



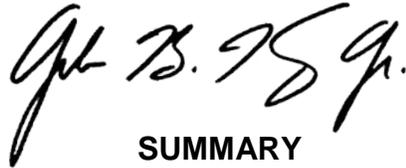
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Ken Slentz 

SUBJECT: Renewal Decision for Charter School Authorized by the Board of Regents: COMMUNITY Charter School

DATE: April 11, 2013

AUTHORIZATION(S): 
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Charter Renewal Application for COMMUNITY Charter School which is authorized by the Board of Regents.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the Regents P-12 Education Committee for discussion and action, and then before the full Board for action at the April 2013 meeting of the Board of Regents.

Procedural History

COMMUNITY Charter School

Initial Charter Term: October 5, 2001, through October 4, 2006

1st Renewal Charter Term: October 5, 2006, through July 31, 2007 (one -year)

2nd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2007, through July 31, 2009 (two-year)

3rd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2009, through June 30, 2013 (four-year)

Background Information

Six Regents-authorized Charter Schools had charters that expire at the end of the current school year, on June 30, 2013. In February and March 2013, the Regents took action on renewal recommendations concerning five of these schools. This month, the last of the six Regents-authorized Charter Schools that are up for renewal in 2013, COMMUNITY Charter School, in Buffalo, New York, is before the Regents for action on its Renewal Application.

The Department continues to improve day-to-day charter school oversight and accountability work as staff to the Board of Regents, one of the two active charter authorizers in New York State. At the Board of Regents' meetings in June 2010 and June 2011, Department staff described significant improvements in charter school oversight and accountability work to implement a new charter school application review process. The Regents have now issued six Requests for Proposals for new public charter schools in New York State with rigorous criteria for charter approval to ensure that only founding groups with the demonstrated will, skill, and capacity to launch a high performing charter school win charter approval. In addition, over the last two years, Department staff has made revisions to the charter agreement, pre-opening process, performance oversight site visits, and school closure protocols.

In November 2012, the Board of Regents approved the Charter School Renewal Policy and the accompanying Charter School Performance Framework, which outlines the performance benchmarks that charter schools will be evaluated by when they apply for renewal. Taken together, these two documents provide a roadmap of the renewal process for charter schools authorized by the Regents and ensure that all interested and impacted parties are informed at the outset of the process of the benchmarks, which a renewal application will be judged by, as well as the policy underpinnings of renewal decisions. Consistent with the terms of the Department's \$113 million federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) multi-year grant, improvement in student academic achievement is the most important factor that will be considered by the Regents when determining whether to renew or revoke a school's charter. In March 2013, the Regents approved regulations that set forth the roles, responsibilities and obligations of all three parties involved in the charter renewal process: the Charter School's Board of Trustees, the Department, and the Board of Regents. The regulations also outline the possible charter renewal outcomes that are within the discretion of the Board of Regents. Consistent with these regulations and our past practice, the Department will issue guidance documents in the spring that provide additional information and details to the field on the charter renewal process and timeline.

While future initial and renewal charters authorized by the Regents will each include a Performance Framework, against which a school's performance can be analyzed and assessed, COMMUNITY Charter School's current short-term renewal charter, was approved by the Regents in 2009, prior to the approval of the Regents Renewal Policy and Regulations and the development of the Performance Framework. Therefore, the renewal recommendation before the Regents concerning COMMUNITY

Charter School is not based upon an analysis of the School's performance in relation to the benchmarks and criteria in the Performance Framework. Rather, the Department's recommendation to the Regents concerning the renewal of COMMUNITY's Charter School's charter, as explained in the attached Renewal Recommendation Report (Attachment 2), is based upon an analysis of the School's record over the eleven years that the School has been in operation and its success in meeting the terms of its charter.

Renewal Recommendation

As with the approval of Initial Charter Applications, the Charter School Statute (Education Law § 2852(2)) requires that in order to approve a Charter Renewal Application, the chartering entity (in this case the Board of Regents) must make the following findings:

- a. the charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in this article and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- b. the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the School in an educationally and fiscally sound manner;
- c. granting the application 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 this article; and
- d. in a school district where the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in the base year is greater than five percent of the total public school enrollment of the school district in the base year (i) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school or (ii) the school district in which the charter school will be located consents to such application.

Beyond the requirement to make these required findings, the Act leaves the decision to renew a charter to the sound discretion of the Board of Regents.

As outlined in the attached Renewal Recommendation Report, COMMUNITY's performance on NYS ELA and mathematics assessments over their most recent charter term can be described as declining from year to year, being among the lowest in the State and among the lowest in the City of Buffalo. While the School has implemented some programmatic changes and proposes changes that are described as designed to improve performance in future years, the possibility of future promise is insufficient to overcome the School's cumulative record of low academic achievement, legal non-compliance and inability to operate in an organizationally sound manner; and is not enough to support a recommendation to approve the renewal application.

Based on the review of evidence related to COMMUNITY Charter School, the Department cannot make all of the findings that the Board of Regents, as the chartering entity is required to make by NYS Education Law Article 56, the Charter Schools Act (the Act), in order to approve a charter application. In particular, given the educational record of the School as described below, the Department does not find that COMMUNITY has demonstrated the ability to operate in an educationally sound manner; that approving the renewal application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in the Act in Education Law § 2850(2); nor that approving the renewal application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend COMMUNITY Charter School.

Attached to this item is a summary table reflecting the material terms of COMMUNITY Charter School's charter (Attachment 1). Summary information about COMMUNITY's Renewal Application, including academic and operational performance over the previous charter terms, is included in the attached Renewal Recommendation Report (Attachment 2).

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents denies the renewal application for the COMMUNITY Charter School, that the board of trustees of the COMMUNITY Charter School be provided notice of this action and that its charter will terminate upon the expiration of its current charter term on June 30, 2013, and that the board of trustees of the COMMUNITY Charter School is directed to take all steps necessary to close the School in accordance with its charter and the School closure procedures of the Department and cease instruction as of June 30, 2013; including but not limited to the immediate provision of notice of this nonrenewal action to the parents of existing students of the Charter School, the parents of any students in the Charter School's most recent lottery and the parents of students on the Charter School's waiting list, provision for the orderly transfer of student records to the Buffalo City School District and disposition of the Charter School's assets.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for COMMUNITY Charter School will become effective June 30, 2013.

Attachment 1: Charter School Material Terms

Name of Charter School	COMMUNITY Charter School
Lead Applicant(s)	Carmen J. Iannaccone, Board Chair (until August 2012) Daniel Ricigliano, current Board Chair
District of Location	Buffalo City School District
Districts Served	Buffalo City School District, Cheektowaga Central School District, Cheektowaga Maryvale Union Free School District, Cleveland Hill Union Free School District
Charter Terms	Initial Charter Term: October 5, 2001 through October 4, 2006 1 st Renewal Charter Term: October 5, 2006, through July 31, 2007 (one -year) 2 nd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2007, through July 31, 2009 (two-year) 3 rd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2009, through June 30, 2013 (four-year)
Facilities	404 Edison Avenue, Buffalo; private facility
Current Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	Maximum enrollment of 332 students in grades K through 6
Mission Statement	“The mission of Community Charter School is to improve student learning and achievement, and to meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. We will increase learning opportunities for all students via individualized learning plans, hands-on service based learning, and an asset driven, resiliency-based learning culture. Teachers will use a combination of teacher-directed instruction and project-based curriculum to take full advantage of practices based on current educational research. Performance based accountability will be based on a mix of traditional testing and a portfolio evaluation. Parents, teachers, students, extended families, mentors, business leaders, community based organizations, block clubs and other leaders will “work together to increase the assets and resiliency of each student.”



New York State Education Department Charter School Office

Charter School Renewal Recommendation Report

COMMUNITY Charter School
Application for Fourth Charter Renewal

April 2013

Introduction

This report is the primary means by which the Charter School Office (CSO) of the New York State Education Department (the Department) summarizes for the New York State Board of Regents its findings and Department staff recommendations regarding a charter school's Renewal Application.

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	COMMUNITY Charter School
Lead Applicant(s)	Carmen J. Iannaccone (Board Chair until August 2012) Daniel Ricigliano, current Board Chair
District of Location	Buffalo City School District
Districts Served	Buffalo City School District, Cheektowaga Central School District, Cheektowaga Maryvale Union Free School District, Cleveland Hill Union Free School District
Opening Date	Fall 2002
Charter Terms	Initial Charter Term: October 5, 2001, through October 4, 2006 1 st Renewal Charter Term: October 5, 2006, through July 31, 2007 (one -year) 2 nd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2007, through July 31, 2009 (two-year) 3 rd Renewal Charter Term: August 1, 2009, through June 30, 2013 (four-year)
Management Company	None (Imagine Schools until 2005)
Partners	None
Facilities	404 Edison Avenue, Buffalo; private facility
Enrollment and Grade Span during Current Charter Term	332 students in grades K through 6
Current Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	Maximum enrollment of 332 students in grades K through 6
Mission Statement	“The mission of COMMUNITY Charter School is to improve student learning and achievement, and to meet or exceed the New York State Learning Standards. We will increase learning opportunities for all students via individualized learning plans, hands-on service based learning, and an asset driven, resiliency-based learning culture. Teachers will use a combination of teacher-directed instruction and project-based curriculum to take full advantage of practices based on current educational research. Performance based accountability will be based on a mix of traditional testing and a portfolio evaluation. Parents, teachers, students, extended families, mentors, business leaders, community based organizations, block clubs and other leaders will “work together to increase the assets and resiliency of each student.”

Background

The Board of Regents issued an initial charter to COMMUNITY Charter School (“COMMUNITY” or “the School,” hereafter) on October 5, 2001. The School, which had originally planned to open for instruction in the 2001-2002 school year, opened on September 1, 2002, with 246 students in grades K through 4. The School attributed the delay in opening to difficulties in locating a suitable facility. The School added Grade 5 in the fall of 2004 and Grade 6 in the fall of 2005. It has operated at full enrollment capacity as a K through 6 school since the 2005-2006 school year. There are currently 332 students enrolled at the School. The School is in its eleventh year of operation.

In May of 2005, the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) placed the School on probation for failure to comply with several requirements including: the provision of alternative instruction to suspended students, documentation of employee background clearances and certifications, and the qualifications of the Director.¹ The probationary term was May 2005 to September 2005. Due to continued lack of compliance, the Commissioner extended the School’s probationary period until June 30, 2006, when the School was finally able to provide evidence of compliance.²

The Board of Regents has granted the School three short-term renewal charters. The first short-term renewal³ was for the period of October 5, 2006, to July 31, 2007 (one year), for the purpose of allowing the School time to obtain and analyze a third consecutive year of student achievement data given the delay in opening. The second short-term renewal⁴ was granted for the period of August 1, 2007, to July 31, 2009 (2 years); at this time the Department found some evidence of academic progress although the School was not meeting its self-defined academic goals. As the second short-term renewal period was ending, the Board of Regents and the Department found student academic success and instructional oversight to still be issues of concern and therefore granted the School a third short-term renewal⁵ that began on August 1, 2009, and will expire on June 30, 2013 (4 years). At each charter renewal decision making point, the Board of Regents has renewed the School’s charter for a truncated term, citing ongoing concerns about the School’s academic and operational performance and, at times, concerns about board oversight and governance. In its fourth renewal application, as with each previous renewal application, COMMUNITY requests a full five-year charter renewal term.

Recommendation and Required Findings

After a thorough Department review of the evidence submitted by COMMUNITY and gathered by the Department, the Department recommendation is that the Board of Regents **deny** the renewal application and allow the School’s current charter to expire as of the last day of the current charter, June 30, 2013. The School would therefore not be allowed to provide instruction beyond the final day of classes in the 2012-2013 school year.

¹ In the Matter of COMMUNITY Charter School, Probation Order, May 18, 2005

² In the Matter of COMMUNITY Charter School, Probation Order, September 22, 2005

³ <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2006Meetings/June2006/0606emscvesida3.htm>

⁴ <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2007Meetings/May2007/0507emscvesida6.doc>

⁵ <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2008Meetings/December2008/1208emscas8.htm>

Based on the review of evidence related to the School's educational record, the Department cannot make all of the findings that the Board of Regents, as the chartering entity, is required to make by NYS Education Law Article 56, the Charter Schools Act (the Act), in order to approve a charter application.⁶ In particular, given the educational record of the School as described below, the Department does not find that COMMUNITY has demonstrated the ability to operate in an educationally sound manner; that approving the renewal application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in the Act in Education Law §2850(2); nor that approving the renewal application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend COMMUNITY Charter School.

In short, COMMUNITY's performance on NYS ELA and mathematics assessments over the most recent charter term can be described as declining from year to year, being among the lowest in the State and in the City of Buffalo. While the School has implemented some programmatic changes and proposes changes that are described as designed to improve performance in future years, the possibility of future promise is insufficient to overcome the School's cumulative record of low academic achievement, legal non-compliance, inability to operate in an organizationally sound manner and is not enough to support a recommendation to approve the renewal application.

Summary of Evidence

The summary of evidence presented below is drawn from the School's record over the term of the charter including: New York State assessment data, the renewal application, renewal and monitoring site-visit findings, annual reports, independent fiscal audits, Board of Trustees minutes and other documents collected by and about the School. On September 26 and 27, 2012, a Department team conducted a renewal site visit at COMMUNITY. In addition, the Department conducted a full site visit on May 15 and 16, 2012, and monitoring site visits on April 7, 2011, and May 13, 2009.

Educational Soundness

Evidence of Performance Related to Academic Goals

For the current charter renewal term (August 1, 2009, through June 30, 2013), COMMUNITY articulated the following absolute, growth, and comparative goals for student performance:

- **Absolute Goal:** At the end of year 4 of the renewed Charter, 75% of all students in Grades 3-6 will score at or above Level 3 in all NYS Assessments for ELA and Math

Based on NYS assessment data, data submitted in the School's renewal application, and additional data analysis conducted by the Department, COMMUNITY did not fully meet its absolute goal. Because the School received a short-term renewal (four years) instead of the five-year renewal it had requested, the data is being analyzed at the end of year three of the current charter term instead of the end of year four;

⁶ Section 2852(2) states: An application for a charter school shall not be approved unless the charter entity finds that: (a) the charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in this article and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (b) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (c) granting the application 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 this article; and (d) in a school district where the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in the base year is greater than five percent of the total public school enrollment of the school district in the base year (i) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school or (ii) the school district in which the charter school will be located consents to such application.

therefore, the absolute goal of 75% of all students in grades 3 through 6 scoring at or above Level 3 in all NYS assessments for ELA and mathematics at the end of year four could not be fully assessed. However, the School has not met the absolute goal in either subject, in any year of the charter term. In fact, student academic status results from the three years of the current charter term show that the School is far from even being *on track* to approach their absolute proficiency goal. In mathematics, students in grades 3 through 6 steadily declined in performance from a high of 42% proficient in 2010 to a low of 27% proficient in 2012. In ELA, students in grades 3 through 6 steadily declined in performance from a high of 30% proficient in 2010 to a low of 16% proficient in 2012. The year-by-year proficiencies are presented in the *Department's Analysis of Student Performance* section of this report.

- **Growth Goal:** For those students in Grades 3-6 that are not scoring at a proficiency level (Level 3 or 4) on the NYS Assessments for ELA and Math, there will be a 5% increase in the total number of students scoring at a proficient level (Level 3 or 4) for these assessments the following year until proficiency is achieved

Despite reporting the growth goal partially met in its renewal application⁷, the School does not provide any rationale or data to support this finding. The data available demonstrate that year to year scores show an overall decline rather than growth in performance.

- **Comparative Goal:** COMMUNITY Charter School will continue to substantially outperform the Buffalo City School District annually on the New York State ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies Assessments

The School did not meet their comparative goal to “substantially outperform” the Buffalo City School District (BCSD) annually on NYS ELA and mathematics assessments. In examination of the School’s 3-8 Assessment data, COMMUNITY performed far below BCSD in ELA each year with only 15% proficiency as compared to 29% proficiency at BCSD on the 2012 ELA assessment. In mathematics, COMMUNITY did outperform BCSD in 2010 by 11 percentage points, performed 4.5 percentage points above BCSD in 2011 (36% proficiency), however in 2012, fell below BCSD’s proficiency in mathematics by 5 percentage points (27% proficient). Overall, since 2010 COMMUNITY has shown an average decline of 14 percentage points in both ELA and mathematics.

The School does not provide sufficient data to conclude that it meets the comparative goal in Science, yet in the Annual Report submitted to the Department, the School reports that it meets the comparative goal for all subjects in terms of its specific zip code area. The School provides no specific data to substantiate the claim. (Note: the Social Studies Assessments are no longer administered by the State and therefore are not applicable to the results concerning this goal.)

Under the Department’s differentiated accountability system, COMMUNITY Charter School was identified as a school **in need of improvement** (Improvement, Year 1, comprehensive) for failure to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for students in ELA in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. Under the Department’s Elementary, Secondary, and Continuing Education Act (ESEA) waiver, COMMUNITY was identified as a **Focus School**, which means the School is among the lowest achieving schools in the state in terms of subgroup proficiency on the statewide assessments, and that the School did not make sufficient growth between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

⁷ The School states, in the renewal application Academic Goal chart in Appendix B, that the goal was “partially” attained, but does not substantiate the claim. The School acknowledges, in the renewal application, that proficiency levels are “woefully inadequate” and describes plans to “rapidly turn around declining student performance,” should the School’s charter be renewed.

Department's Analysis of Student Performance

In order to ensure the availability of a robust data set for consideration, and to supplement the basic assessment data and renewal application, the Department conducted an additional set of statistical analyses that compare the academic performance of COMMUNITY to traditional public and charter schools in the Buffalo City School District (BCSD) and similar schools across New York State (see Appendix A for the full statistical analyses).

Table 1, below illustrates the ELA and mathematics proficiency rates for COMMUNITY as a direct weighted average comparison to those of students in the same grade band (3-6) and similar schools in BCSD and across NYS as a whole. There are two findings worth noting:

First, the most current ELA and mathematics proficiency rates for COMMUNITY are lower than both BCSD and NYS for similar grade bands. Second, the proficiency rates in both ELA and mathematics for COMMUNITY have seen a steady decline over the past three academic years.

Table 1: Weighted Average Percentages of Students Scoring at Level 3 and 4 on the NYS Assessments in Grades 3-6

	<i>Tested Grades</i>	Math Proficiency Rates (At or Above Proficiency)			ELA Proficiency Rates (At or Above Proficiency)		
		<i>CCS</i>	<i>BCSD</i>	<i>NYS</i>	<i>CCS</i>	<i>BCSD</i>	<i>NYS</i>
2012	3-6	27%	35%	67%	16%	30%	59%
2011	3-6	36%	36%	66%	25%	33%	57%
2010	3-6	42%	36%	64%	30%	36%	57%

One general criticism of such comparisons is that charter schools may enroll a disproportionate number of students who, by demographic category, are at greater risk for low performance. In order to address such concerns, the Department conducted a multivariate regression analysis⁸ to predict the expected performance of COMMUNITY and that controls for demographic characteristics, thus helping to ensure truly similar schools are being compared. The results show that even after controlling for such variables, COMMUNITY consistently performs worse than the local district and well below its expected performance in both ELA and mathematics during the current term. The discrepant effect sizes for the School are shown in comparison to the district in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Controlled Comparison of Student Performance

School year	<i>Tested Grades</i>	Math		ELA	
		<i>CCS Effect Size</i>	<i>Buffalo CSD Effect Size</i>	<i>CCS Effect Size</i>	<i>Buffalo CSD Effect Size</i>
2011- 2012	3-6	-0.49	-0.29	-0.48	-0.17
2010-2011	3-6	-0.26	-0.19	-0.25	-0.09
2009-2010	3-6	-0.72	-0.23	-0.74	-0.13

⁸ All public schools, including charter schools, in New York State of the same type (in this case, schools that tested students in grades 3 through 6) are included in the regression model, and the model accounts for the percentage of students identified as eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch, English language learner status, and students with disabilities at each school. The overall predicted proficiency rating is calculated as a weighted average by the number of students tested in a given grade.

In summary, COMMUNITY did not meet its stated goals for absolute, growth, and comparative performance. The School's renewal application contained little quantitative evidence to support the School's claim that these goals have been met. Additional Department analyses provide evidence that the School's performance is well below that of comparative schools in Buffalo and across New York State. Student academic performance has fallen steadily and dramatically over the charter term. In addition, as stated earlier, COMMUNITY is identified as a Focus School under the Department's differentiated accountability system.

Evidence of Performance Observed through On-site School Reviews

The CSO site visit teams conducted monitoring visits to the School throughout this current charter term on the following dates: February 24, 2010, August 31, 2011, and May 15, 2012. Additionally, a CSO site visit team conducted a renewal site visit at COMMUNITY on September 26 and 27, 2012. During each visit, CSO interviewed the Board of Trustees, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students; observed classrooms. As part of the renewal site visit, the site visit team attended a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The CSO renewal site visit team's overall findings indicate that the quality of the educational program is poor as reflected in the dramatically declining student performance results and qualitative trend evidence gathered during classroom observations over the course of the charter term. In its renewal application, the School acknowledges its poor performance, and throughout the application, emphasizes plans to "re-start" the School through plans that include the selection of new formative assessments, implementation of rigorous evaluations of teacher and school leader performance, and hiring of additional staff to support data-driven decision making and improved classroom instruction.

