

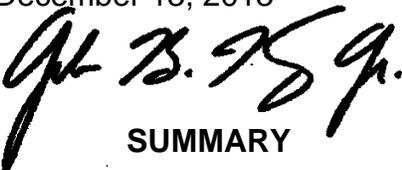


THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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

DATE: December 13, 2013

AUTHORIZATION(S):


SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

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

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

Proposed Handling

This issue will be before the Regents P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at the December 2013 Regents meeting.

Procedural History

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

Background Information

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

Article 56 of the Education Law, and that the charters be extended for the terms indicated. The letter from the NYCDOE Chancellor submitting the proposed renewal charters to the Board of Regents¹ and the Summary of the NYCDOE's 2013 Renewal Recommendation Report for each school are attached to this item. Links to the full Renewal Reports are provided after the name of each school below:

Four and ½ year Renewals²:

- Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/93E1498F-0FA7-4AE4-B149-D8CECF646414/0/ConeyIslandPrepRenewalReport201314FINAL.pdf>
- The Equality Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/685B51DF-6BFD-4E9F-86BA-12DF3EA609D8/0/EqualityRenewalReportFinal.pdf>

Three and ½ year Renewals³:

- Brownsville Ascend Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/9C7B6B74-05BC-403E-B08F-10DCE9DF6CB7/0/BrownsvilleAscend.pdf>
- Explore Empower Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/BE6A05C1-CA55-4A49-A687-C8DADC38FFF8/0/EmpowerRenewalReport201314FINAL.pdf>
- Growing Up Green Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/A0FEF2E1-7E47-4B5C-AD17-58FED00F40A7/0/GUGCSRRenewalReport201314FINAL.pdf>
- Summit Academy Charter School
<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/AEBAE73D-A35B-4371-890C-C3B7D5794754/0/SummitRenewalReport201314FINAL.pdf>

¹ The letter from the NYCDOE Chancellor also includes renewal recommendations for one school that is not before the Regents for action this month. A renewal recommendation for that school will be brought to the Regents for action at a future meeting of the Board of Regents.

² These renewals are considered full-term renewals. However, in order to align the expiration of the renewal charter terms with the school year and avoid future mid-year charter expirations, the Chancellor of the NYC DOE is recommending 4 ½ year charter renewal terms for these schools rather than full 5 year renewal terms.

³ In order to align the expiration of the renewal charter term with the school year and avoid future mid-year charter expirations, and, in order to give these schools renewals terms that will encompass three full academic years, the Chancellor of the NYCDOE is recommending 3 ½ year charter renewal terms for these schools.

Six-month Renewal to Complete the Current School Year:

- Fahari Academy Charter School

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/66B5B563-A696-4F41-AB4F-8BCAD15ACF22/0/FahariRenewalReport201314FINAL.pdf>

Fahari Academy Charter School's current charter expires on December 15, 2013. The Chancellor of the NYCDOE is recommending a short-term renewal until June 30, 2014. The students at Fahari Academy Charter School would not be best served by a mid-year closure of the school when the current charter expires. A short-term renewal of the charter will permit the school to operate with a valid charter for the remainder of the current year and provide for an orderly closure.

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2018.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of **The Equality Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2018.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Brownsville Ascend Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2017.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Explore Empower Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2017.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Growing Up Green Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2017.

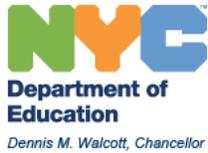
VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed charter school: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Summit Academy Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2017.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approves and issues the renewal charter of the **Fahari Academy Charter School** as proposed by the Chancellor of the City School District of New York, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including June 30, 2014.

Timetable for Implementation

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

Attachments



December 12, 2013

John B. King Jr.
Commissioner of Education
The State Education Department
The University of the State of New York
Albany, NY 12234

Commissioner King,

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) will consider the renewal applications of charters from 16 public charter schools in New York City. Of the 16 charter schools, 12 schools have charters that expire before the end of the school year and 4 schools have charters that will expire by mid-September 2014.

There are five charters that expire in December 2013 and three charters that expire in January 2014; the below comprises the NYC DOE's recommendations for these eight schools.

The Chancellor recommends that the following schools be granted a full term renewal.

