to learning. In a visit to the school in May 2013, reviewers noted that questioning techniques at the school, “ask students to analyze and apply the information being studied” and in May 2011, that the school “fosters a safe and comfortable learning environment which encourages both academic success and teacher professional development”.

#### **B. Governance, Operations & Finances**

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has partially developed its governance structure and organizational design. The Board consists of eight voting members and two non-voting members. Over the course of the charter, 3 members resigned or were removed and the Board has grown by four voting members and two non-voting members. Currently, the Board consists of experts from many professions including, but not limited to, the financial sector, non-profit administration, accounting, legal profession, and education.

Over the course of the school's current charter term, WCHS has partially established a stable school culture, despite turnover among teaching staff. The school has consistently met its charter goals for parent satisfaction on the NYC DOE School Survey, though struggled with its goals for student and teacher satisfaction. It has met its goals for student enrollment and retention each year. NYC DOE survey results have consistently been Average to Above Average across all four categories (Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety & Respect) over the course of the term, with the exception of Academic Expectations in 2012-2013, which was Below Average. School Survey participation rates have been above city averages for all constituencies for all years of the term.

Overall, the school is in position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weaknesses noted in the past three independent financial audits.

#### **C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations**

Over the charter term, Williamsburg Charter High School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations and not others.

In 2011, WCHS was placed on probationary status for non-compliance with certain operational and governance requirements, including but not limited to entering into a contractual relationship with Believe Charter Schools management organization without NYC DOE approval, accumulating extensive debt, and struggling with board capacity issues. In January 2012, as a result of not rectifying concerns, the DOE issued a Notice of Intent to Revoke Charter due to WCHS' failure to address a sufficient number of these issues. In the spring of 2012, WCHS challenged the revocation, and which was ultimately overturned. As a result of continuing concerns regarding WCHS' financial health and governance, the school was placed on extended probationary status in summer of 2012. WCHS submitted and followed its Corrective Action Plan, successfully addressing or resolving the concerns raised in the notice of extended probation fully. WCHS was removed from probationary status in December 2013.

**D. Plans for Next Charter Term**

During the third charter term, WCHS is not considering model replication or alteration, but proposes a modest increase in the school's enrollment by a total of 19 students. The projected enrollment increase from 944 to 963 represents a 2% increase and will allow WCHS the ability to provide more interested families with the opportunity to become part of the WCHS community. WCHS proposes this increase based on high academic performance in the past two years, high demand for freshman seats in the 2013-2014 application lottery and extra, available space in the school's facility.

**For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a full term charter renewal of 5 years (through June 30 of 2019).**