As early as during site visits made in 2004, the Department expressed concern about the School's low standards for student work. In 2007, the Department noted the School's lack of evidence of meeting academic goals and its lack of use of data and instructional oversight. During the renewal site visit in September 2012, team members visited twenty-seven classrooms, covering all grade levels and subject areas. Leaders at the School stated that the site visit team would see evidence of the School's key design elements being implemented in the classroom including rigorous instruction, the workshop model of instruction, and differentiation. The site visit team did not find students engaged in rigorous tasks or other evidence that reflected the School leadership's stated expectations. While teachers posted learning objectives in many classrooms, only about one third of the teachers communicated these objectives and demonstrated appropriate use of instructional methods to maximize student learning. In most classrooms, the site visit team did not see checks for understanding, differentiation to meet individual student needs, and feedback to students. During the renewal visit, the CSO renewal site visit team observed a few classrooms using technology; however some teachers were observed struggling to properly use the equipment (use of technology was not observed in visits prior to the renewal visit).

Additionally, the CSO renewal site visit team noted that the level of student engagement in learning varied considerably from one classroom to another. In many of the classrooms observed, students, although not disruptive, were not actively engaged in the lesson. Teachers generally did not address the inattentive students unless they were outwardly disruptive. Observations revealed almost 100% use of direct instruction, one "right" answer, and little to no follow up for incorrect responses. Whole class instruction was used much more frequently than small group, pair, or independent learning that is characteristic of the workshop model – the expected modality of instruction and learning as framed by the School's leadership. The renewal site visit team found little evidence of individualization despite the School's claims of teachers implementing differentiated instruction and pacing. School leaders indicated

they are monitoring this instructional component. These findings were consistent with those from earlier site visits during the term of the current charter.

The design and use of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) is another key design element of the School that the School has not implemented as planned. During focus groups conducted at the time of the renewal site visit, the School acknowledged that the ILPs are good tools for planning purposes; however, in practice they have not been used as intended (and as specified in the current charter). In its renewal application, the School outlines plans and promises for the future for teachers to collaborate with parents and students to create meaningful, learner-centered ILPs.

The use of data in instructional decision-making was not observed at COMMUNITY during the renewal site visit in September of 2012. This is another area of programmatic growth identified in the renewal application but not realized during the current charter term. The School, however, did take one step to strengthen their data analysis capacity; COMMUNITY joined the Partnership for Innovation for Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) in the fall of 2010. PICCS has provided the School with support in areas such as teacher evaluation, setting instructional expectations, and using data to inform instructional practice. PICCS has a five-step process for developing a data culture. However, the School is still only in the beginning steps of the five-step process and provided no evidence during the renewal visit that teachers were using data to inform and guide instruction. The School leaders spoke of targeting instruction to focus on students scoring in the middle range on NYS assessments, but this strategy has not yet been implemented.

The School has not used common formative assessments during the current charter term and, as a result, the School does not have a common set of student academic assessment measures – other than the NYS assessments – to measure student proficiency or growth or to set student learning objectives (SLOs) for teachers. During focus group conversations, school leaders spoke of the desire to have a common formative assessment system at the School, should the Board of Regents renew the School's charter. Moving forward, the School plans to use AIMS Web three times each year.

Over the course of the charter, teachers have received minimal feedback on their instructional practice. In the past, teachers were evaluated twice over the course of the school year, yet received no formal feedback connected with these evaluations. Currently, the newest leadership team is making attempts to increase the quality and quantity of classroom observations. During the September 2012 renewal visit, the CSO renewal site visit team saw school leaders observing classrooms, and offering informal feedback to teachers on sticky notes.

School wide expectations for student behavior have varied over the term of the charter. At the May 2012 site visit, the administrative team identified discipline as an issue and students expressed concern for safety. During the September 2012 renewal site visit, the CSO renewal visit team found evidence that this year the School has worked to clearly define acceptable student behavior, with the goals of institutionalizing a discipline system of positive reinforcement to provide consistency across the School. The School leaders and teachers reported that this system has been effective thus far. Student behavior has improved in the current school year, as evidenced by fewer in-school suspensions (ISS) and other discipline infractions than the previous year. Students noted that discipline was fair this school year, but not necessarily consistent from one teacher to another.

During the May 2012 site visit, school leaders reported that parent involvement was low and the School previously held no parent conferences. At renewal time, according to school leaders, teachers started using a new system, Performance Plus, to communicate student achievement with families. Teachers and School leadership staff conduct home visits for the purpose of involving parents in the development of their children's individual plans. This school year, COMMUNITY has planned two family nights, as well

as quarterly parent-teacher conferences. During the renewal focus group, parents reported that they are generally satisfied with the School's level of communication.

According to the renewal application, the School administered a parent satisfaction survey in the spring of 2012, with a 54% response rate. Parents who responded to the survey reported high satisfaction levels with the School. During the parent focus group conversation at the renewal site visit, parents reported that they were pleased with the School citing student achievement, positive relationships with teachers, small class sizes, and responsiveness to individual students. In the focus group interviews, stakeholders reported that they felt the school community is a safe learning environment. The School updated the facility to make it bright and clean.

Organizational Soundness

Evidence of Organizational Capacity

COMMUNITY has experienced many challenges, including several disruptive operational transitions. In 2006, the School ended a contract with Imagine schools, the management company it contracted with since it opened in 2003, and began operating independently. In its current term, the School has experienced several operational challenges that point to a lack of management and stewardship capacity on the part of the Board of Trustees. Board of Trustees' roles, responsibilities and reporting structures are unclear.

Over the course of its operation, the School has had seven school leaders, including three principals in calendar year 2012 alone. In the spring of 2012, the School brought on an entirely new leadership team; although the leadership team was well received by stakeholders, this structure was not in alignment with the approved charter. After this new leadership team was in place for only a few months, the School leader resigned. At the time of the renewal site visit in September 2012, another new school leader had recently been hired. The School has not been successful at clarifying roles and responsibilities or developing a culture of accountability. Teachers have not received formal evaluations and the Trustees have not evaluated school leaders in a formal and systematic way. Past site visit reports document internal leadership disagreements, staff complaints, teacher protests, and low staff morale. One former employee filed an official complaint with the Board of Regents alleging violations of the charter and other statutory violations by the Board of Trustees. This complaint is being investigated.

Evidence of Board Oversight and Governance

As early as 2004, the School's Board of Trustees has had difficulty maintaining membership and a quorum at meetings. A Comprehensive Monitoring Report from September 2004 summarized the Department's concerns and findings including the Board's lack of adherence to its by-laws (maintaining a quorum, Board composition, and conflicts of interest), violations of Public Officers' Law requirements, and required record keeping deficiencies.

In April 2012, the Department documented the Board's violation of the Education Law and its own by-laws which require a minimum of 5 members on the Board. The Board provided a memo confirming it had only 4 members at the time and was therefore operating without a legally constituted board. The Department conducted a site visit in May 2012, and noted that the Board of Trustees had not implemented the governance and leadership structure specified in the charter, had no plans for recruiting additional Board members, and was in violation of its own by-laws which required that there be a secretary position on the Board. Subsequent to the September 2012 renewal site visit, the Board conducted a recruitment campaign that resulted in nine new members joining the Board since October 2012, well into the final

year of the School's charter term. The Board currently consists of eleven members, nine of whom joined in the past few months.

During the renewal site visit, it was evident that the newly constituted Board needed basic training. One example of this was when the Board expressed uncertainty about how to conduct the meeting in the absence of a quorum; it hesitated to vote on one item then proceeded to vote on another.

On numerous occasions, the Department has reminded the Board of its obligation under the Open Meetings Law to provide notice of meetings and to make minutes available to the public (communications include a letter dated April 2012, a site visit report from July 2012 and emails from August 2012).

The Board of Trustees deviated from its approved school leadership structure by hiring staff for positions that are not on the approved organizational chart and expressed uncertainty about the approved organizational structure. When questioned about it during a site visit in May 2012, Board members stated that they were trying to, "figure it out."

Fiscal Soundness

The Department reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative reporting is done through the fiscal dashboard (See Appendix B). The dashboard presents several near-term⁹ and long-term¹⁰ financial performance indicators. These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and are also used by the Trustees at the State University of New York (SUNY) in their capacity as a charter school authorizer in New York State. Near-term indicators such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash are measures of liquidity, and of the charter school's capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators such as total margin and debt-to-asset ratio are measures of the charter school's capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations. To lend context to the quantitative data, CSO staff reviewed annual reports and the renewal report submitted by the School describing their financial management practices. They also analyzed audited financial statements for the School for the operating years 2008-2009 through 2011-2012¹¹. CSO conducted a three-year analysis of financial trends for Years 1 through 3 of the charter term, as well as a review of audited financial statements received in November 2012.

⁹ Near-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of an entity. CSO uses four measures. The "current ratio" is a measure of operational efficiency and short-term financial health. It is calculated as current assets divided by current liabilities. "Unrestricted days cash" is a measure of liquidity and available funding. It is calculated as unrestricted cash divided by (total expenses/365). To capture the impact of enrollment on finances, we also measure "enrollment stability" by comparing actual vs. projected reported by schools. Schools failing to enroll 85% of their projected total may not be permitted to provide instruction. CSO also uses a "financial composite score" as a blended measure of performance on multiple indicators. Scores between 1.5 and 3.0 denote fiscal strength. Intermediate scores range from 1.4 to 1.0. Scores below 1.0 require additional CSO monitoring of fiscal performance and management. Please see Appendix B for additional detail on the fiscal performance of the School on these near-term indicators.

¹⁰ Long-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the financial viability of an entity for periods of one year or more. CSO uses four measures. The "total margin" measures the deficit or surplus a schools yields out its total revenues. "Debt to asset" ratio measures the use of borrowed funds to finance operations. Ratios greater than 1.0 are indicative of high risk. "Cash flow" measures increases or decreases in cash from operations, financing, and investing. "Debt Service Coverage Ratio" measures the capacity of an entity to cover debt obligations in the current year. See Appendix B for additional detail on the fiscal performance of the School on these long-term indicators.

¹¹ <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/COMMUNITYCharterSchool/home.html>

The key findings for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, are summarized in this narrative, and additional quantitative analysis for fiscal years 2009 through 2011 may be found in Appendix B.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, the School received an unqualified audit of its financial statements. Auditors found no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies when reviewing the internal controls of the School. Testing by auditors did not reveal any instances of noncompliance with Government Auditing Standards.

In 2011-2012, COMMUNITY maintained a low-risk financial position with a current ratio of 2.77. Over the past three years, the average current ratio has been 2.87. The School significantly exceeds CSO liquidity benchmarks with over 370 days unrestricted cash on hand. The School reported land assets valued at \$55,000. Property and equipment assets are valued at \$3,043,936.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, COMMUNITY had a financial composite score of 3.00 (highest possible score). The School had a low debt-to-asset ratio of .12, and a strong total margin of 19.7 percent (for additional information, see the Long-Term Performance Evaluation sheet in Appendix B). The CSO staff have prepared a series of graphs to illustrate the long-term (three-year trend analysis) performance of the School. The graphs illustrate that COMMUNITY owns significant assets relative to its overall revenues and that overall expenses are tracking consistently with enrollment. Both short-term and long-term quantitative indicators indicate the School is fiscally strong.

Despite the strong performance on the dashboard, the School was the subject of an audit by the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) a possible conflict of interest violation was discovered. The School was also cited for a lack of rigorous fiscal oversight and clearly-defined bidding processes. The Office of the State Comptroller conducted this audit of the School's finances in the spring of 2012. The report, dated June 2012, found that the former Board President engaged in business transactions with an owner of a construction company to which the School has paid \$2.4 million since 2007; the Board did not follow the School's conflict of interest policy because it made no determination as to whether this relationship resulted in a conflict of interest as the policy requires; school officials did not use competitive procedures to obtain construction services; and the School did not produce a written contract that stated the scope of the work or the basis of payment. Additionally, there is a risk that the former Board President could have improperly benefited from his position as a trustee and that the School could have paid more than necessary for construction.

Faithfulness to the Charter

The School has not implemented many of the design elements of the original charter or the subsequent updated school plans, and took license to make significant changes without the Department's or Regents' approval as required by the charter and statute. The mission and the interpretation of the mission has shifted several times over the course of the past charter terms. Key design elements found in the fourth renewal charter application vary greatly from those in the current approved charter. The School has chosen to disregard the key design elements specified in the current, approved charter based on the premise that these changes will be approved with the upcoming renewal decision, should the Board of Regents renew the School's charter. Moreover, the School has a record of noncompliance issues and has lacked effective systems for ensuring that legal requirements are met. For example, in a decision dated July 6, 2012, the Department received a complaint by a parent concerning violations of federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to the education of students with disabilities, ages 3-21, and found that the School violated the requirements of various federal regulations concerning evaluation of a student to determine eligibility for special education services and protections for children not yet eligible for special education and related services (concerning disciplinary actions taken by the School).

Plans for the Next Charter Term

The applicant proposes “a comprehensive reform of the School” as an addendum to the application. These “key renewal elements” do not align with the key design elements laid out in the body of the application. Only three items, a comprehensive evaluation system, collaborative teams, and a developmental asset program, are included in both lists. These specific elements do not suggest a “comprehensive reform” as all schools are expected to have an evaluation protocol, personal learning communities are a concept utilized in other schools, and the developmental assets program has been in place since the School opened. A “restart” proposal is not justified for a school in its eleventh year of operation that has already received multiple short-term charter renewals and has consistently failed to meet expected outcomes for student academic and operational performance.

Summary of Public Comment

As required by the Act, the Department notified the Buffalo City School District and other public and nonpublic schools in the same geographic area as COMMUNITY about the submission of the School’s fourth renewal application. The District held the required hearing on October 24, 2012. According to the minutes of the hearing, the School’s leader was given an opportunity to make a presentation to the BCSD Board of Education. Following the presentation, Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions about the School. Topics included the recent OSC audit of the School, potential schools that children can attend after leaving COMMUNITY, low student test scores on the NYS assessments, staff diversity, the low number of ELL students, and busing.

Additional Information

Student Demographics

Table 3 summarizes the student demographic profile for COMMUNITY as compared to the Buffalo City School District for the past three academic years.

Table 3: Student Demographic Profile for COMMUNITY Charter School and BCSD 2009-2012

	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012	
	Charter Enrollment in Grades 3-6	Buffalo CSD Enrollment in Grades 3-6	Charter Enrollment in Grades 3-6	Buffalo CSD Enrollment in Grades 3-6	Charter Enrollment in Grades 3-6	Buffalo CSD Enrollment in Grades 3-6
Special Populations						
Free Lunch	81%	70%	86%	73%	86%	N/A
Reduced Lunch	9%	7%	7%	6%	7%	N/A
Limited English Proficient	0%	9%	0%	10%	0%	11%
Students with Disabilities	17%	22%	16%	20%	11%	20%
Race/Ethnic Origin						
Native American	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
African American	96%	56%	93%	55%	93%	54%
Hispanic or Latino	3%	15%	3%	15%	3%	16%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0%	4%	1%	5%	1%	6%
White	1%	23%	1%	23%	1%	22%
Multiracial	0%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%

Enrollment Targets

The 2010 amendments to the New York State Charter Schools Act (Education Law §2851(4)(e) and §2852(9-b)) require the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (SUNY) to prescribe enrollment and retention targets for charter schools for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program. The Regents and the SUNY Trustees developed a methodology for calculating targets that are comparable to the enrollment and retention figures for these categories of students within the public school district of location (see Table 4).

As identified in Table 4, the School's enrollment targets, noted in the table as the effective target, are compared to COMMUNITY's current population, as reported by the charter school on their October 2012 – 2013 BEDS forms. These targets were determined utilizing the Enrollment Target Calculator,

developed by NYSED and SUNY and revised on December 2012. The targets set for COMMUNITY are based on preliminary student enrollment of 313 students in grades K through 6 in the City of Buffalo. It should be noted that COMMUNITY exceeds the enrollment target for free/reduced price lunch students. The student with disabilities population is approximately two-thirds of the adjusted target and the enrollment of English language learners is significantly under the effective target. In the renewal application, the School describes recruitment efforts to these populations and how its re-start initiative will support teacher capacity to differentiate instruction for these student populations.

Table 4: 2012-2013 Enrollment Targets for COMMUNITY Charter School

	Effective Target¹²	CCS%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	86.8%	89.8%
English language learners	8.2%	1.9%
Students with Disabilities	18.7%	10.9%

Board of Trustees

The names, positions, affiliations, role, and term of service for the Board of Trustees for COMMUNITY are as follows:

Name	Position on Board	Committee Affiliation	Area of expertise, and/or additional role	Term Information
Daniel S. Ricigliano	President	Audit/Finance, Labor Management	Finance	Elected 2004, serving 3 rd term, Expires 2013
Michael J. Littman	Vice President	Marketing, Education	Higher education	Elected 2007, serving 2 nd term*
Tasha S. Miller	Secretary	Human Capital Management, Education	Parent Representative, Elementary educator	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015
Justin Reid	Treasurer	Accounting and fiscal Management	CPA	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015
Anthony Jones	Trustee	Marketing, Human Capital Management	Marketing	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015
Rebecca Vinchesky	Trustee	Human Capital management	Not-for-profit management	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015

¹² The effective target is less than the actual target because it accounts for the fact that every school is likely to experience natural enrollment rate fluctuations from one year to the next. The effective target is calculated as the lower bound of a one-sided 95% confidence interval based upon the Wilson Score Interval method for calculating confidence intervals for proportions.

Name	Position on Board	Committee Affiliation	Area of expertise, and/or additional role	Term Information
Sara DeLena	Trustee	Education	Business	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015
Kathleen Ballard	Trustee	Education	Education	Elected 11/2012, serving 1 st term Expires 2015
Erin Torcello	Trustee	Human Capital Management	Law	Elected 11/2012, serving first term Expires 2015
Robert Gamble	Trustee	Education	Education/Higher Education	Elected 11/2012, serving 1st term Expires 2015
Alan Hoffman	Trustee	Human Capital Management	Law	Elected 11/2012, serving 1st term Expires 2015

* Mr. Littman may or may not have been reelected following the end of his term on July 31, 2012.

School Leader History

Name	Term
Marcia Lamkin	September 2002- January 2004
Thomas Bondolilli	January 2004- September 2004
Karen D'Aurizio	September 2004 – December 2008
James Bordonaro	October 2005- July 2009
Carol Smith	December 2008- March 2012
Ann Marie Wiesinger	March 2012- June 2012
Denise Luka	June 2012- Present

Appendix A: Analysis of Student Performance

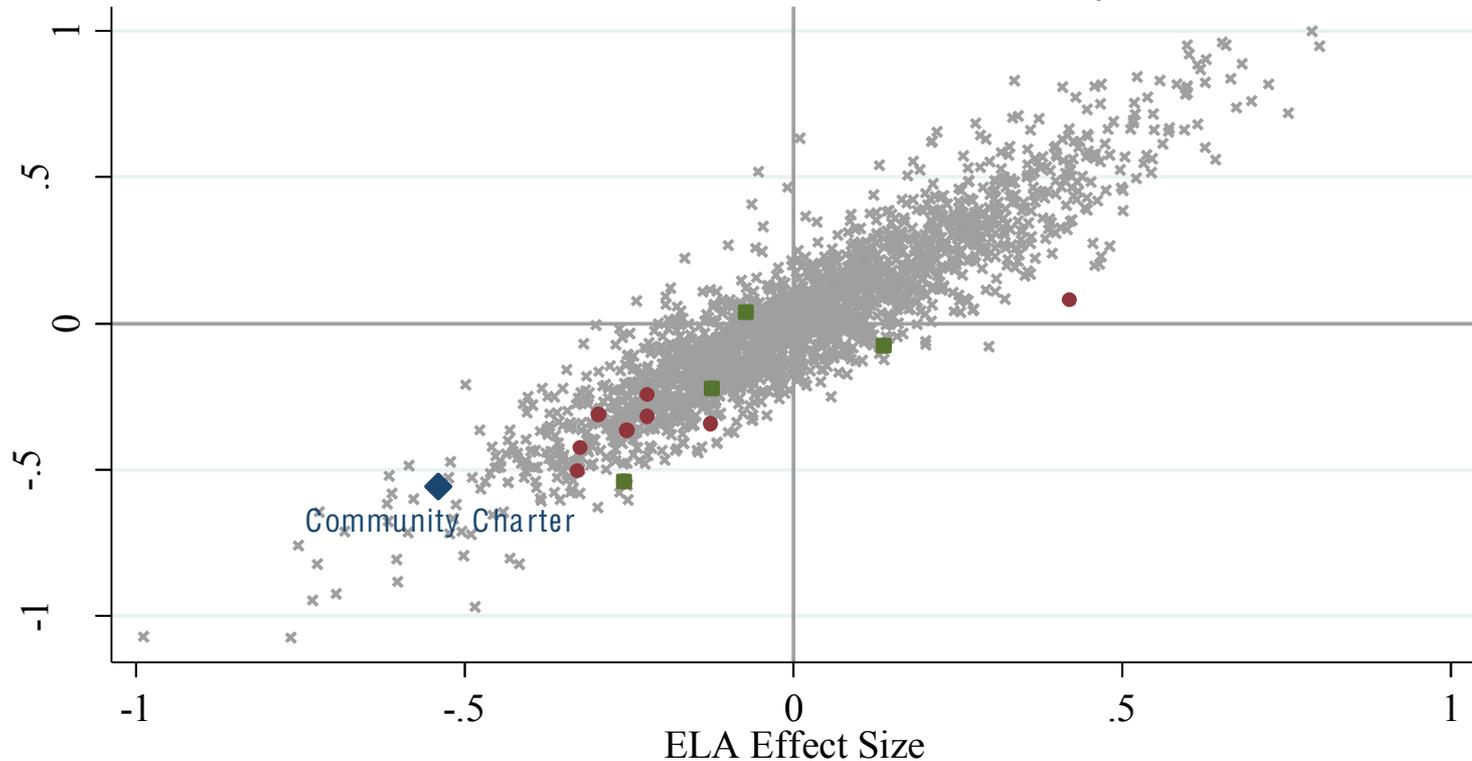
COMMUNITY Charter School

Controlling for students' poverty, LEP, and special education status

**REGRESSION RESULTS
(COMBINING ALL TESTED GRADES,
COMPARED TO STATE AND DISTRICT
AVERAGES)**

Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to All NY Elementary Schools, 2012