1. Coney Island Preparatory Charter School, NYC District 21 (with term starting December 16, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2018)
 - o Currently serving grades 5-9 with 450 students, the school is also approved to grow as planned to serve grades 5-12 and to expand to serve grades K-4, ultimately serving a total of 948 students.
2. The Equality Charter School, NYC District 11 (with term starting January 13, 2014 and expiring June 30, 2018)
 - o Currently serving grades 6-8 with 234 students, the school is also approved to expand to serve grades 9-12, ultimately serving 564 students.

The Chancellor recommends that the following schools be granted short term renewals.

3. Explore Empower Charter School, NYC District 17 (with term starting December 16, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2017)
 - o Currently serving grades K-6 with 372 students, the school is also approved to grow as planned to serve grades K-8, ultimately serving a total of 540 students.
4. Summit Academy Charter School, NYC District 15 (with term starting December 16, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2017)
 - o Currently serving grades 6-10 with 291 students (originally approved to serve 444), the school is also approved to grow as planned to serve grades 6-12, with a revised enrollment of 391 students.
5. Growing Up Green Charter School, NYC District 30 (with term starting December 16, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2017)
 - o Currently serving grades K-5 with 504 students, the school is also approved to expand to serve grades 6-8, ultimately serving 756 students in grades K-8.
6. Brownsville Ascend Charter School, NYC District 23 (with term starting January 13, 2014 and expiring June 30, 2017)
 - o Currently serving grades K-6 with 665 students, the school is also approved to grow as planned to serve grades K-8, ultimately serving a total of 1,004 students.

The Chancellor recommends that the following school be a granted short term renewal, with the term starting January 13, 2014 and expiring June 30, 2015.

7. Hebrew Language Academy Charter School, NYC District 22
 - Currently serving grades K-5 with 473 students, the school has withdrawn a request to expand, but may reapply during the next charter term.

The Chancellor is denying the renewal application for the following school, and requests that the Board of Regents grant a six-month term starting December 16, 2013 and expiring June 30, 2014 to enable the school to continue to operate through this academic year

8. Fahari Academy Charter School, NYC District 17
 - Currently serving grades 5-8 with 409 students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saskia', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Saskia Levy Thompson
Deputy Chancellor for Portfolio Planning
New York City Department of Education

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Josh Wolfe
School Leader	Jacob Mnookin, Executive Director
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 21
Physical Address, public	501 West Avenue, Room 300, Brooklyn 11224
Physical Address, private	294 Avenue T Brooklyn, 11223
Facility	Public and Private
School Opened For Instruction	2009
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	12/15/2013
Maximum Grade Levels / Authorized Enrollment at Expiry Date	5-9/450
Proposed Charter Term	5 years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date	K-12/948

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	A	A	B
Student Progress	-	A	A	C
Student Performance	-	A	A	A
School Environment	-	A	A	A
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	8.0	4.3	5.3

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School	41.9%	49.7%	50.9%	26.3%
CSD 21	54.4%	56.8%	58.7%	37.9%
Difference from CSD 21	-12.5	-7.1	-7.8	-11.6
NYC	46.2%	46.3%	46.9%	25.7%
Difference from NYC	-4.3	3.4	4.0	0.6
New York State	52.5%	54.8%	55.2%	31.2%
Difference from New York State	-10.6	-5.1	-4.3	-4.9

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School	75.6%	79.1%	81.5%	39.6%
CSD 21	68.8%	72.7%	75.6%	43.5%
Difference from CSD 21	6.8	6.4	5.9	-3.9
NYC	59.7%	59.5%	60.6%	27.3%
Difference from NYC	15.9	19.6	20.9	12.3
New York State	64.6%	64.6%	65.7%	28.9%
Difference from New York State	11.0	14.5	15.8	10.7

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

Academic Goal Analysis (based on School's submission)					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	3	7	9	3	22
# Met	2	4	5	1	12
# Partially Met	0	0	0	0	0
# Not Met	1	3	4	2	10
% Met	67%	57%	56%	33%	55%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Not Met	33%	43%	44%	67%	45%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Coney Island Preparatory Public Charter School (CIPPCS) has demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

The school's mission is rooted in the belief that all students will master the skills and content necessary for success in college and the career of their choice. The school provides each student the opportunity to participate in advisory group, enrichment classes, college trips and nonfiction exhibition.

CIPPCS entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. Therefore, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has three years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at CIPPCS. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and assess student progress student progress, student performance, and school environment. Progress Report scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

The primary objective of charter schools, in accordance with the NY State Charter Schools Act of 1998, is to improve student learning and achievement. CIPPCS has made notable progress in fulfilling its primary obligation.

The school has shown remarkable success in the first years of its charter term. In its first two years of operation, CIPPCS maintained a stellar academic record. CIPPCS received A grades for every rated section of the Progress Report, ranking CIPPCS in the top 7% of all middle schools citywide both years. In 2012-2013, CIPPCS maintained this high performance trend, and received an A on both student performance and school environment sub-sections.

For all three years of the school's graded progress reports, and indeed for all four years that CIPPCS has testing results, the school ranked in the top 30% of all middle schools in the city in ELA proficiency and in the top 20% of all middle schools in the city for math proficiency..

On the most recent progress report, CIPPCS earned a C grade on the progress sub-section and saw a decrease in the overall progress report grade. Median adjusted growth percentiles¹ in both ELA and math are the main metrics in the Progress section, and the school did not perform as well relative to its peer schools and in the city in 2012-2013 as compared to 2011-2012.

While CIPPCS saw a decrease in overall proficiency in this most recent year, CIPPCS has consistently demonstrated strong performance since its inception, which is evidenced by the school's consecutive A's in student performance. The school's math proficiency rate this year ranked them in the top 17% of all middle schools citywide. Similarly, its ELA proficiency ranked the school among the top 25% of all middle schools citywide. Despite the fact that its ELA proficiency decreased from the prior year, the school's citywide rank increased respective to ELA proficiency, from the top 30% of all middle schools citywide to the top 25% in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

Though the school's proficiency levels did not increase from 2011-12 to 2012-13, over the last four years CIPPCS's has been in the top 26% of middle schools citywide in terms of ELA proficiency

¹ This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

and in the top 17% of all middle schools citywide in terms of math proficiency. Compared to its Community School District (CSD), CIPPCS outperformed CSD 21 in math in every year but the last year. Over the last four years, CIPPCS' math proficiency was above the district average in two years and below the district average in the other two years. .

It is important to note that CIPPCS serves a higher population of students who receive Free and Reduced Lunch as well as higher number of Students with Disabilities as compared to its CSD. Therefore, it is important to compare its performance relative to their peer schools, in addition to their district. To that end, CIPPCS is peered with the 40 other middle schools across the city that have student populations that are most similar across every student characteristic. When compared to their peer schools, CIPPCS is in the top 8% of schools in terms of ELA proficiency and in the top 3% of schools in terms of math proficiency for the last four years.

Although CIPPCS showed less progress on the most recent progress report, the absolute performance of CIPPCS, when compared to the city, the district and its peer schools, shows that students at the school are performing well, and the school is getting these results while serving higher proportions of challenging populations than the CSD overall.

Schools receive additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for showing exceptional progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. In 2012-2013, the school earned additional points based on the 16% of students in Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) placements that met proficiency in math, placing the school in the 90th percentile relative to middle schools citywide. The school also earned additional points for the 23% of students receiving Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS) that met proficiency in math, placing the school in the 92nd percentile relative to middle schools citywide.

Further, CIPPCS is successfully preparing its students for high school. In 2012-2013, the school had 86% of eighth graders earning high school credit, which was the highest percentage in the district and places the school in the top 5% of schools in the city for its percentage of 8th graders earning high school credit.

During the CIPPCS charter term, the NYC DOE conducted annual site visits in the spring of 2010 and 2011. The reviewers cited CIPPCS' consistent approach to instruction and planning and use of rigorous assessment systems to monitor student progress which incorporates professional Data Days and provides multiple opportunities for struggling students to receive academic assistance. The reviewers also noted that the school established a strong culture that promotes student progress and reinforces a positive learning environment for students.²

The NYC DOE also notes that CIPPCS has a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. The school provides a responsive education model that primarily uses a co-teaching instructional approach that has two-three teachers providing instruction in a class including Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) in the 5th, 6th and 7th grade in the Special Education program.

CIPPCS identifies itself as a "Direct Instruction-Group Practice-Individual Practice Model" in reading, math, science, and social studies. The school incorporates the Writers Workshop model in development of strong writing skills of students. The school is committed to implementing varied instructional methods and techniques as appropriate and to best fit the needs of its students. To facilitate learning for students with disabilities and at-risk students, CIPPCS has incorporated a daily intervention block for additional academic assistance.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

CIPPCS is a fiscally sound and viable organization.