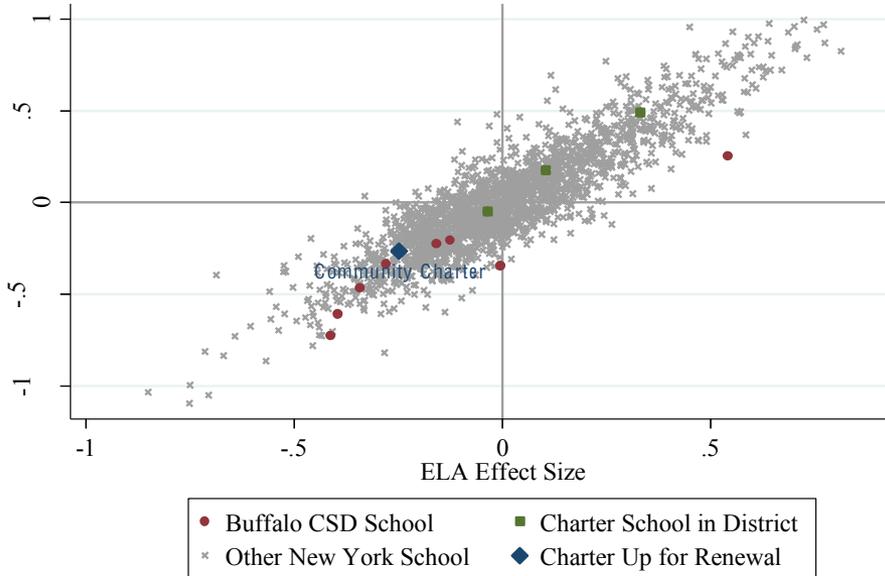
Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2012



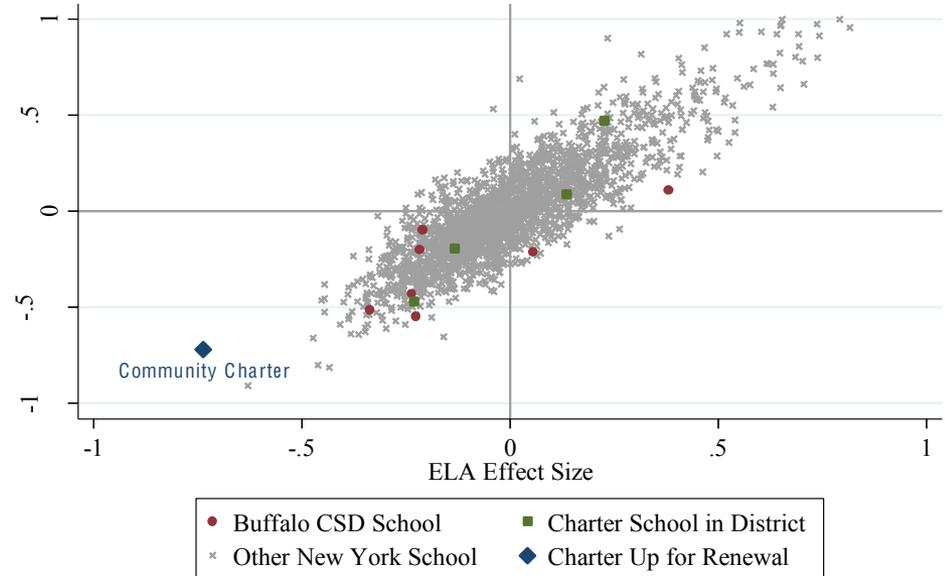
- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| ● Buffalo CSD School | ■ Charter School in District |
| × Other New York School | ◆ Charter Up for Renewal |

Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to All NY Elementary Schools 2011 and 2010

Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2011

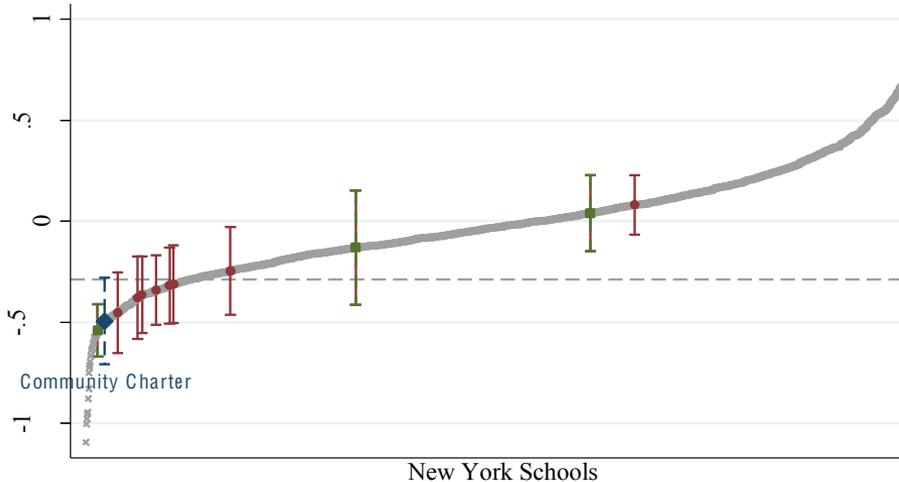


Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2010



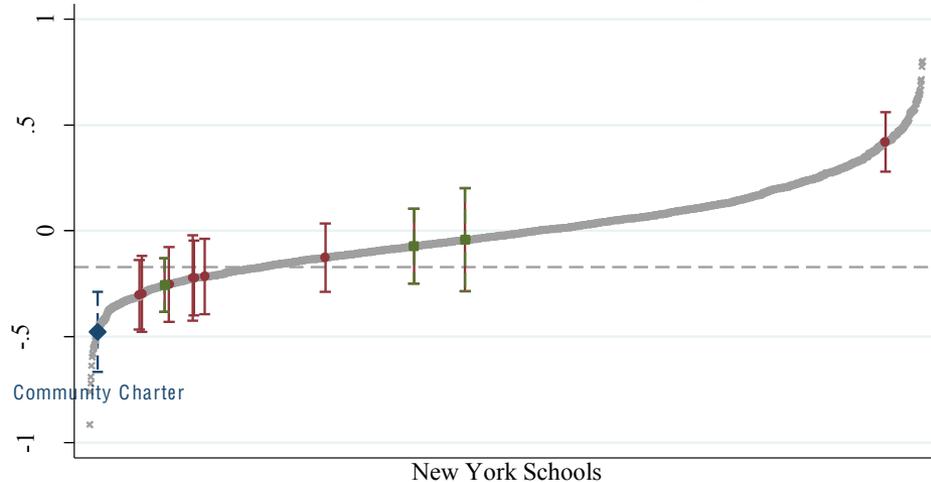
Math and ELA Adjusted Performance, 2012 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)

Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Math Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2012



- Buffalo CSD School
- Charter School in District
- * Other New York School
- ◆ Charter Up for Renewal

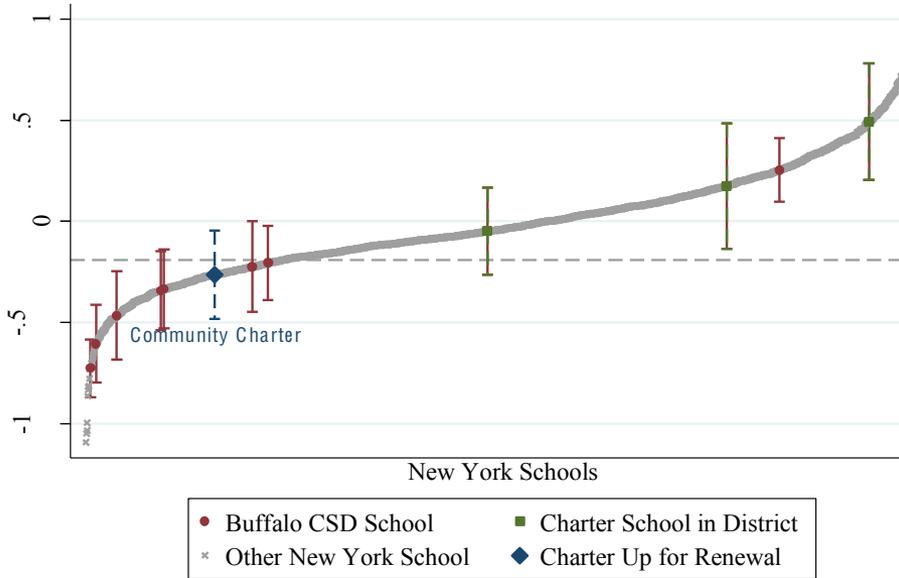
Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted ELA Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2012



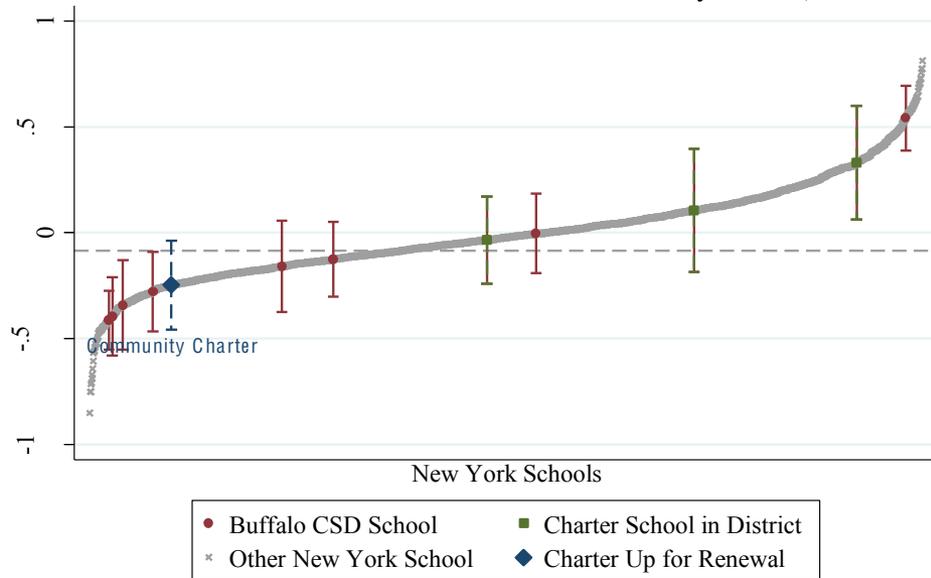
- Buffalo CSD School
- Charter School in District
- * Other New York School
- ◆ Charter Up for Renewal

Math and ELA Adjusted Performance, 2011 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)

Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Math Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2011

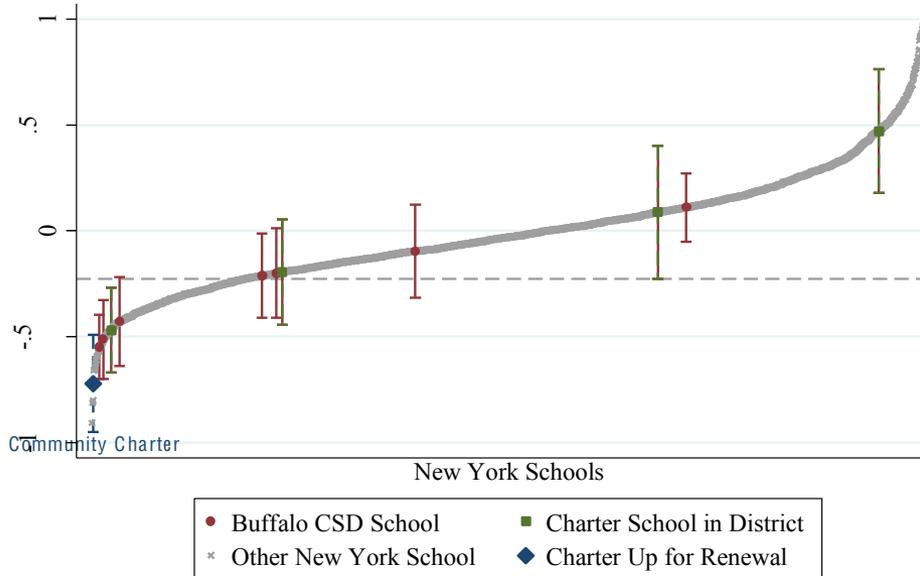


Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted ELA Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2011

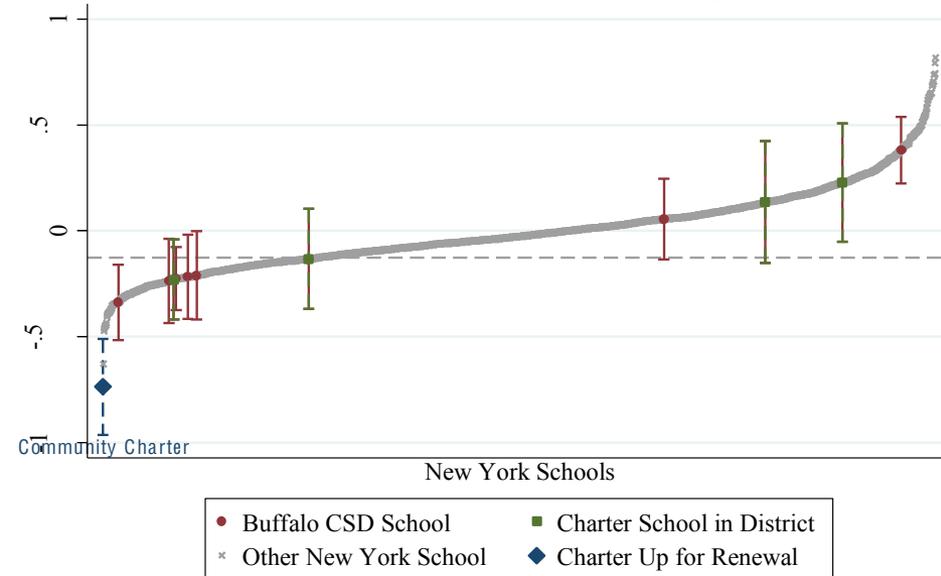


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance, 2010 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)

Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted Math Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2010



Controlled: Difference between Actual and Predicted ELA Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2010

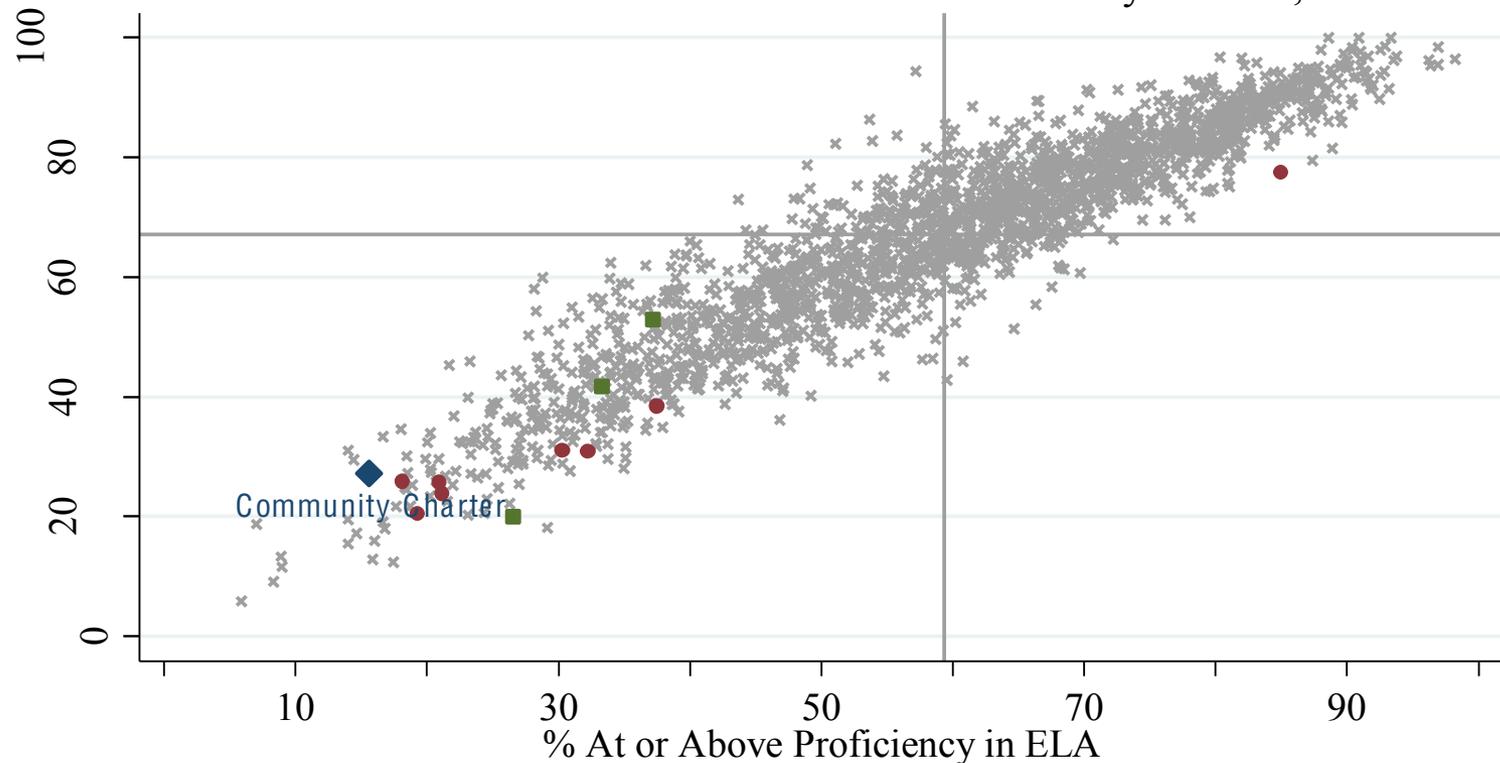


Percent at or above proficiency

**UNCONTROLLED PERFORMANCE RESULTS
(COMBINING ALL TESTED GRADES,
COMPARED TO STATE AND DISTRICT
AVERAGES)**

Math and ELA Proficiency Rates Compared to All NY Elementary Schools, 2012

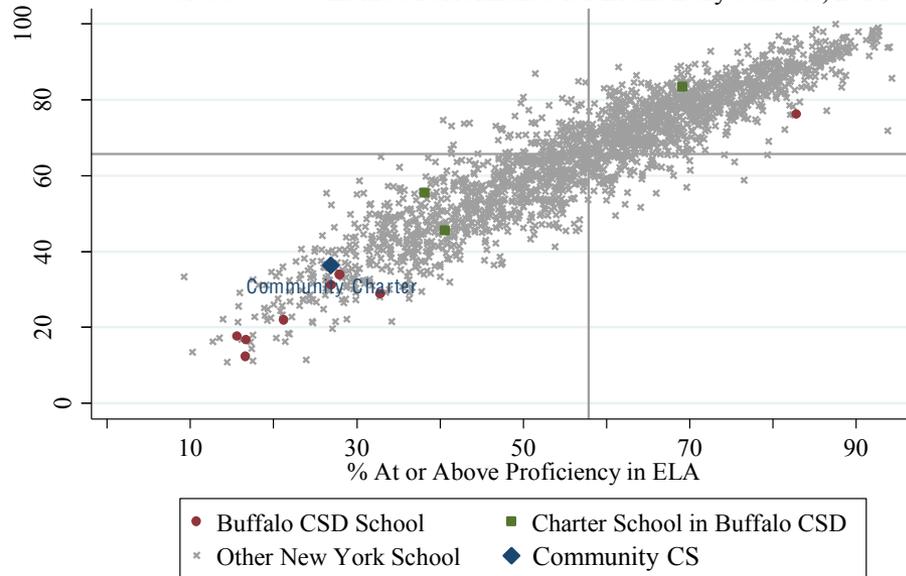
Uncontrolled: Percent At or Above Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2012



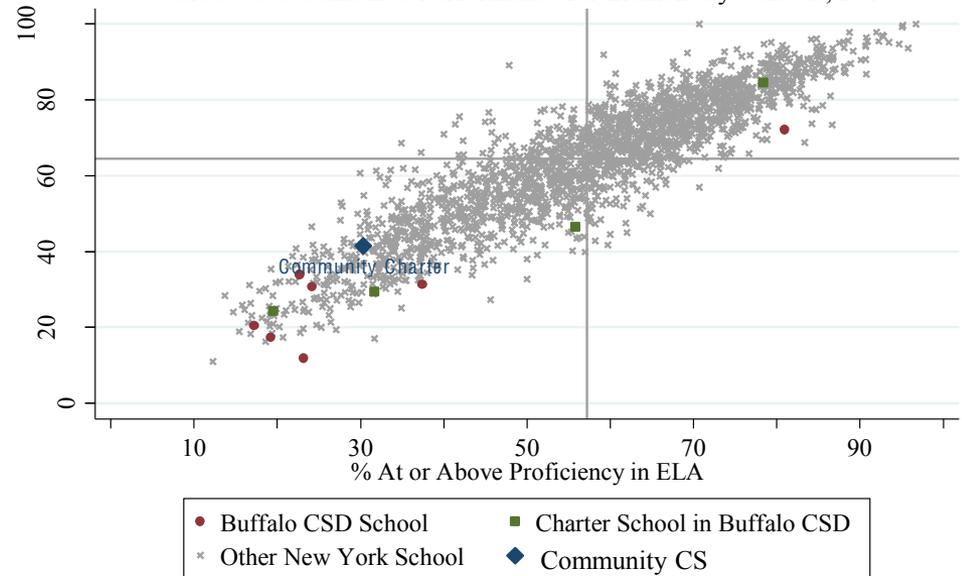
- Buffalo CSD School
- Charter School in Buffalo CSD
- × Other New York School
- ◆ Community CS

Math and ELA Proficiency Rates Compared to All NY Elementary Schools 2011 and 2010

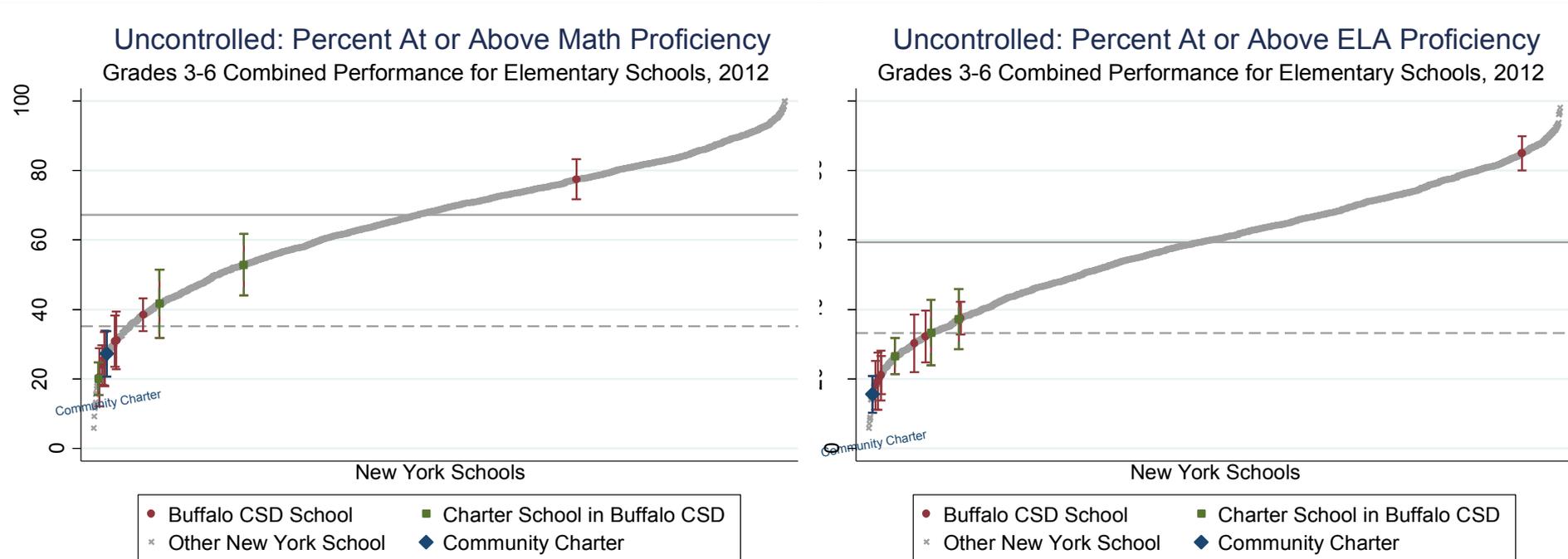
Uncontrolled: Percent At or Above Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2011



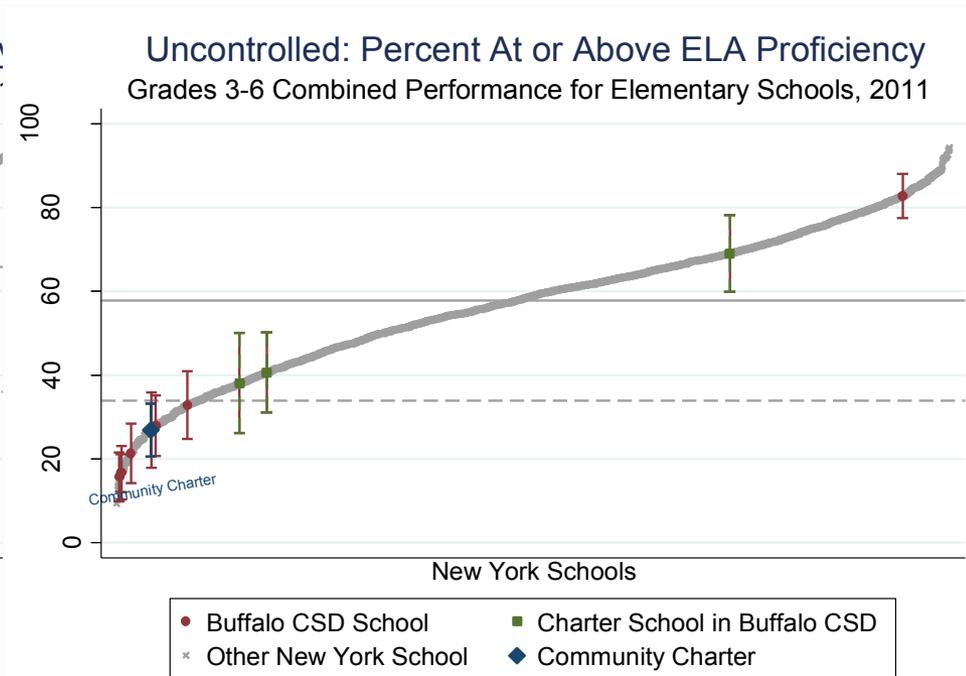
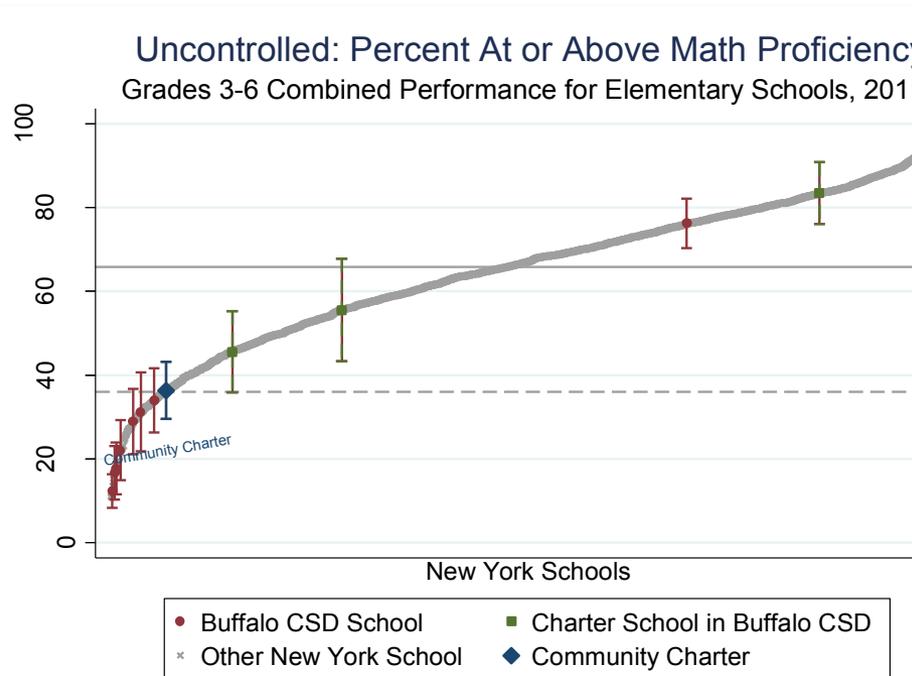
Uncontrolled: Percent At or Above Proficiency
Grades 3-6 Combined Performance for Elementary Schools, 2010



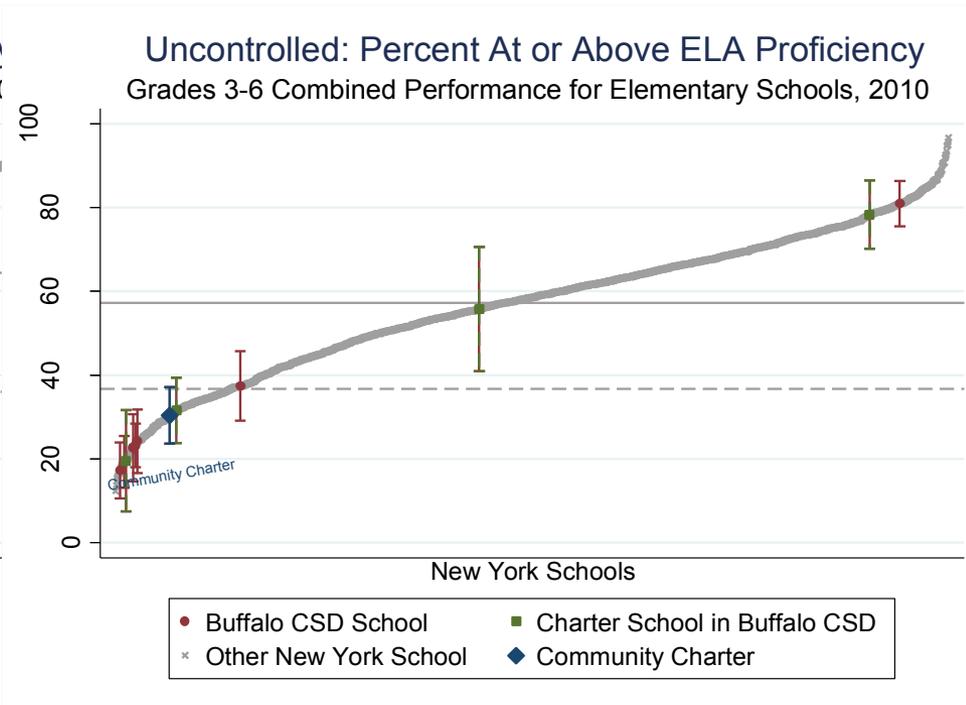
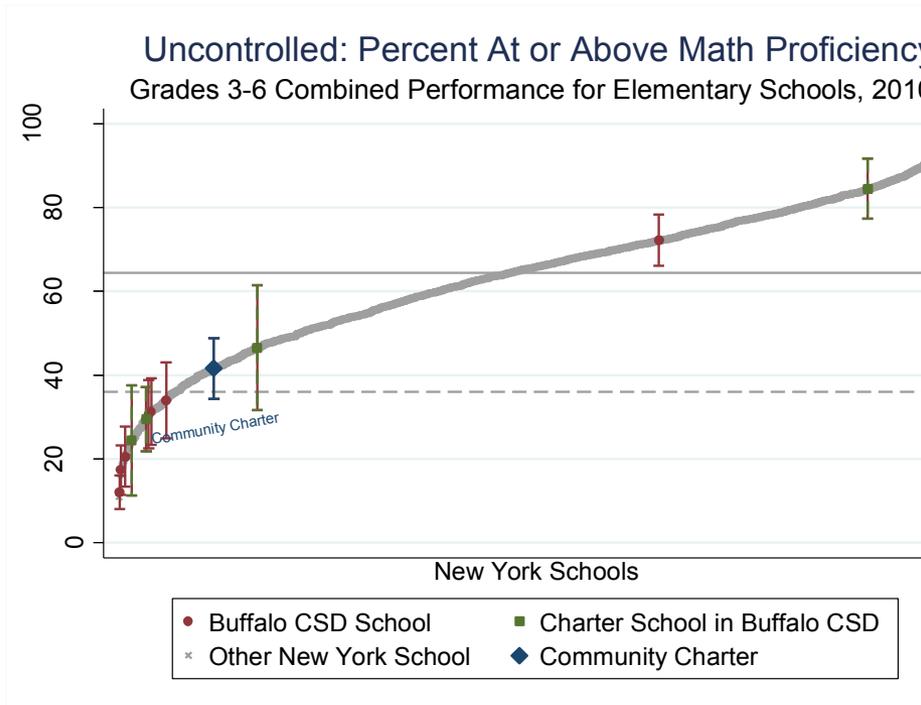
Math and ELA Proficiency Rates, 2012 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)



Math and ELA Proficiency Rates, 2011 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)



Math and ELA Proficiency Rates, 2010 Compared to the District (Dashed Line)

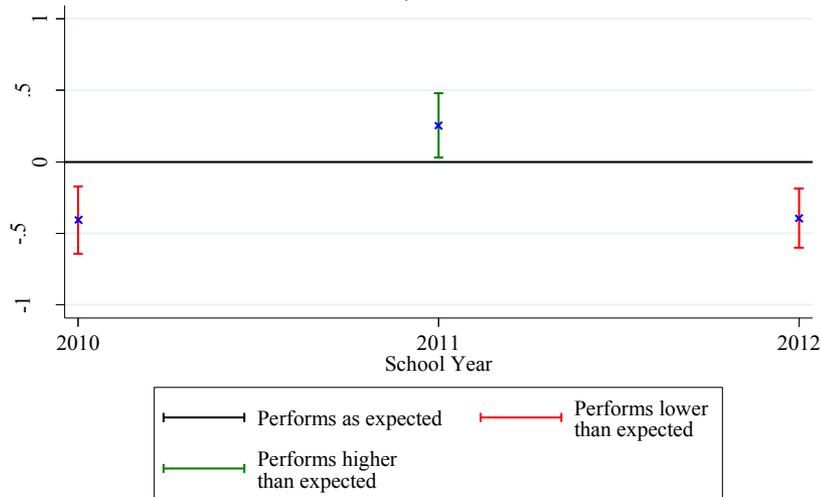


Controlling for students' poverty, LEP, and special education status

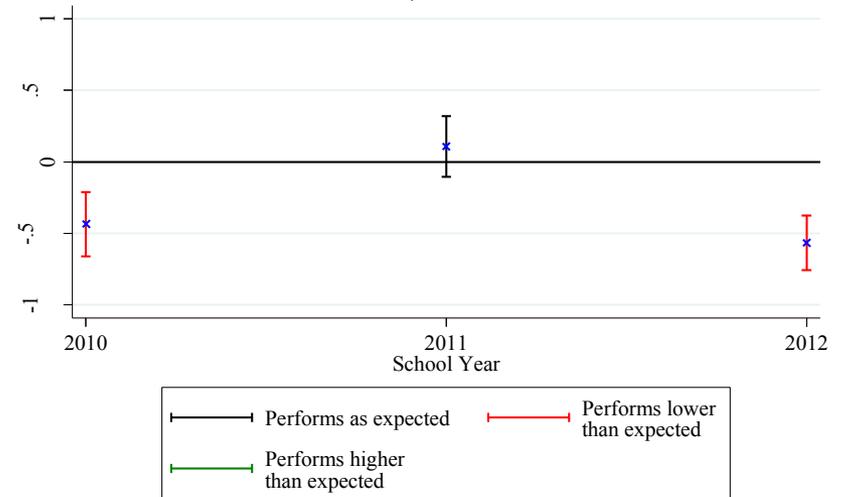
**PERFORMANCE BASED ON
REGRESSIONS
(TRENDS: GRADES SEPARATELY)**

Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Trends Grade 3

Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 3 Math, 2009-10 to 2011-12

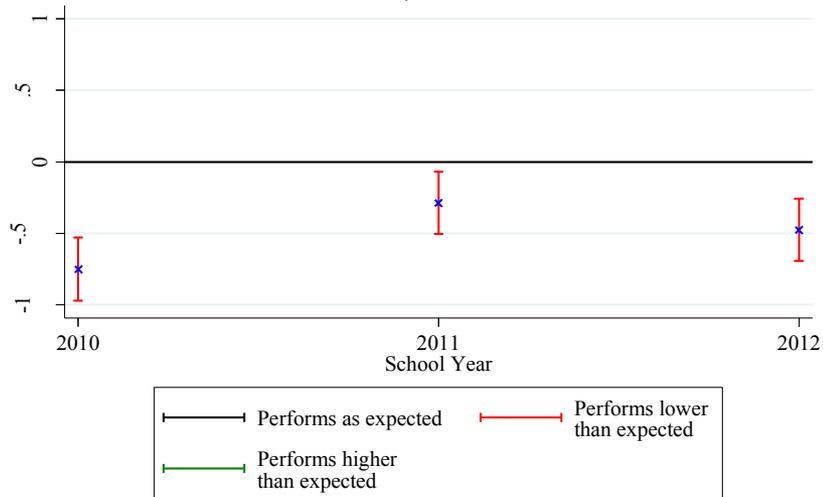


Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 3 ELA, 2009-10 to 2011-12

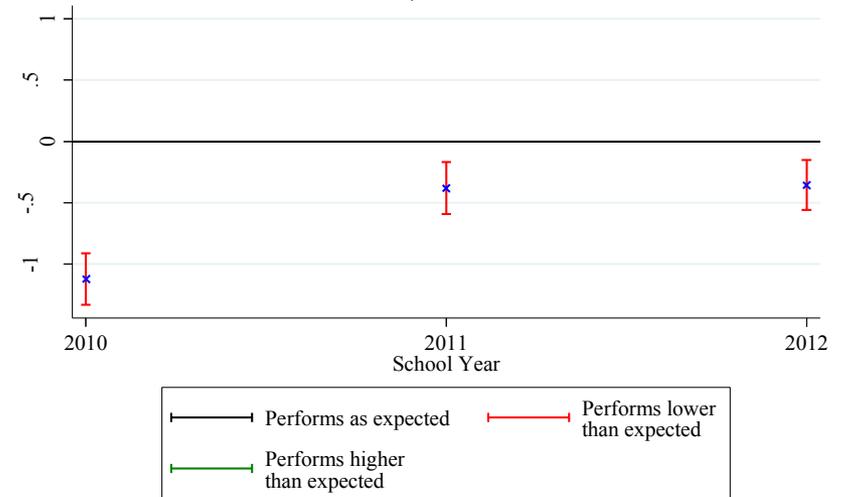


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Trends Grade 4

Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 4 Math, 2009-10 to 2011-12

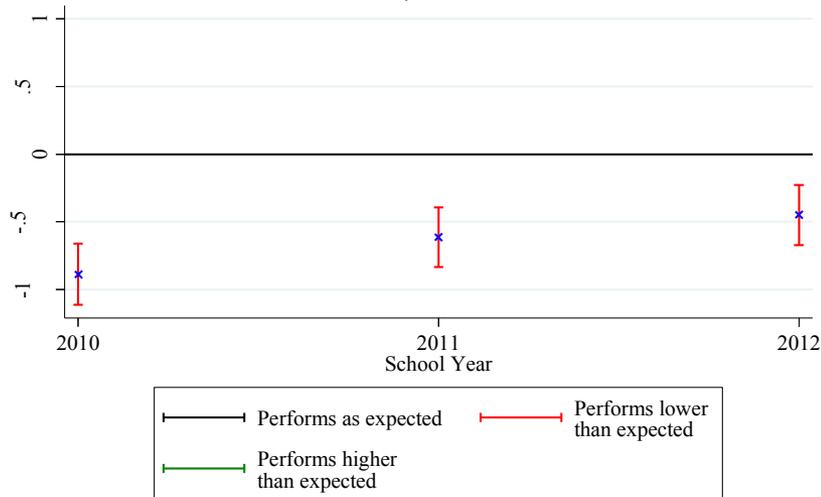


Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 4 ELA, 2009-10 to 2011-12

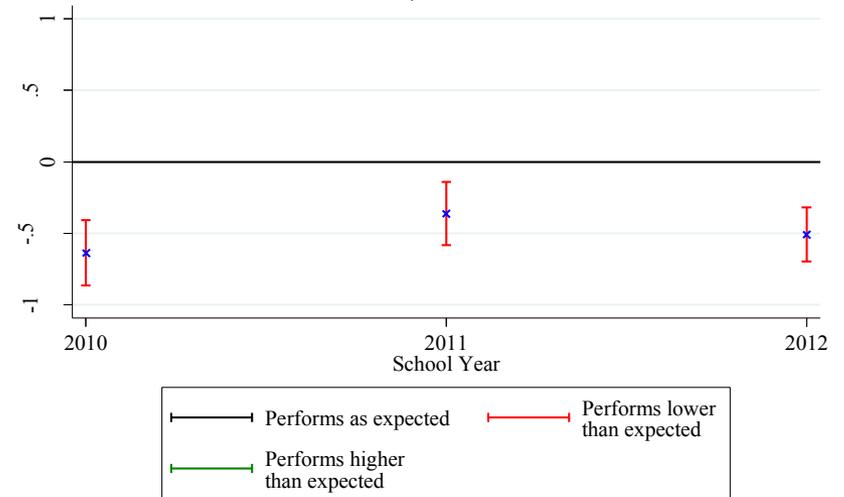


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Trends Grade 5

Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 5 Math, 2009-10 to 2011-12

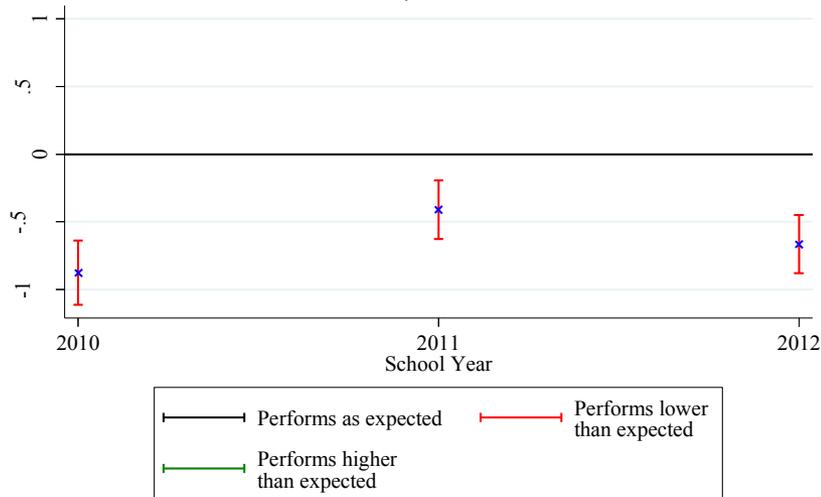


Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 5 ELA, 2009-10 to 2011-12

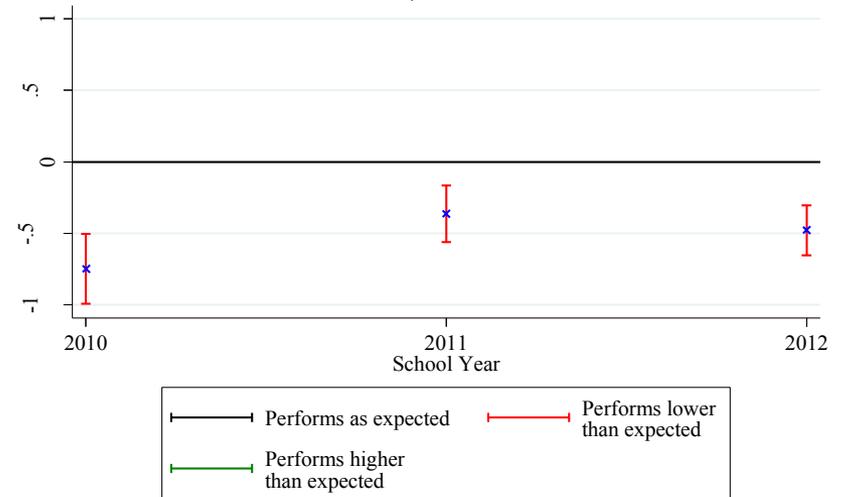


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Trends Grade 6

Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 6 Math, 2009-10 to 2011-12



Controlled: Trends for Community Charter Charter School
Grade 6 ELA, 2009-10 to 2011-12