² Coney Island Prep Public Charter School Annual Site Visit Reports, 2010, 2011.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has nine members, which is aligned to the Board's bylaws. The Board has demonstrated effective oversight over the school as evidenced by regular updates to the Board on academic progress, well established lines of accountability and active committees.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture. In 2010, the school received the highest level of satisfaction on all four sections of their first NYC DOE School Survey: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety & Respect. On all subsequent NYC DOE School Surveys, the school has shown consistency with its scores, always scoring at least Well Above Average and Above Average" on all sections.

As it pertains to charter goals, the school partially met its goals for attendance and enrollment, with the school meeting its goals in all years except for 2011-12.

Financially, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices. There were no material weaknesses noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012 or 2012-13 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, CIPPCS has been compliant with applicable laws and regulations, with the exception of teacher certification. Currently, the school is out of compliance with New York State Charter Schools Act Section §2854. A school can have no more than 5 teachers or 30% of the teaching staff uncertified, whichever number is lower. As of October 2013, twenty-two of thirty-nine teachers are certified.

The Board has been compliant with applicable laws and regulations.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

CIPPCS was planned as a five through twelve school, serving both middle and high school grades. Upon receiving their first charter, the school was approved to serve grades five through nine.

CIPPCS intends to grow to serve the remaining high school grades, while simultaneously expanding downward, beginning with Kindergarten and first grade. The school will eventually serve students in grades Kindergarten through twelve during its next charter period. At the end of the school's charter term, projected student enrollment will be 948 students.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a full-term five term charter renewal and approves a grade and enrollment expansion, with the following conditions:

- **CIPPCS must comply with NY State Charter Schools Act Section §2854**
 - The school must be in complete compliance with regard to teacher certification by the end of the first year of the next charter term.
- The school's elementary expansion is contingent on the NYC DOE receiving a succinct elementary grade expansion plan which should include, but not be limited to, descriptions on curriculum, staff, assessment and specific academic goals by January 31, 2014.
- The school must comply with IDEA and NY State guidelines and mandates regarding students with special needs in the first year of the next charter term.
 - The school must develop a pre-referral/referral process that includes parent notification. The school must report on progress toward IEP goals for all students with IEPs in a timely manner. The school must develop a tracking system for Related Services of students with IEPs. Additionally, each year, the school must conduct timely annual reviews of all IEPs.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	The Equality Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Ed Hubbard
School Leader	Caitlin Franco
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 11
Physical Address	4140 Hutchinson River Parkway East, Bronx 10475
Facility	Public
School Opened For Instruction	2009
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	1/12/2014
Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date	6-8 / 228 ¹
Proposed Charter Term	Five Years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date	6-12 / 546

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	C	A	B
Student Progress	-	C	A	B
Student Performance	-	C	A	C
School Environment	-	A	A	A
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	1.5	4.8	4.9

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
The Equality Charter School	31.6%	23.5%	29.9%	9.1%
CSD 11	30.1%	29.9%	34.7%	16.1%
Difference from CSD 11	1.5	-6.4	-4.8	-7.0
NYC	39.2%	38.3%	42.5%	24.8%
Difference from NYC	-7.6	-14.8	-12.6	-15.7
New York State	52.5%	54.8%	55.2%	31.2%
Difference from New York State	-20.9	-31.3	-25.3	-22.1

¹ The school was originally authorized for a first charter term enrollment of 414 students serving grades 6-11 but amended its charter in December 2010.

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
The Equality Charter School	49.2%	50.9%	69.6%	16.2%
CSD 11	40.4%	42.1%	47.9%	16.8%
Difference from CSD 11	8.8	8.8	21.7	-0.6
NYC	52.8%	54.7%	57.3%	26.5%
Difference from NYC	-3.6	-3.8	12.3	-10.3
New York State	64.6%	64.6%	65.7%	28.9%
Difference from New York State	-15.4	-13.7	3.9	-12.7

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

Academic Goal Analysis (based on School's submission)					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	2	8	8	4	22
# Met	0	1	3	1	5
# Partially Met	0	0	1	1	2
# Not Met	2	7	4	2	15
% Met	0%	13%	38%	25%	23%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	13%	25%	9%
% Not Met	100%	88%	50%	50%	68%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, The Equality Charter School (ECS) has demonstrated academic achievement and progress as demonstrated by its last two Progress Report grades. ECS received an A grade on the 2011-2012 New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Progress Report and a B grade on the 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report. The school also earned an A and B in the Student Progress subsection over the past two years. The overall percentile ranking on the Progress Report compared to middle schools citywide has placed it in the top 30% in the past two years and made ECS the top ranked middle school in its Community School District (CSD) in both 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure."