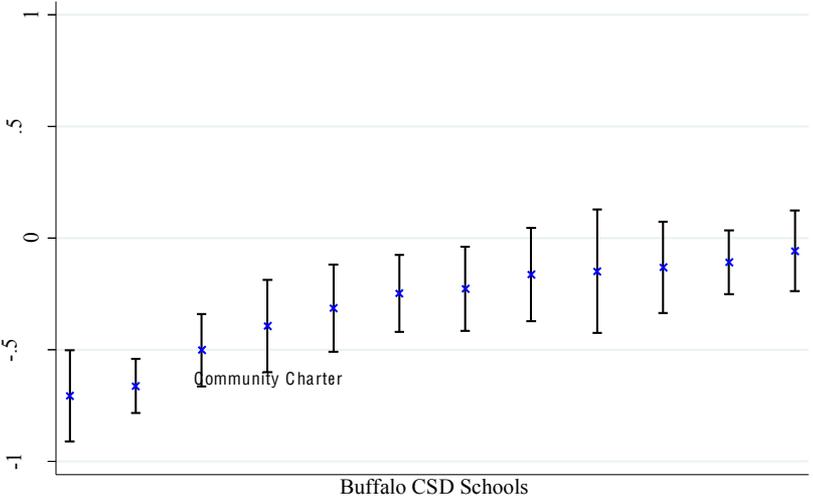


Controlling for students' poverty, LEP, and special education status

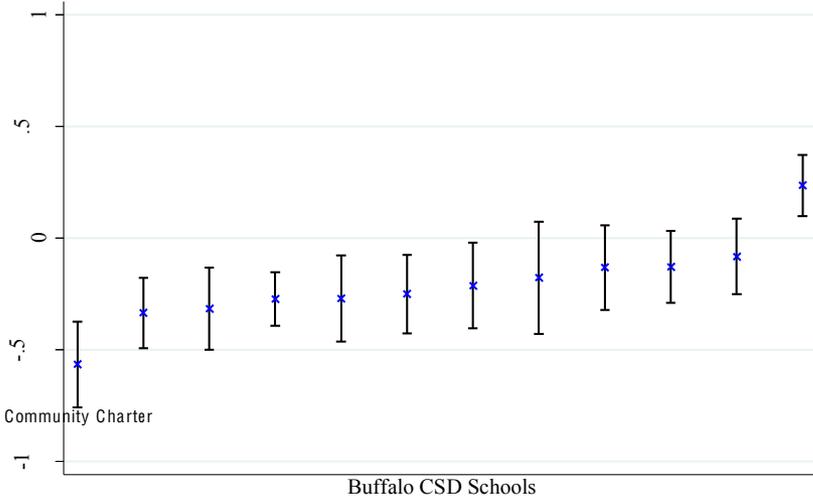
**PERFORMANCE BASED ON
REGRESSIONS
(GRADES SEPARATELY,
COMPARED TO DISTRICT)**

Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 3, 2012

Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 Math, 2012

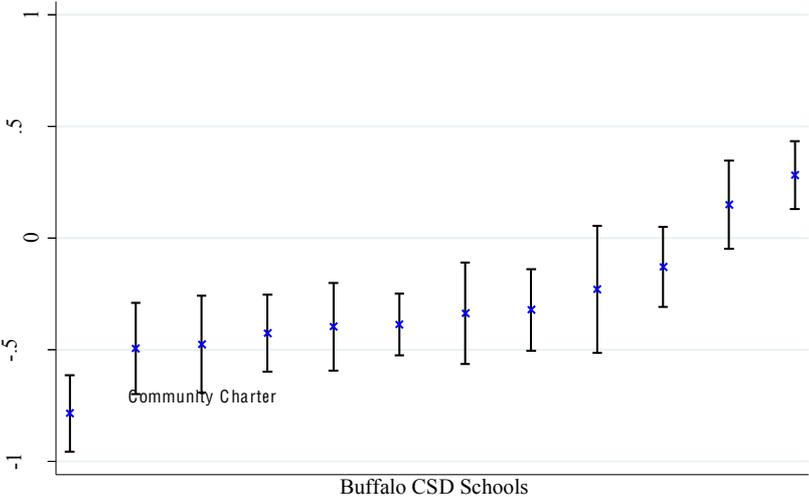


Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 ELA, 2012

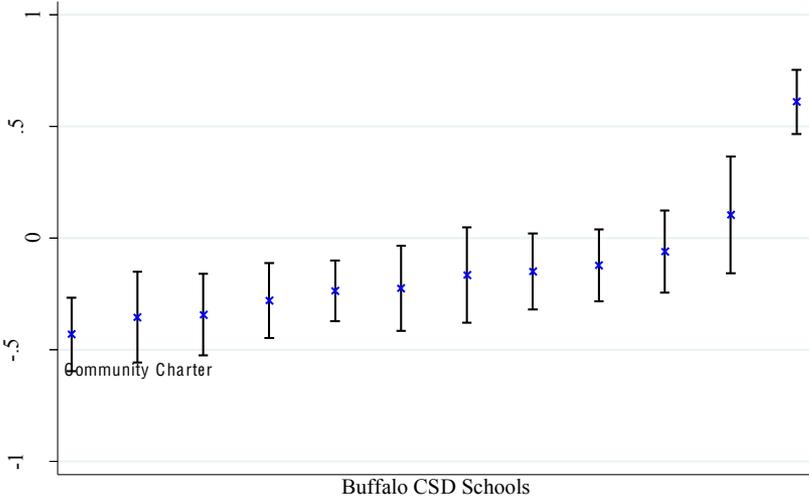


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 4, 2012

Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 Math, 2012

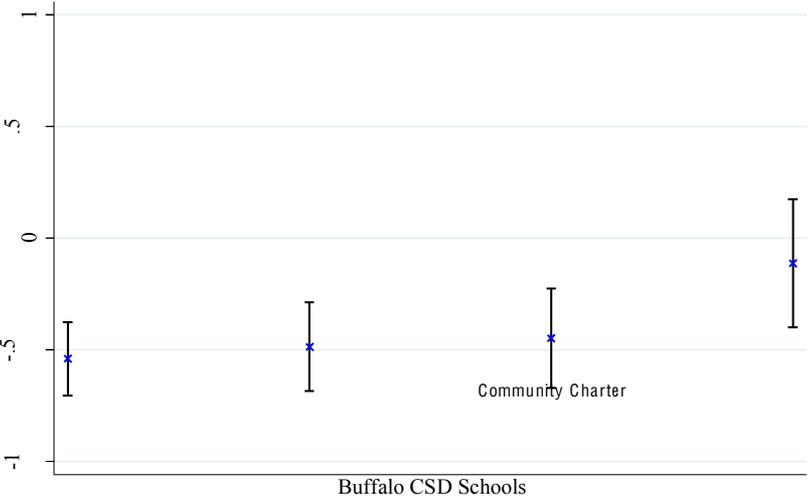


Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 ELA, 2012

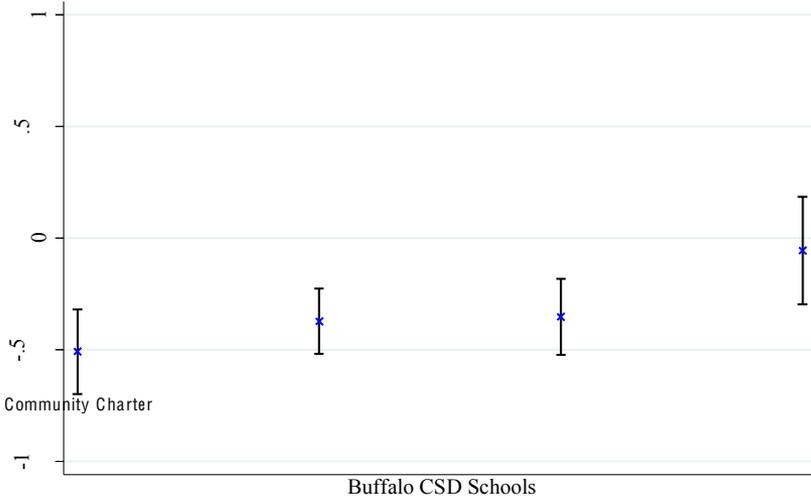


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 5, 2012

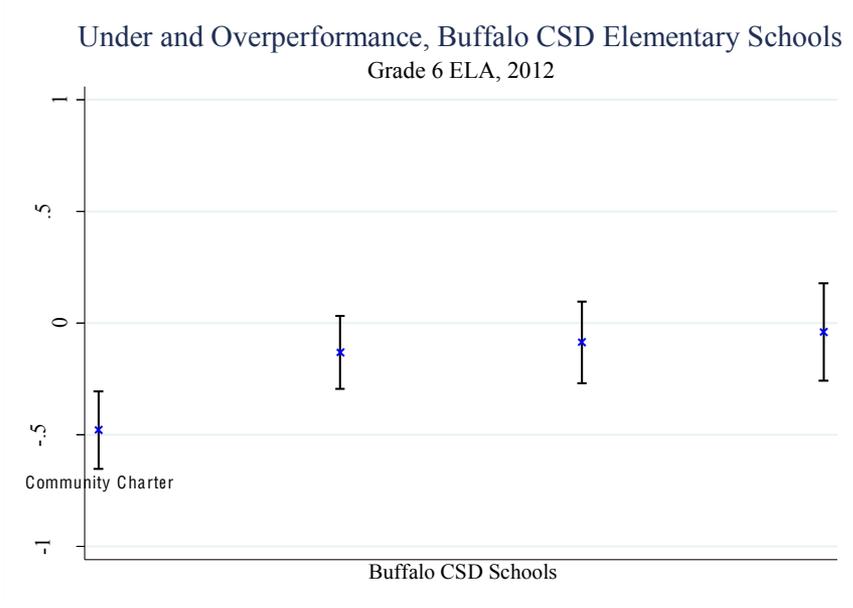
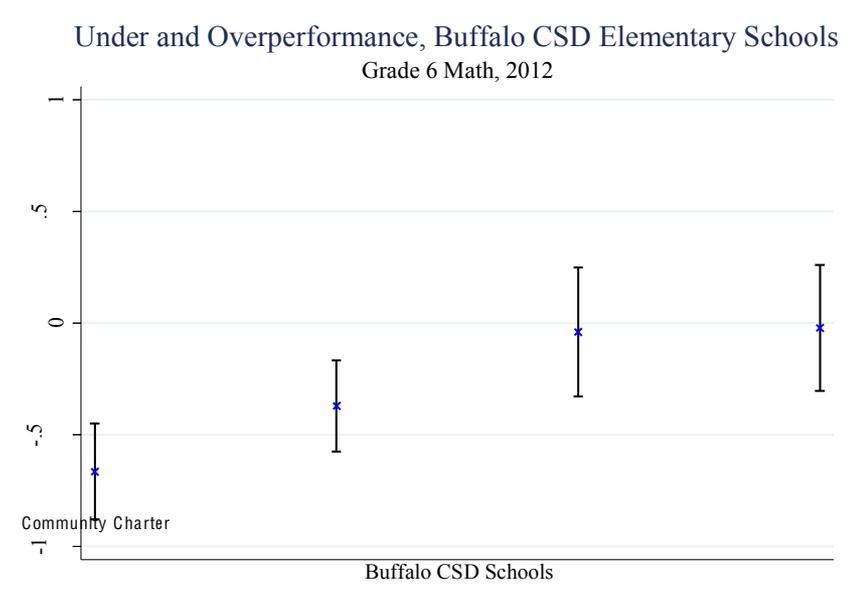
Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 5 Math, 2012



Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 5 ELA, 2012



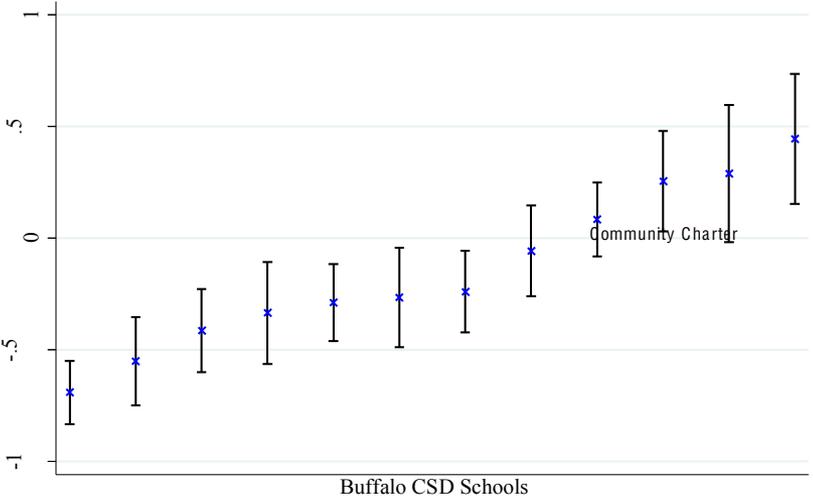
Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 6, 2012



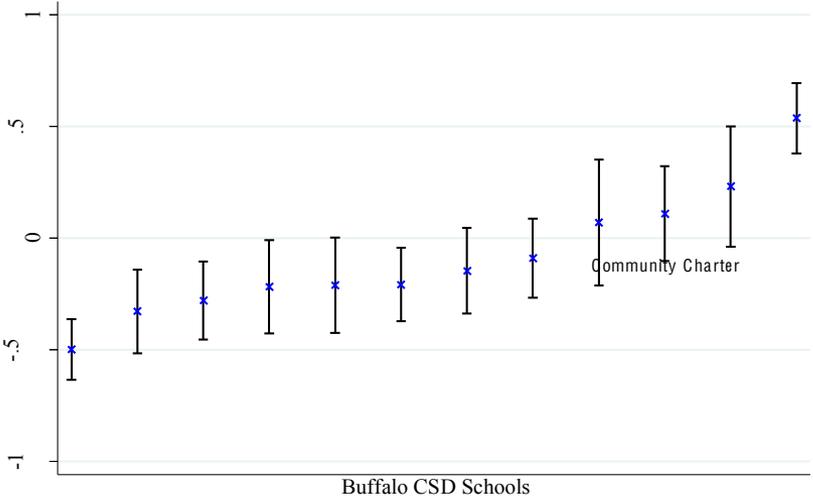
Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools

Grade 3, 2011

Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 Math, 2011

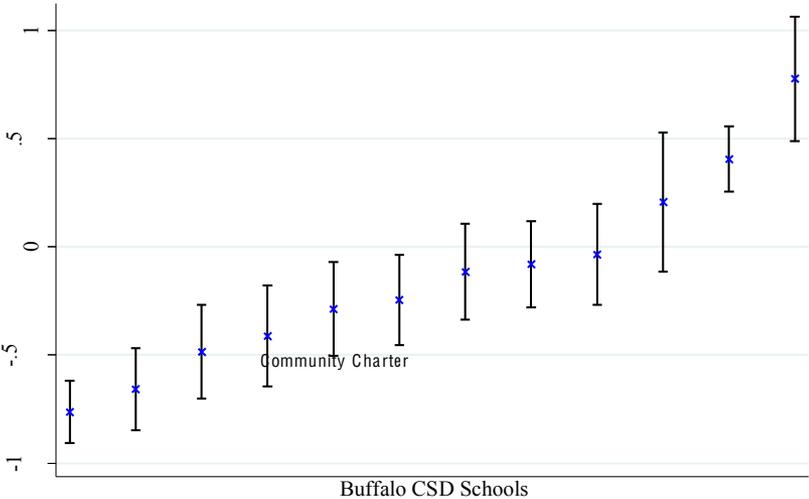


Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 ELA, 2011

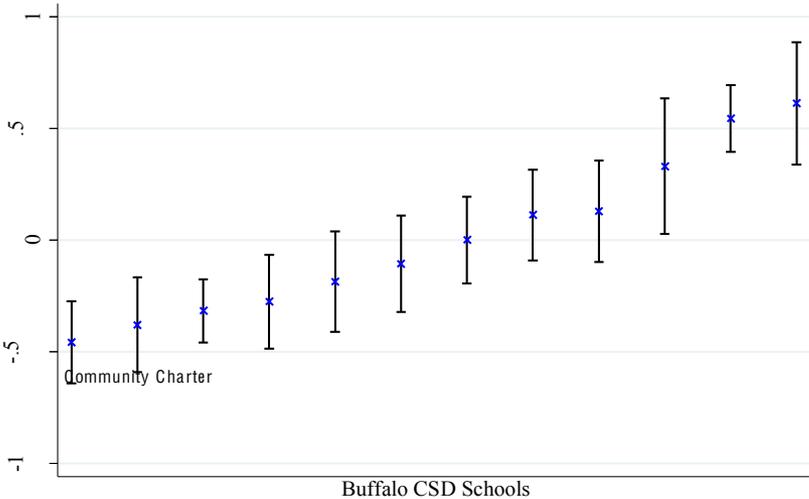


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 4, 2011

Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 Math, 2011

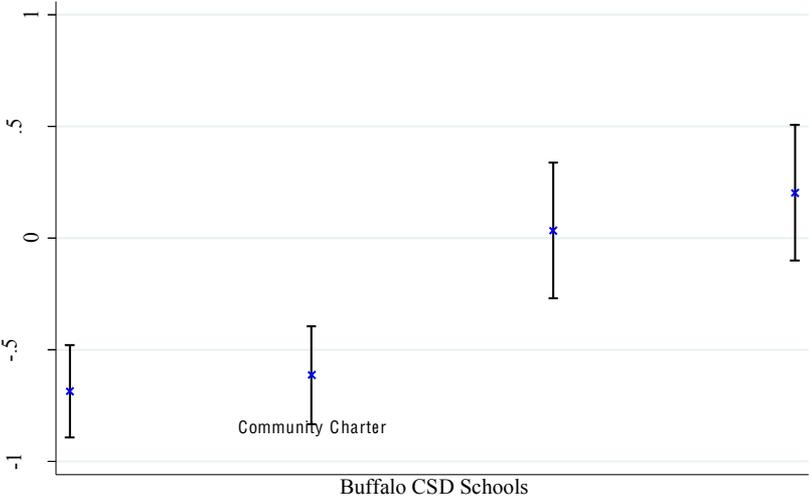


Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 ELA, 2011

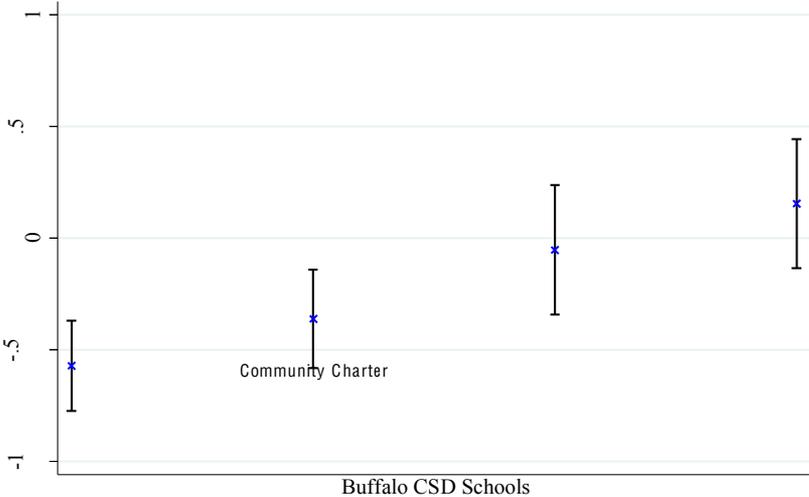


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 5, 2011

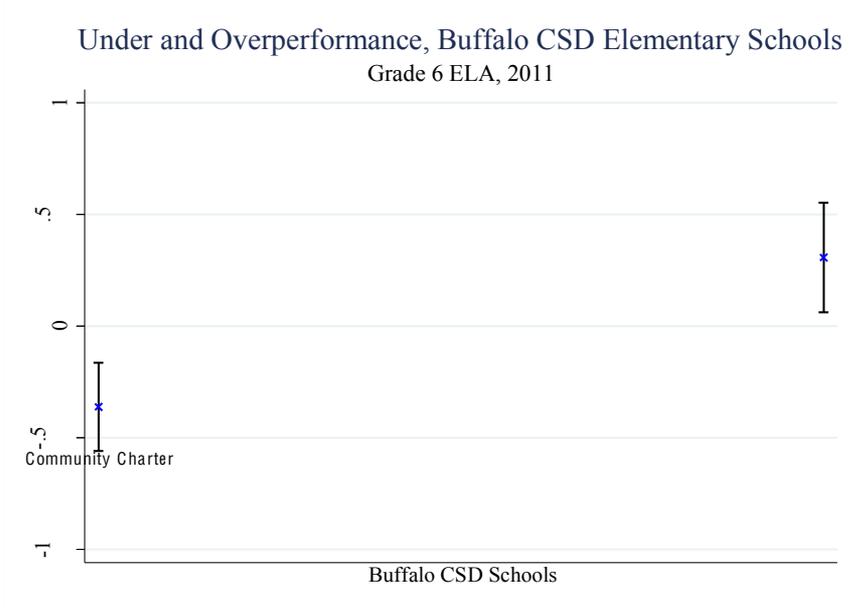
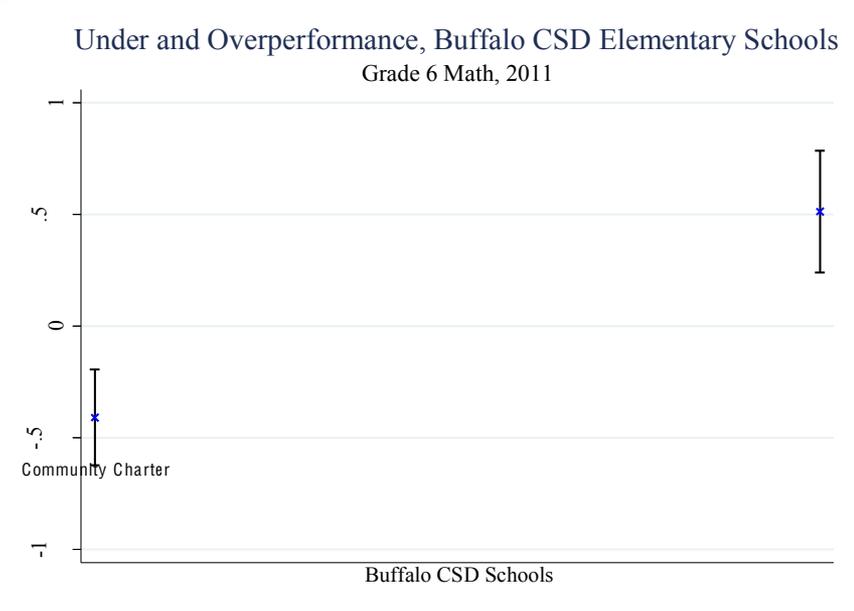
Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 5 Math, 2011



Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 5 ELA, 2011

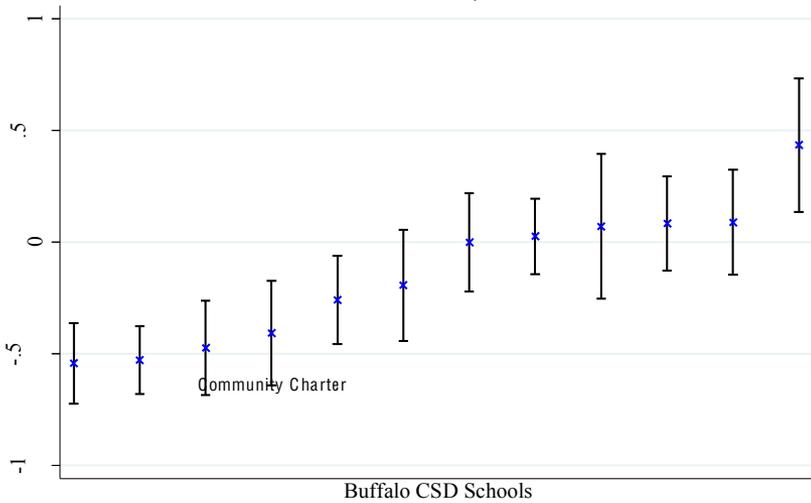


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 6, 2011

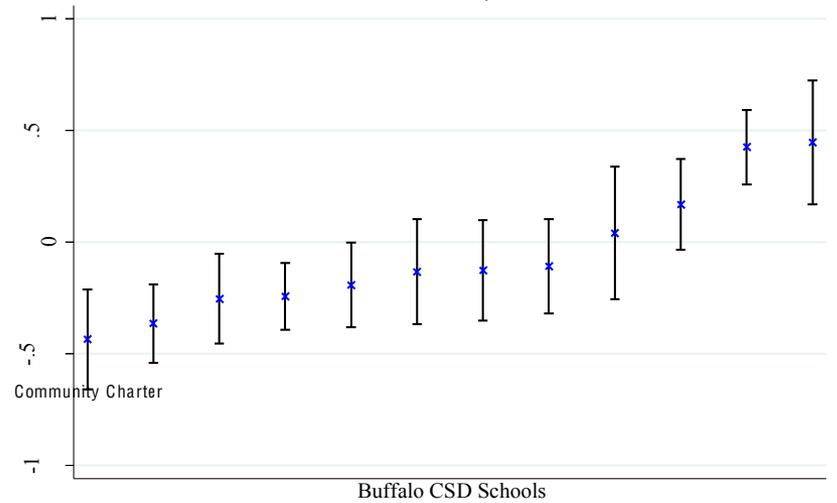


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 3, 2010

Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 Math, 2010

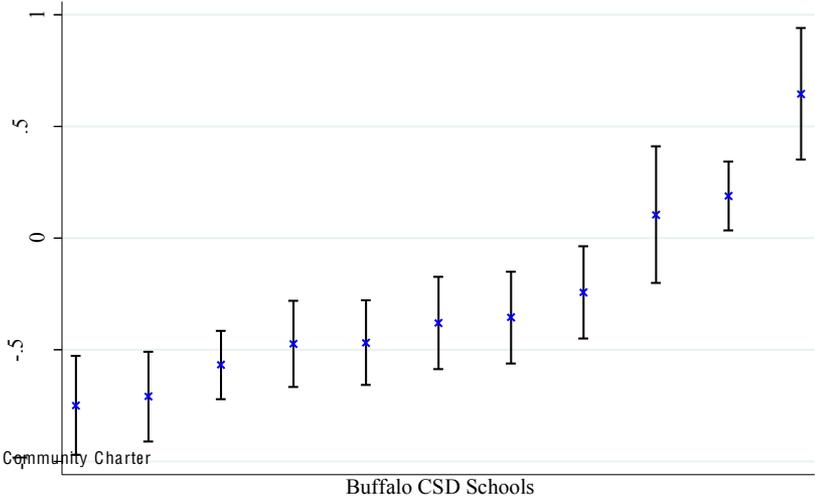


Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 3 ELA, 2010

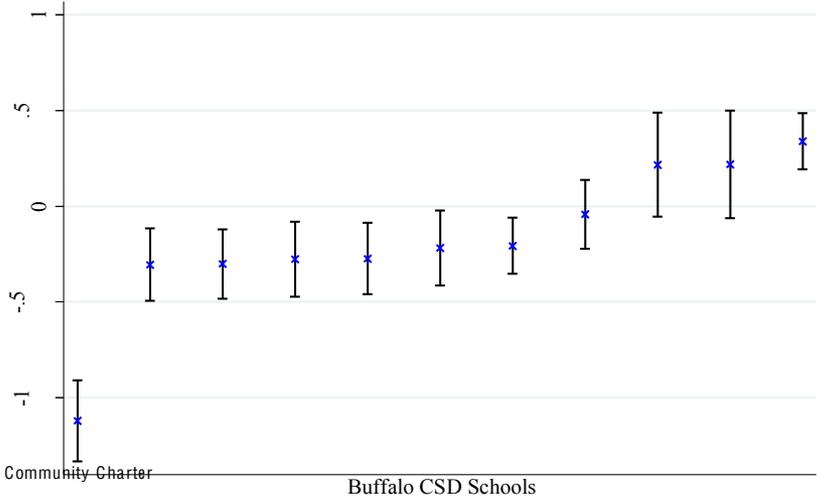


Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 4, 2010

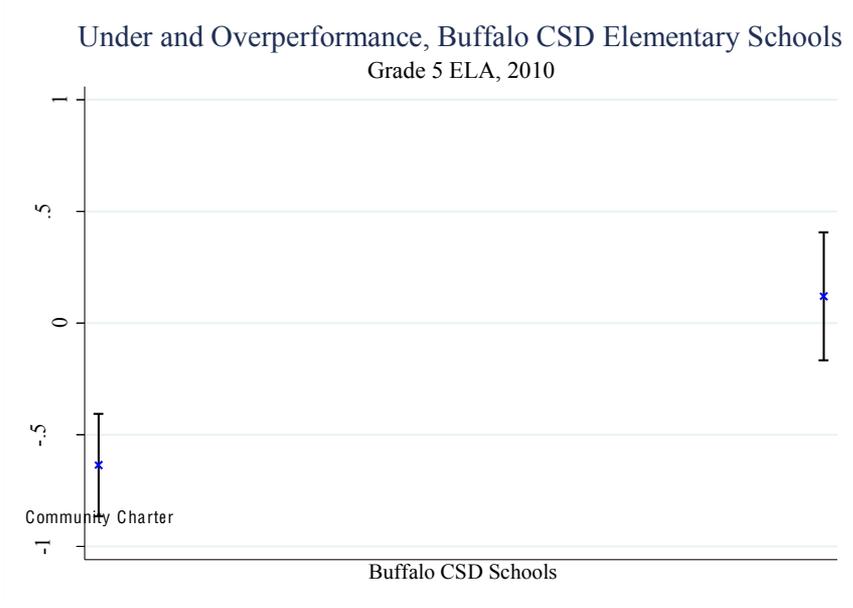
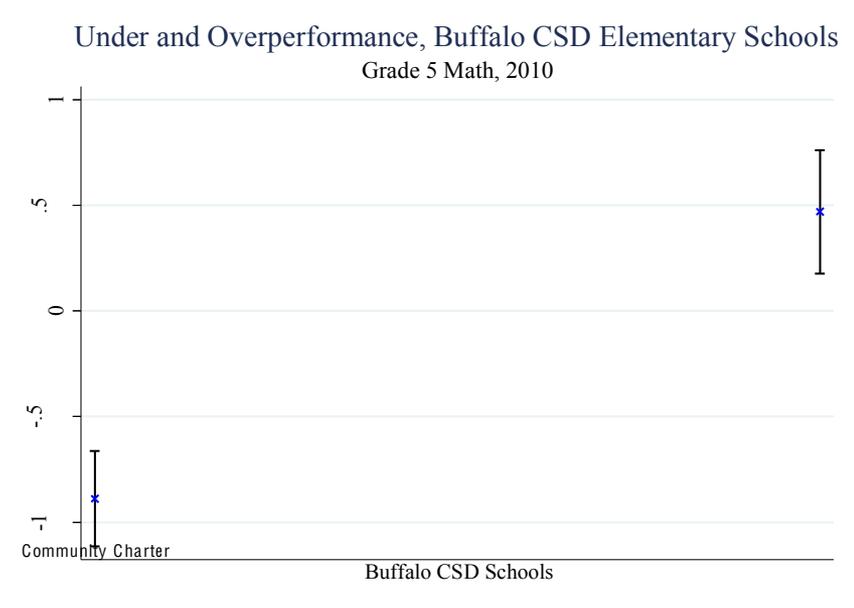
Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 Math, 2010



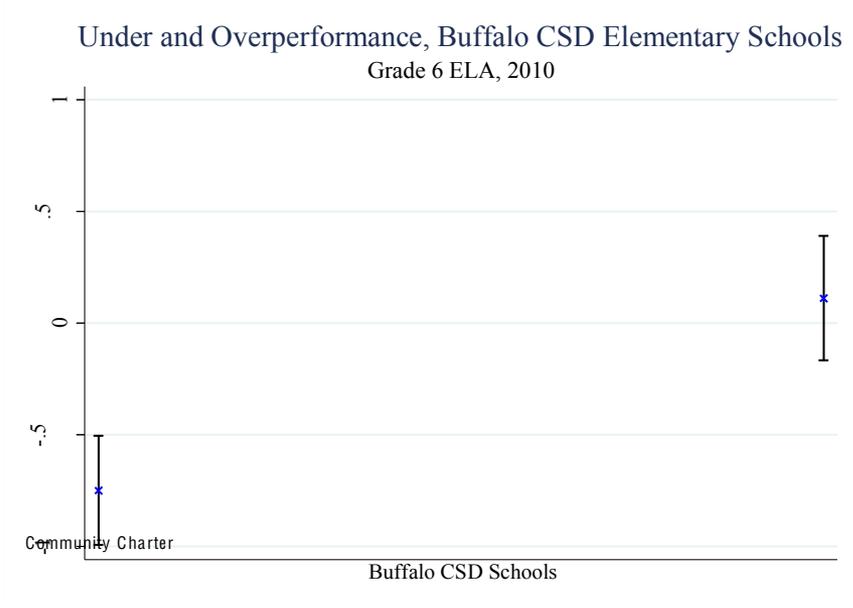
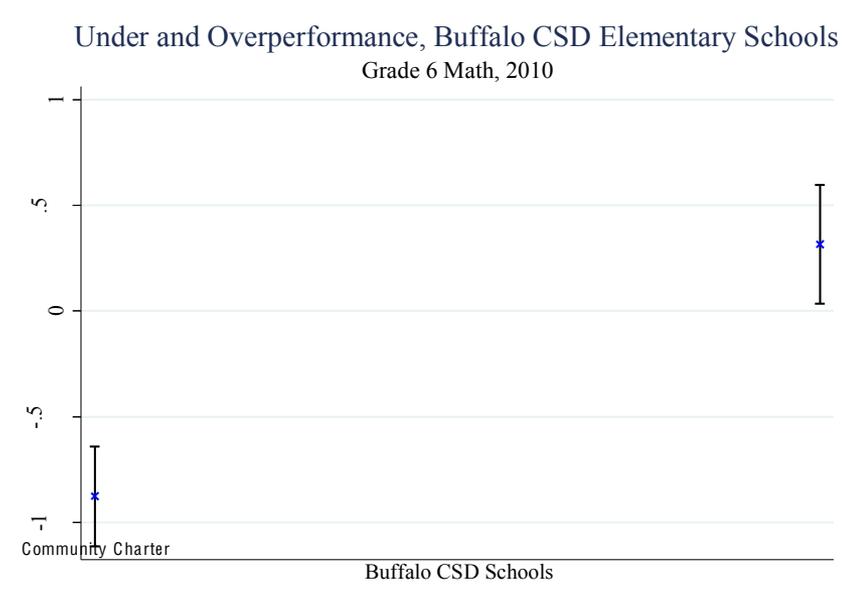
Under and Overperformance, Buffalo CSD Elementary Schools
Grade 4 ELA, 2010



Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 5, 2010



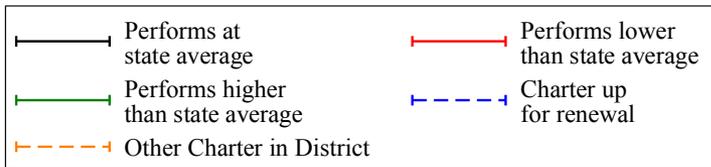
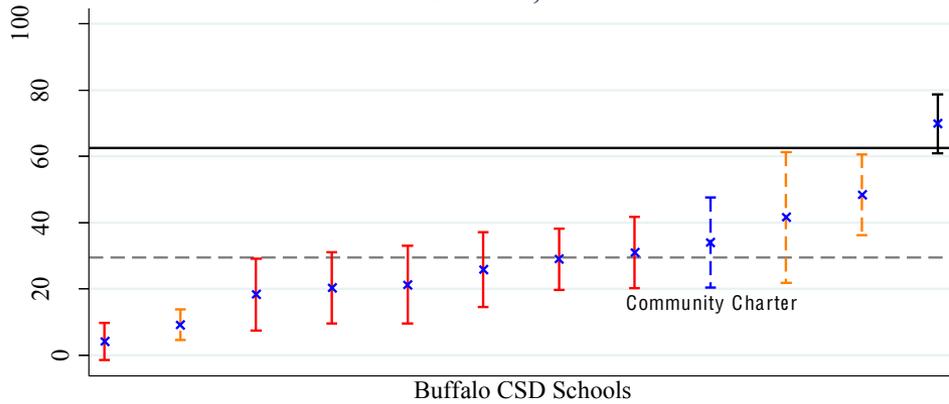
Math and ELA Adjusted Performance Compared to Other District Schools Grade 6, 2010



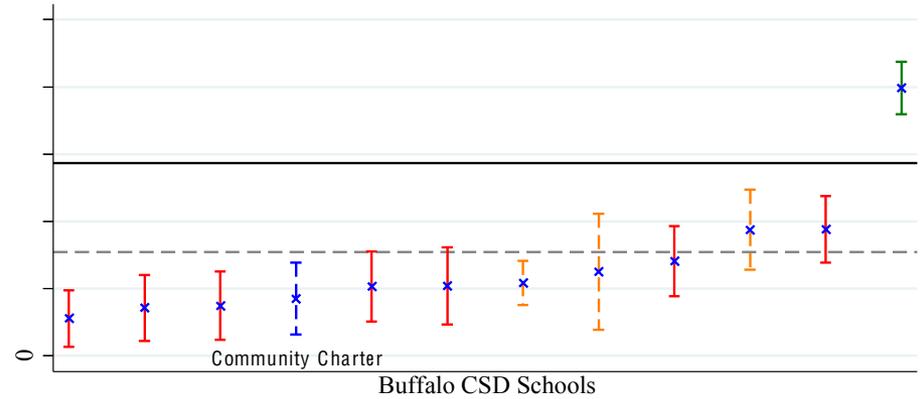
Percent at or above proficient

**UNCONTROLLED PERFORMANCE
(GRADES SEPARATELY,
COMPARED TO DISTRICT)**

Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools Grade 3, 2012

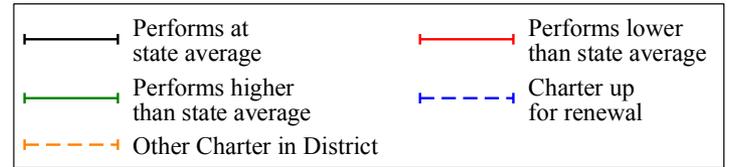
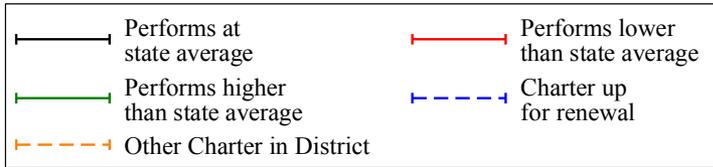
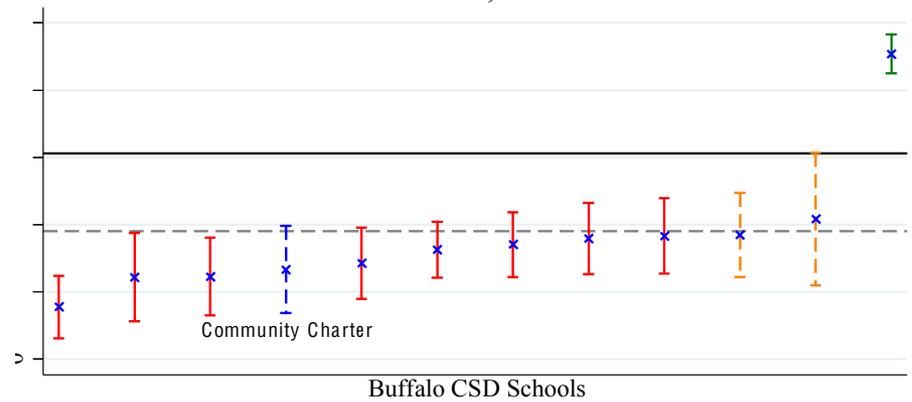
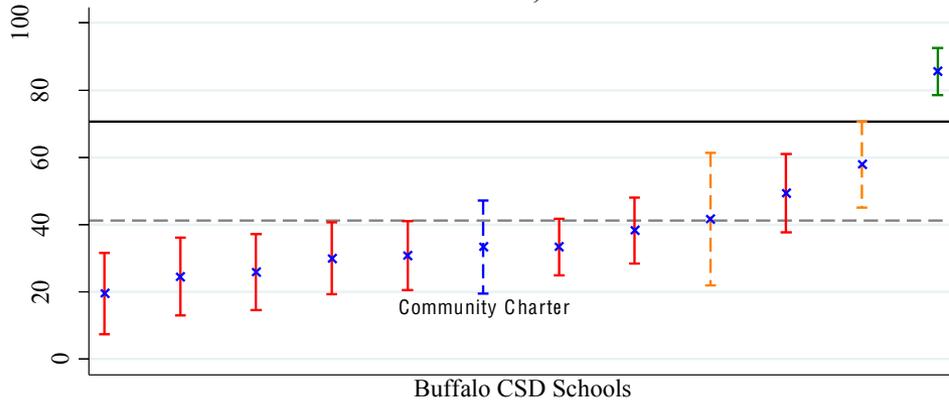


Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools Grade 3, 2012

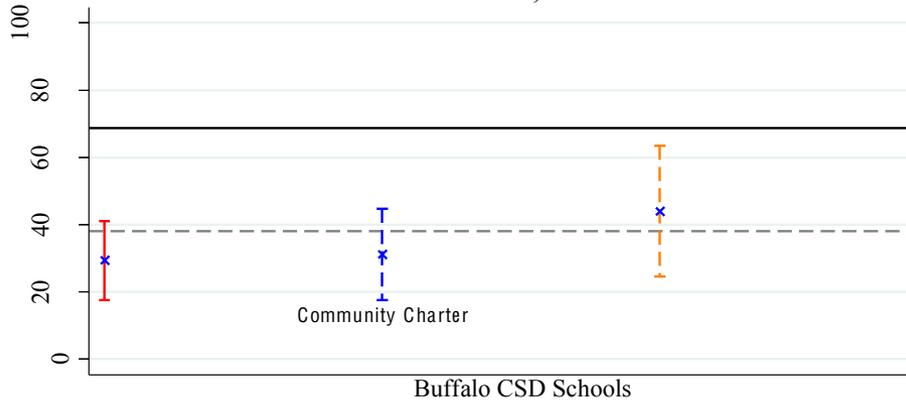


Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 4, 2012

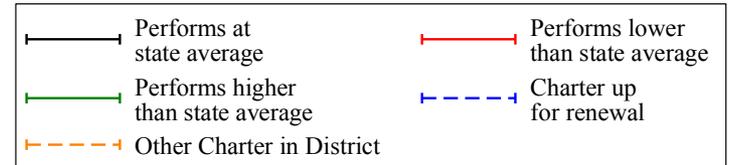
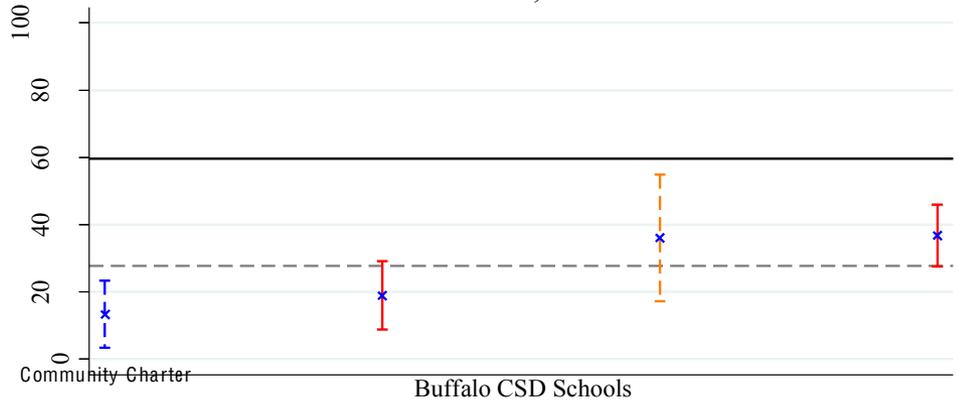
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 4, 2012



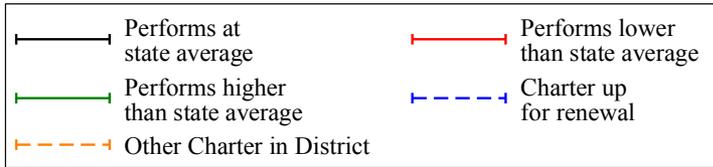
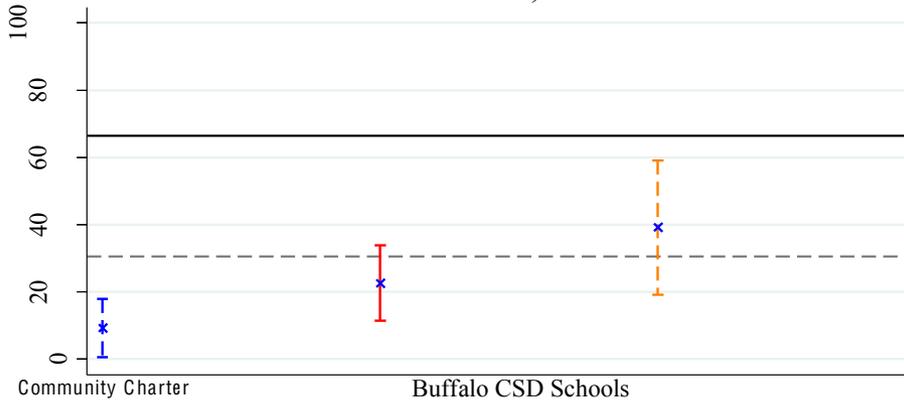
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2012



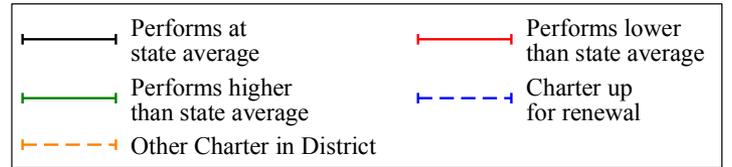
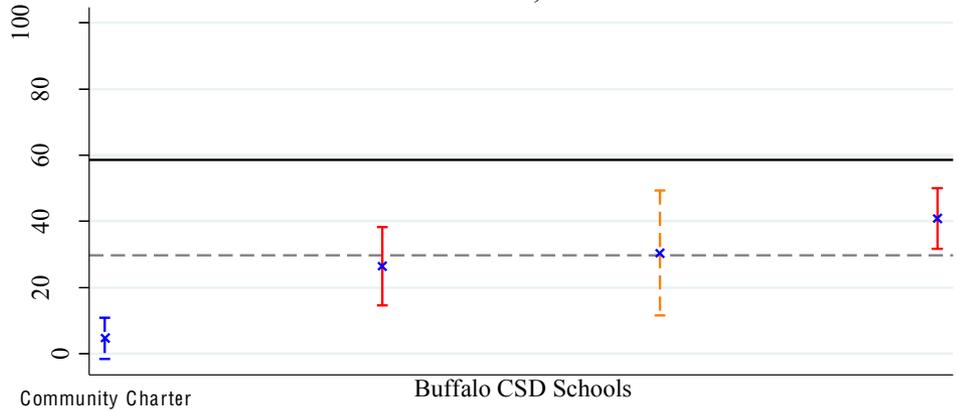
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2012



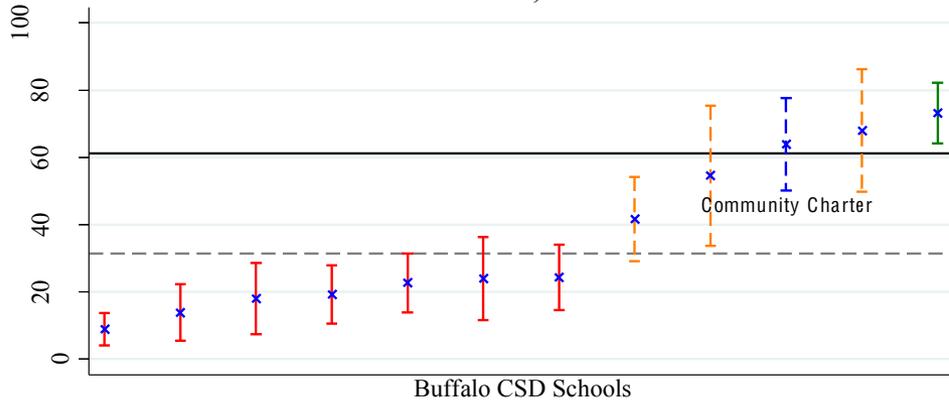
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2012



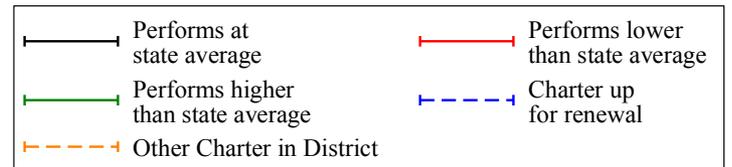
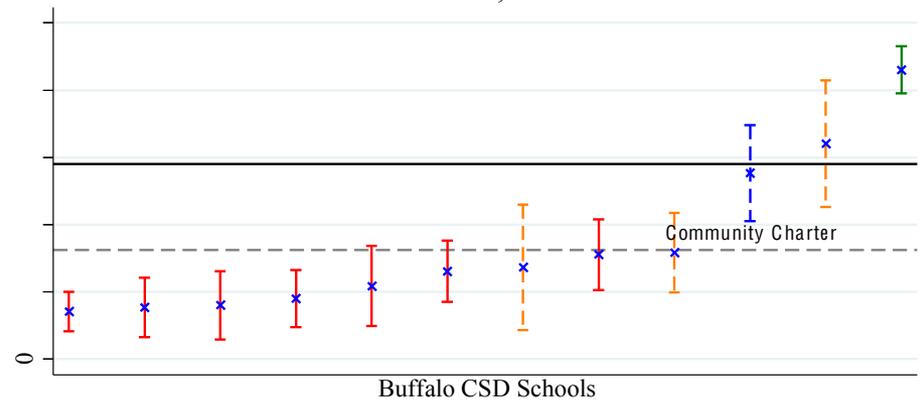
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2012



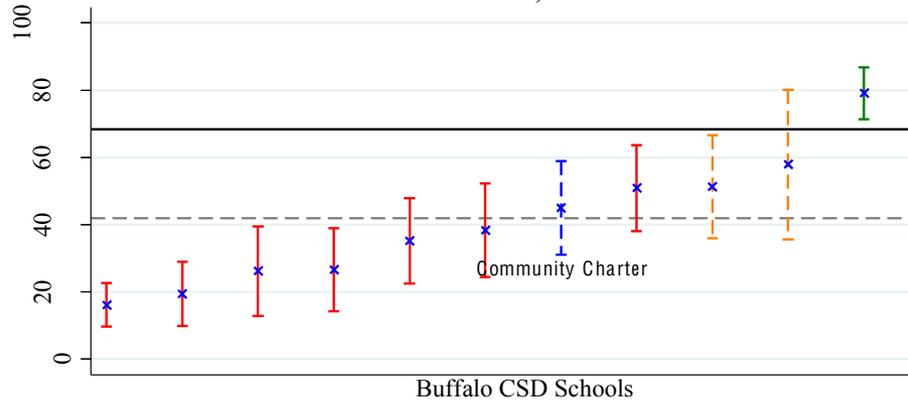
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 3, 2011



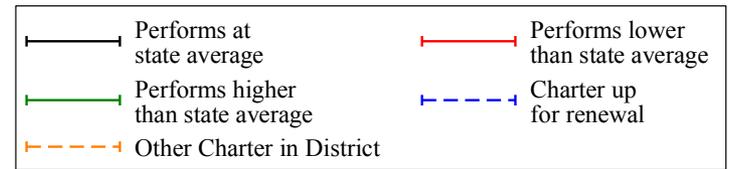
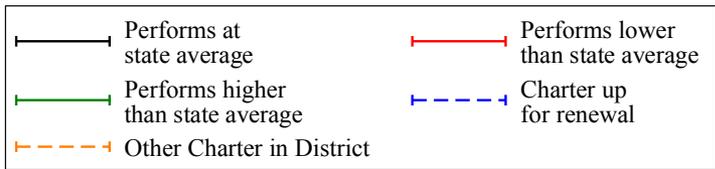
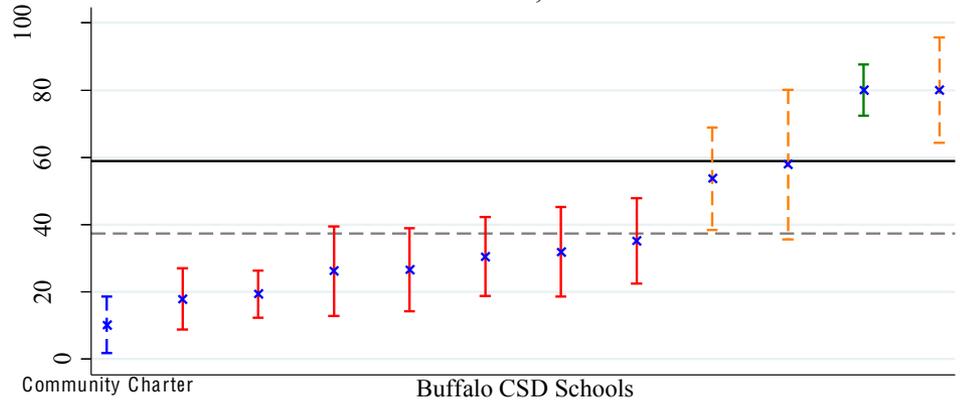
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 3, 2011



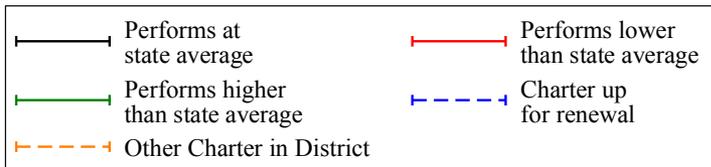
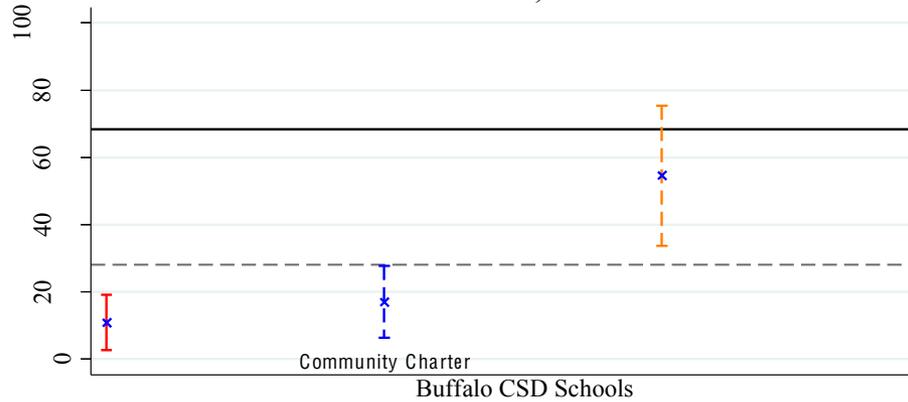
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 4, 2011



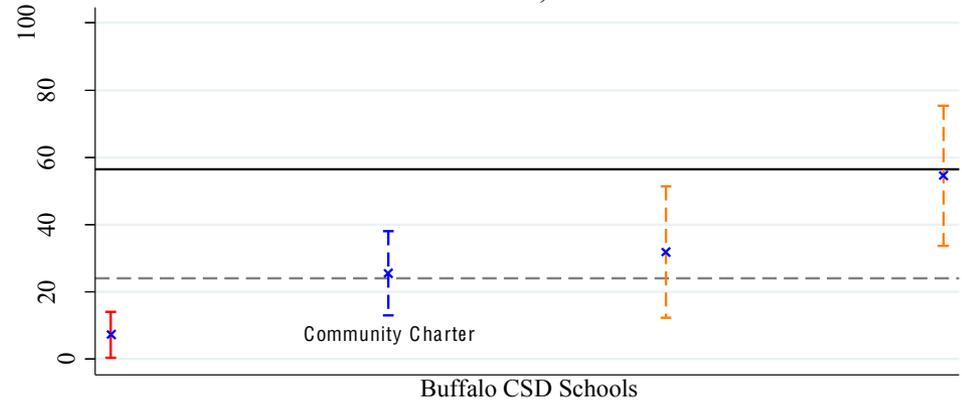
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 4, 2011



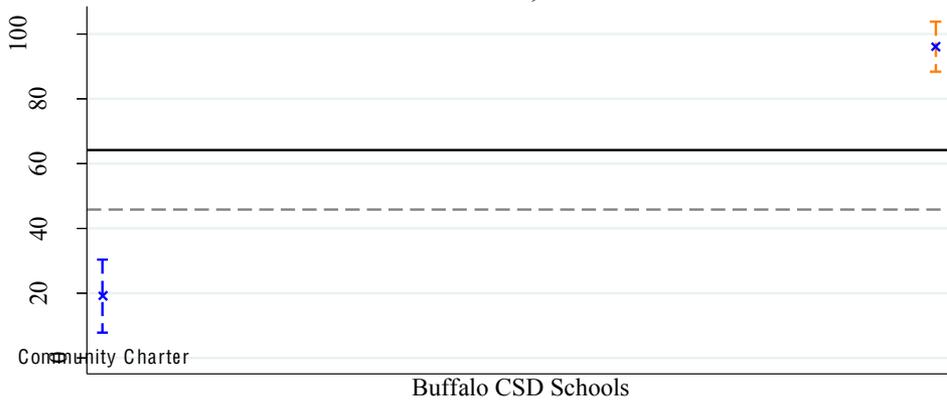
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2011



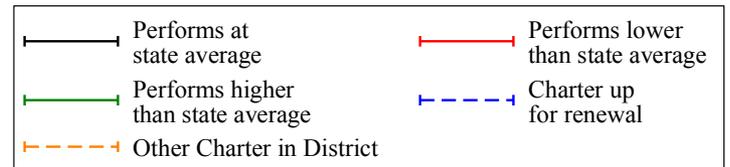
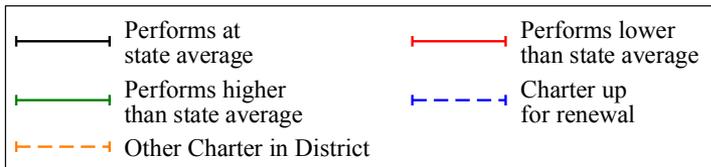
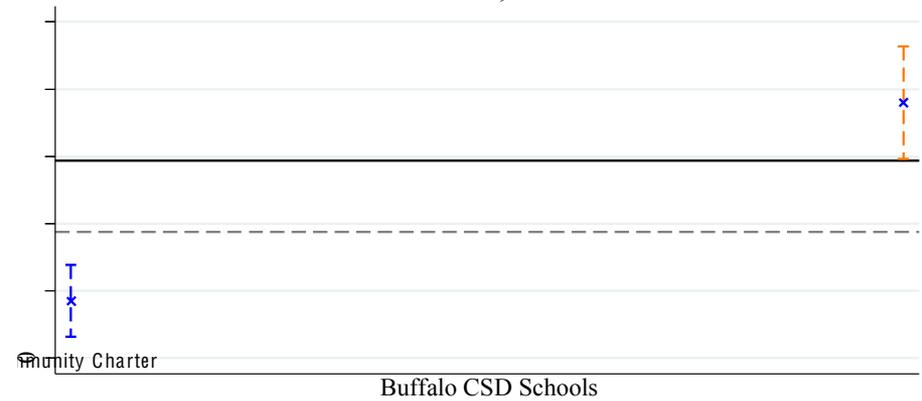
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2011



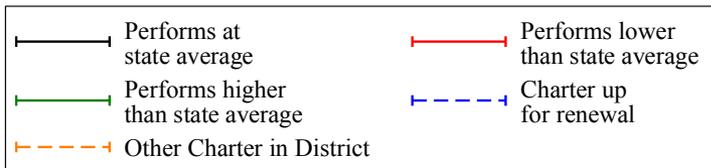
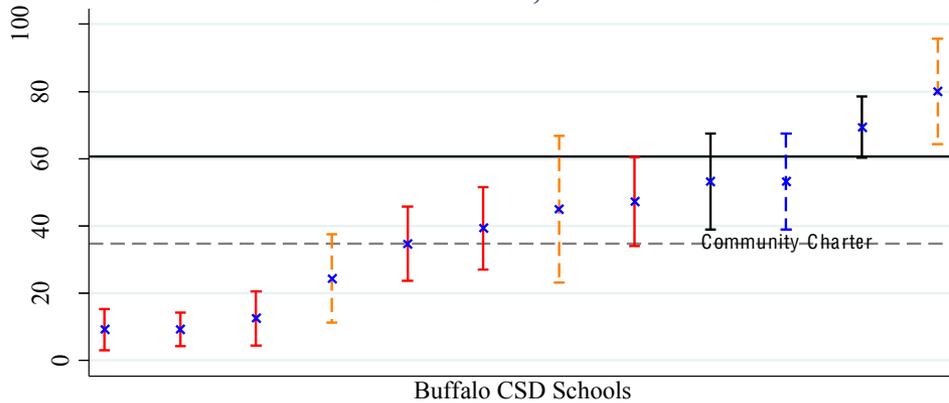
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2011



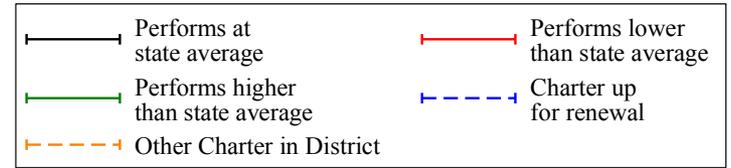
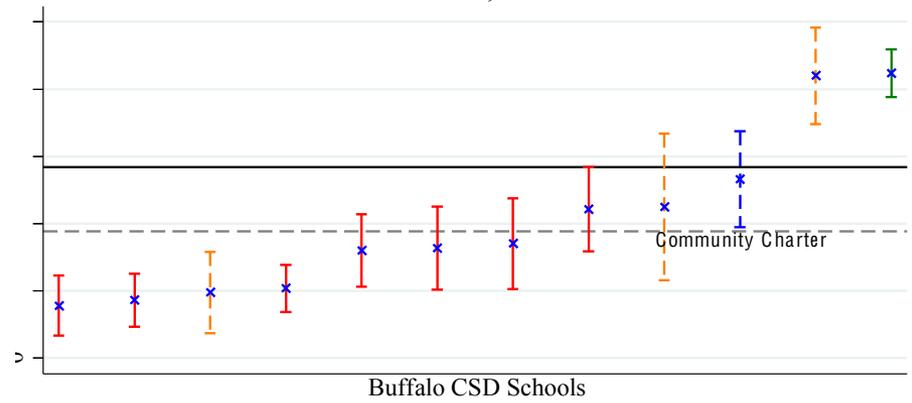
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2011