ECS's mission is to ensure that all its students achieve "academic and personal success through a nurturing scholar-centered approach." The school helps students develop Life Action Plans to meet their individualized goals and provides them with a rigorous academic program designed to prepare them for college and post-secondary education. ECS enrolls new students at all grade levels to fill available seats. Over the course of its first charter term, 20% or more of the total number of students enrolled have been Students with Disabilities (SwD).

The school entered the fifth year of its first term of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. The NYC DOE has four years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic performance of ECS. In addition, ECS has received three graded NYC DOE Middle School Progress Reports. Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D or F for Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment, with additional points for closing the achievement gap contributing to the overall grade. Grades are based on comparing school results in each category to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to school results citywide.

In its three graded Middle School Progress Reports, ECS earned an overall grade of C in 2010-2011, an A in 2011-2012, and a B in 2012-2013. Over the past two years, its overall Progress Report performance placed ECS in the top 30% or better of NYC middle schools, ranking in the 97th percentile in 2011-2012 and in the 74th percentile in 2012-2013. As noted above, based on its Progress Report performance, ECS was the top ranked middle school in its CSD in both 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

The Student Progress grade is the most heavily weighted of the Progress Report subsections, representing 60% of the total points available, and ECS's results during its first term have been positive. In its first Student Progress grade, ECS earned a C in 2010-2011, improving its grade to an A in 2011-2012 and then earning a B in 2012-2013, indicating success in moving its students forward academically based on the median adjusted growth percentiles² from the previous year, including a separate evaluation for improving students in the school's lowest third of performers.

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

ECS's Student Performance section grade³, over its initial charter term has been mixed to positive, with the school receiving a C in its first student performance grade in 2010-2011, an A in 2011-2012, but another C in 2012-2013.

Over the course of its first term, ECS has met about a quarter of its achievable academic charter goals, increasing its percentage of met goals in the second half of the term: 0% (of 2) in year one, 13% (of 8) in year two, 38% (of 8) in year three, and 25% (of 4) in year four⁴.

ECS has surpassed its CSD in overall proficiency for common tested grades in math in 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, and performed about on par with the CSD in 2012-2013. ECS has been below CSD 11 in overall proficiency in ELA each year but its first year of operation. However, it should be noted that the school's adjusted growth percentile performance on their most recent Progress Report ranked them in the 61st percentile of the district in ELA and 94th percentile in math.

Over the course of its first charter term, ECS has developed a responsive education program and a supportive learning environment. The NYC DOE has conducted four site visits during the term: Annual Visits in the Spring of 2010, 2011, and 2012, and as part of the renewal process, a two-day visit in the Fall of 2013. The school had implementation challenges in the school's first year and a half of operation and there were changes in school leadership and staff with the current school leader becoming principal in the spring of 2011. As indicated by the site visit report from May of 2011, considerable effort was put into restarting the school's learning environment and school culture and recommitting staff to the school's mission with the school launching a Response to Intervention (RTI) program, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, and providing staff development support that followed Doug Reeves' research in aligning taught and tested curriculum. In addition, the principal rebuilt the school leadership team during that spring and summer establishing a strong, scholar-centered culture of professional collaboration which resulted in improved Progress Report results and very high satisfaction results from parents, teachers and students—areas of the NYC School Survey that had been average or below, like Academic Expectations and Safety & Respect, increased to above or well above average.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Equality Charter School is a fiscally sound and viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has established and maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has nine members, which is more than the minimum number of five members and fewer than the maximum number of eleven members established by its bylaws. The Board has provided effective oversight of school management, making timely and successful decisions to improve leadership and to postpone expansion to high school grades until they were satisfied their middle school implementation was successful and stable. The Board maintains authority over school management, holding it accountable for performance and requiring a monthly Principal's Report from the school leader that details information related to the school's academics, operations, finances, and culture.