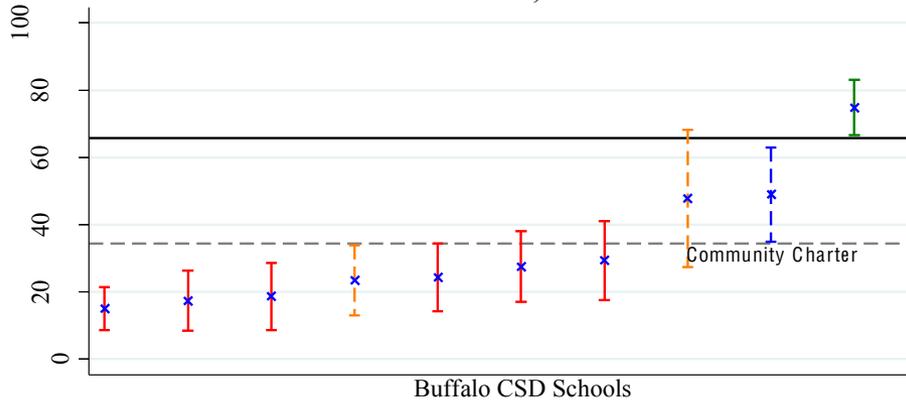
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 3, 2010



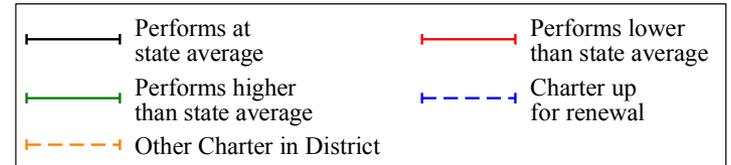
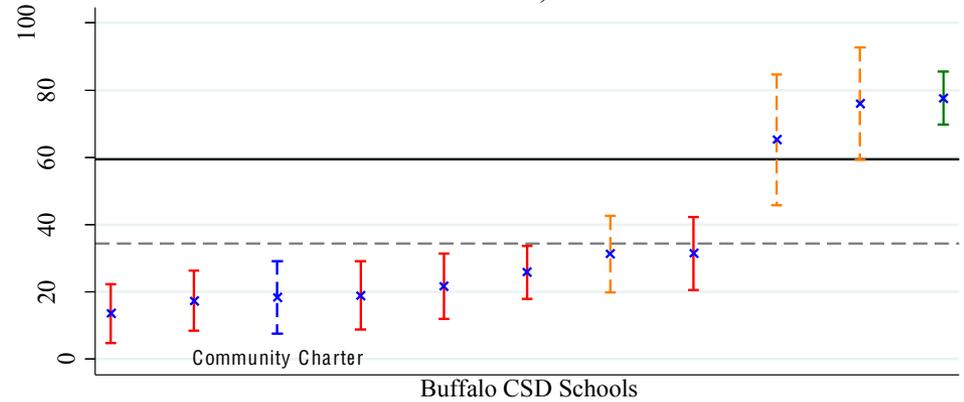
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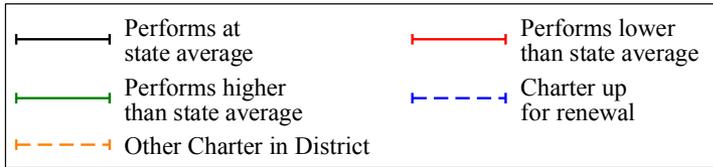
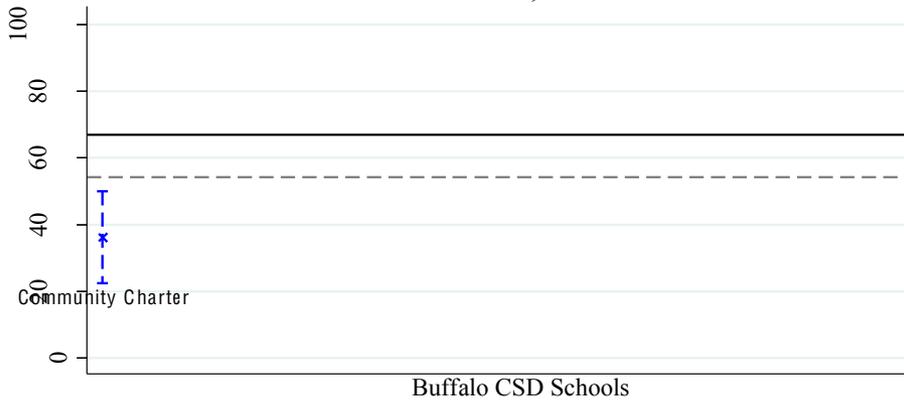
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 4, 2010



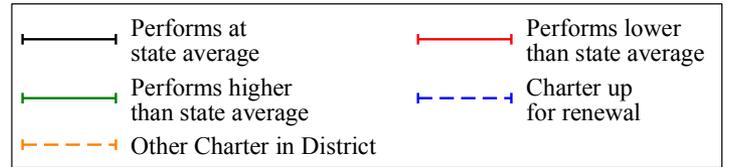
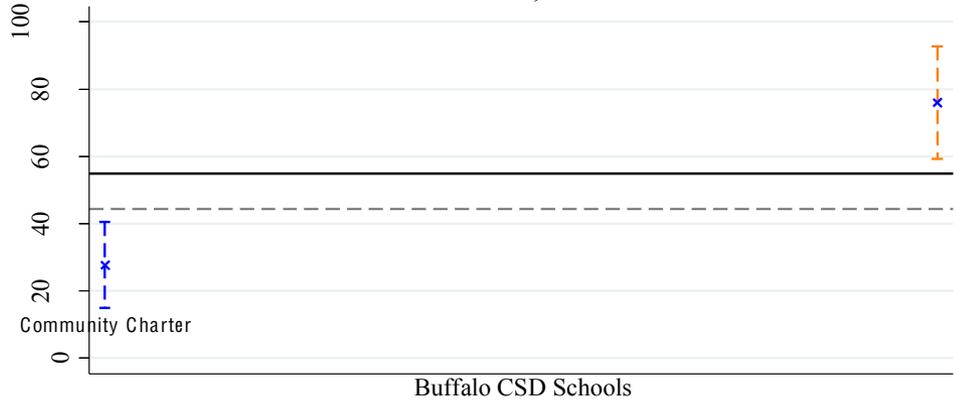
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
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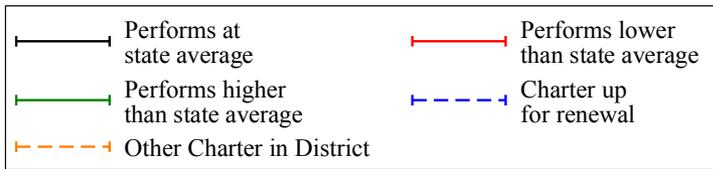
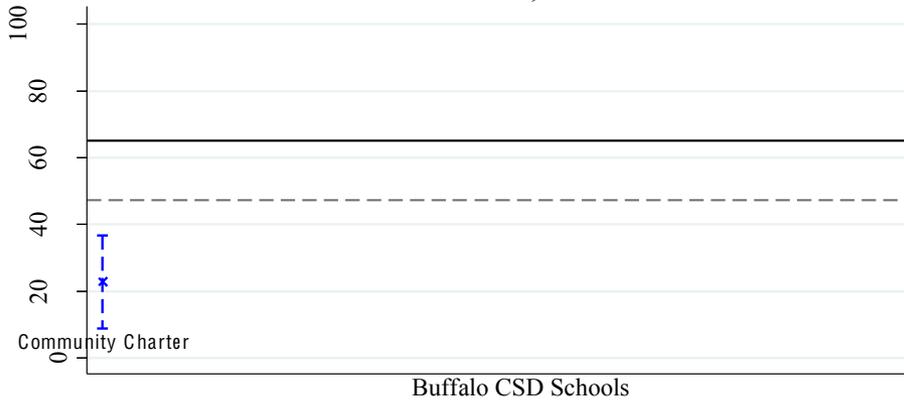
Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2010



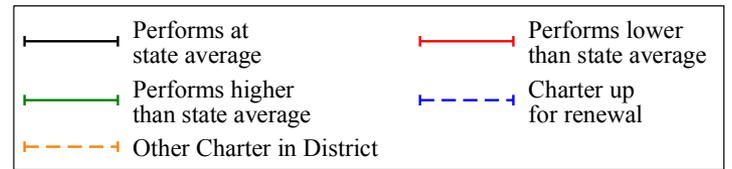
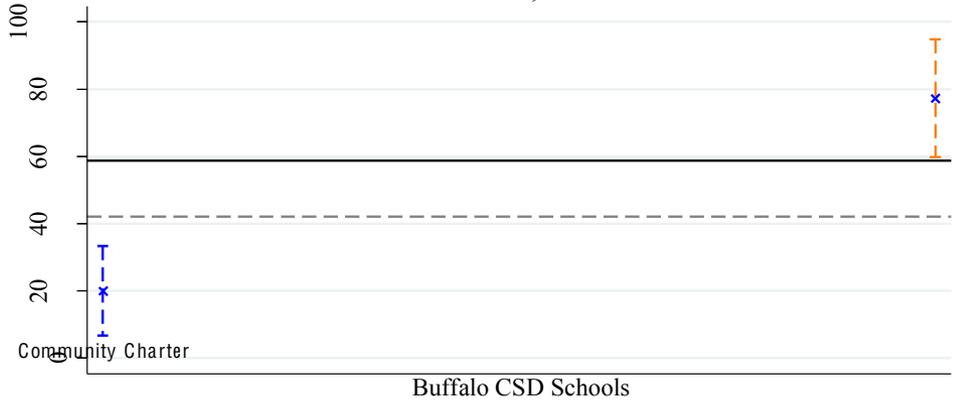
Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 5, 2010



Percent At or Above Math Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2010



Percent At or Above ELA Proficiency, Elementary Schools
Grade 6, 2010



Appendix B: Community Charter School Fiscal Dashboard

Charter School:	Community Charter
<i>Report as of:</i>	2011

General Information:			
Contact Info:		Years in Operation:	10
Region:	Buffalo City	Grades Served:	K-6
		Enrollment:	334
		Max Enrollment:	332

Income Statement:

Revenues:	
State/Local Operating	\$4,112,637
Federal Sources	531,323
State/Local Grants	8,543
Other	11,525
Total Revenues:	\$4,664,028

Expenses:	
Total Program Services	\$3,219,499
Management and General	525,778
Fundraising	0
Total Expenses:	\$3,745,277

Ops. Surplus/(Deficit)	\$918,751
-------------------------------	------------------

Balance Sheet & Cash Flow:

Assets:	
Cash	\$1,209,283
Total Current Assets	1,383,427
Investments & PP&E	2,945,972
Total Assets:	\$4,329,399

Liabilities:	
Current Liabilities	\$498,616
Total Debt	0
Total Liabilities:	498,616
Net Assets:	3,830,783
Total Liab. & Net Assets:	\$4,329,399

Change in Cash	(\$239,450)
-----------------------	--------------------

Key Performance Metrics:

Near-Term Metrics:	
Current Ratio	2.8x
Unrestricted Days Cash	373.3
Enrollment Stability	100.6%
Total Revenue Per Student:	\$13,964
Total Expenses Per Student:	\$11,213

Sustainable Metrics:	
Total Margin	19.7%
Debt to Asset Ratio	0.12x
Cash Flow	(\$239,450)
Debt Service Coverage Ratio	N/A
Composite Score	3.00
Composite Strength	Strong

Appendix B: Community Charter School Fiscal Dashboard

Symbol Legend:

	Meets Standard (Low Risk)
	Adequate (Moderate Risk)
	Requires Review (High Risk)

Key Inputs:

Target School:	Community Charter
Time Period:	2011

Financial Indicator:

Target: Community Charter

Near-Term Indicators:

1a.	Current Ratio
1b.	Unrestricted Days Cash
1c.	Enrollment Stability

Current Metric:	Performance:
2.8x	
373.3	
100.6%	

Financial Composite Score:

1d.	Composite Score
-----	-----------------

Current Metric:	Performance:
3.00x	

Long-Term Indicators:

2a.	Total Margin
2b.	Debt to Asset Ratio
2c.	Cash Flow
2d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio

Current Metric:	Performance:
19.7%	
0.12x	
(\$239,450)	
N/A	

Appendix B: Community Charter School Fiscal Dashboard

	2011	2010	2009	Average
1a. Current Ratio	2.77x	1.38x	4.46x	2.87x
<i>Explanation: Current Ratio (CR) is a measure of operational efficiency and short-term financial health. CR is calculated as current assets divided by current liabilities.</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
X	CR is greater than or equal to 1.1
	CR is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is positive (current year ratio is higher than last year's)
	Adequate - Moderate Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
	Current Ratio is between 0.9 and 1.0 or equal to 1.0
	CR is between 1.0 and 1.1 and one-year trend is negative
	Requires Review - High Risk:
	Current ratio is less than or equal to 0.9

	2011	2010	2009	Average
1b. Unrestricted Days Cash	373.3	343.0	298.1	338.1
<i>Explanation: The unrestricted days cash on hand ratio indicates how many days a school can pay its expenses without another inflow of cash. Calculated as Unrestricted Cash divided by (Total Expenses/365).</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
X	30 days or more of cash
	Between 30 and 60 days of cash and one-year trend is positive
	Adequate - Moderate Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
	Days Cash is between 15 and 30 days
	Days Cash is between 30 and 60 days and one-year trend is negative
	Requires Review - High Risk:
	Less than 15 Days Cash

	2011	2010	2009	Average
1c. Enrollment Stability	100.6%	91.6%	92.5%	94.9%
<i>Explanation: Enrollment stability tells authorizers whether or not the school is meeting its enrollment projections, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Budget.</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk:
X	Enrollment Variance equals or exceeds 95% in most recent year
	Adequate - Moderate Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
	Enrollment Variance is between 85% and 95% in the most recent year
	Requires Review - High Risk:
	Enrollment Variance is equal to or less than 85% in most recent year

Financial Composite Score:

	2011
2 Financial Composite Score	3.00
<i>Accounting for an Institution's Total Financial Condition. We evaluate the financial health of schools using a blended score that measures institutions' performances on key financial indicators. The blended score allows an institution's sources of financial strength to offset areas of financial weakness. To calculate: Step 1: Calculate Three Financial Ratios from Financial Statements (Primary Reserve Ratio, Equity Ratio, and Net Income Ratio). Step 2: Convert Ratio Results to Strength Factor Scores. Step 3: Multiply the Strength Factor Scores by a Weighting Factor. Step 4: Add the Weighted Strength Factor Scores to Obtain the Composite Score.</i>	

	Meets Standard: Fiscally Strong
X	Composite Score Range of 1.5-3.0.
	Fiscally Adequate
	Composite Score Range of 1.0-1.4.
	Requires Review: Fiscally Needs Monitoring
	Composite Score Range of -1.0-0.9.

Appendix B: Community Charter School Fiscal Dashboard

	2011	2010	2009	Average
2a. Total Margin	19.7%	13.4%	13.6%	15.5%
<i>Explanation: Total margin measures the deficit or surplus a school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Calculated as Net Income divided by Total Revenue.</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Most recent year Total Margin is positive
	Adequate - Moderate Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Most recent Total Margin is less than 0 but greater than -10%
	Requires Review - High Risk (if satisfies any of the following two):
<input type="checkbox"/>	Current year Total Margin is less than -10%

	2011	2010	2009	Average
2b. Debt to Asset Ratio	0.12x	0.28x	0.14x	0.18x
<i>Explanation: Measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. Calculated as Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets.</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Debt to Asset Ratio is less than 0.90
	Adequate - Moderate Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debt to Asset Ratio is between 0.90 and 1.0
	Requires Review - High Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debt to Asset Ratio is greater than 1.0

	2011	2010	2009	Average
2c. Cash Flow	(\$239,450)	(\$320,961)	\$548,712	(\$3,900)
<i>Explanation: Cash flow is an assessment of change in cash from operations, financing, and investing over a given period.</i>				

	Meets Standard - Low Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three-year cumulative cash flow is positive and cash flow is positive in recent year
	Adequate - Moderate Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Three-year cumulative cash flow is positive but cash flow is negative in most recent year
	Requires Review - High Risk:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Three-year cumulative cash flow is negative

	2011	2010	2009	Average
2d. Debt Service Coverage Ratio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Explanation: Debt service coverage ratio indicates a school's ability to cover its debt obligations in the current year. Calculated as: (Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Principal and Interest Payments).</i>				

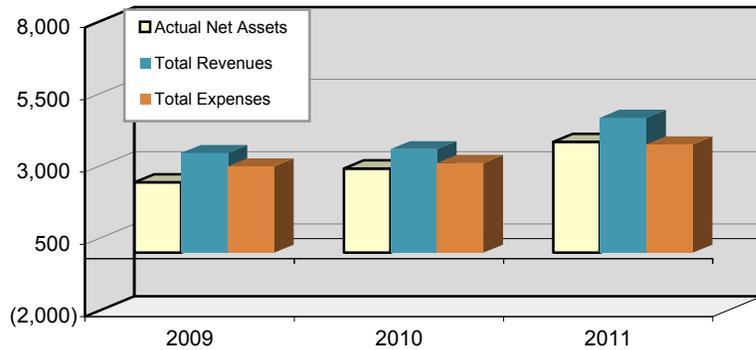
	Meets Standard - Low Risk:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Debt Service Coverage Ratio is equal to or exceeds 1.10
	Adequate - Moderate Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debt Service Coverage Ratio is less than 1.10
	Requires Review - High Risk:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Debt Service Coverage Ratio is less than 0.90

Appendix B: Community Charter School Fiscal Dashboard

Charter School: Community Charter
Report as of: 2011

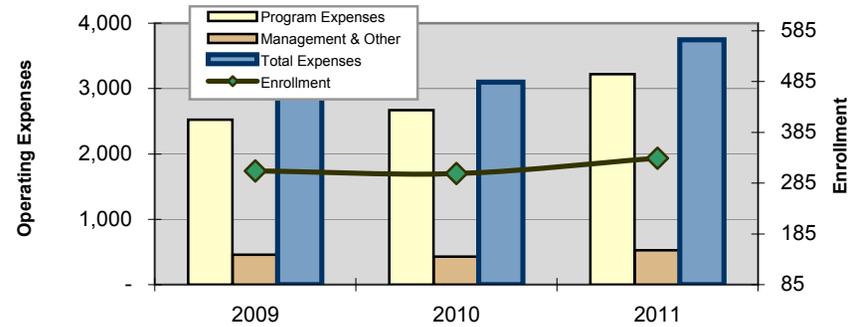
(\$'s in thousands)

Revenues, Expenses & Change in Net Assets



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-over-year basis.

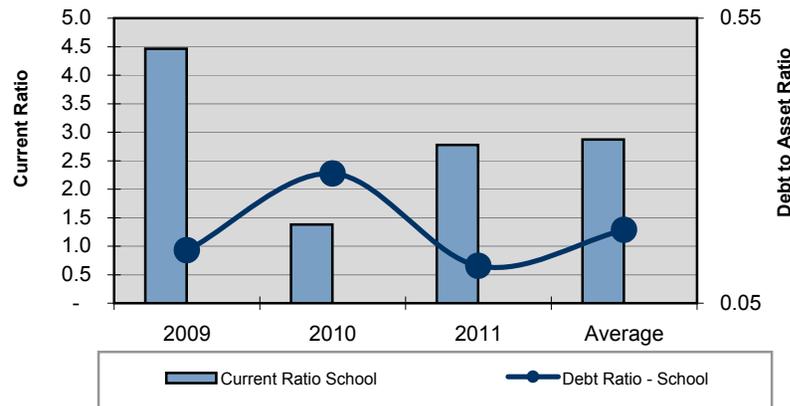
Enrollment vs. Operating Expenses



This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern.

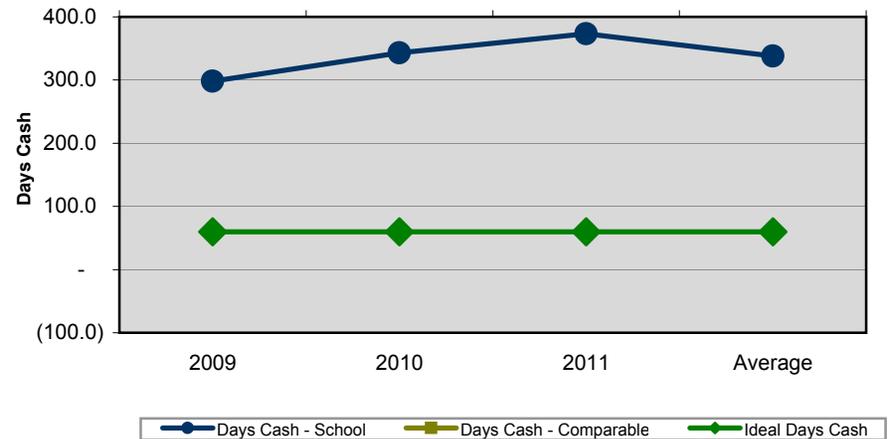
Current Ratio / Debt to Asset Ratio

CURRENT RATIO - Risk = Low > 1.1 / Medium 0.9 - 1.1 / High < 0.9
 DEBT TO ASSET RATIO - Risk = Low < 0.90 / Medium 0.9 - 1.0 / High > 1.0



Current Ratio is a measure of operational efficiency and short-term financial health. Debt to Asset indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets.

Days Cash



Unrestricted days cash on hand indicates how many days a school can pay its expenses without another inflow of cash.