The school's Principal, Caitlin Franco, is a founding member of the staff who has been serving in her current position since February 2011 after the resignation of the school's founding principal.

³ This section is based on the percent of students at proficiency and the average student proficiency level (1.0 to 4.5) and how these measures compare to peer group and citywide results.

⁴ It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. The school's charter goals also include the school being deemed in good standing with state and federal accountability which the met in 2010-2011.

The School's Board is currently led by Board Chair Ed Hubbard and had been led by Ehri Mathurin from June 2010 through the start of 2013-2014 school year.

Over the course of its charter term, ECS has developed a stable school culture. The school's NYC School Survey results steadily improved over each of the past four school years, beginning in 2009-2010 with overall results of Average and Above Average and eventually reaching their 2012-2013 levels of Well Above Average to Above Average across all four satisfaction categories. During each of the past three school years, the school has received an A in the School Environment section of the NYC DOE Progress Report. The school has met its 95% average daily attendance goal for each of the past four school years.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 or 2012-2013 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

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

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

ECS was originally authorized to serve grades six through eleven in its initial term, but in 2010 the school submitted a charter revision proposal to delay expansion to serve ninth grade students until its second charter term. During its next charter term, the school will continue with its original growth plans and serve grades six through twelve by school year 2017-2018. The school plans to begin by offering ninth grade in the 2014-2015 school year and has secured a private facility to house the high school grades.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a full-term renewal and approves its continued growth to serve high school grades in the new charter term.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Brownsville Ascend Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Theodore J. Coburn
School Leader	Erica Murphy
Management Company (if applicable)	Ascend Learning, Inc.
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 23
Physical Address	1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn 11212
Facility	Private
School Opened For Instruction	2009
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	1/12/2014
Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date	K-5 /640
Proposed Charter Term	3 years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date	K-8 / 1,004

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	-	B	C
Student Progress	-	-	C	C
Student Performance	-	-	B	B
School Environment	-	-	B	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	-	1.7	0.3

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	-	-	59.3%	24.6%
CSD 23	-	-	28.5%	10.9%
Difference from CSD 23	-	-	30.8	13.7
NYC	-	-	49.0%	27.7%
Difference from NYC	-	-	10.3	-3.1
New York State	-	-	55.2%	31.2%
Difference from New York State	-	-	4.1	-6.6

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	-	-	73.6%	39.3%
CSD 23	-	-	30.0%	11.0%
Difference from CSD 23	-	-	43.6	28.3
NYC	-	-	57.0%	34.2%
Difference from NYC	-	-	16.6	5.1
New York State	-	-	65.7%	28.9%
Difference from New York State	-	-	7.9	10.4

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

Academic Goal Analysis					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	0	0	4	5	9
# Met	0	0	4	4	7
# Partially Met	0	0	0	1	0
# Not Met	0	0	0	0	2
% Met	N/A	N/A	100%	80%	89%
% Partially Met	N/A	N/A	0%	20%	11%
% Not Met	N/A	N/A	0%	0%	0%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Brownsville Ascend Charter School (Brownsville Ascend) has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress. Though Brownsville Ascend's New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) overall Progress Report grade dropped from a B in 2011-2012 to a C in 2012-13, the school continues to outperform its Community School District (CSD) 23 in the percentage of students proficient in both ELA and math in each grade that the school serves.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure".

The mission of Brownsville Ascend Charter School is to equip every student with the knowledge, confidence, and character to succeed in college and beyond. "[S]tudents will, from the earliest grades, steadily build a strong foundation of learning habits, critical thinking skills, and knowledge; excel academically in the middle and high schools; and graduate as confident young adults, prepared to succeed as college students, citizens, and leaders in their chosen fields." The school is a replication of Brooklyn Ascend Charter School, currently serving students in grades K-7. Both schools plan to grow to serve students in kindergarten through twelfth grades. In grades kindergarten through five, Brownsville Ascend uses a lead teacher in each classroom, but the number of teachers in each classroom varies depending on grade level. There are collaborative team teaching (ICT) classrooms in kindergarten, first and second grades. In grades three through five, associate teachers push in to classrooms to work with small groups and learning specialists pull students out to work on targeted skill-building.

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year and the NYC DOE has two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of Brownsville Ascend's students. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and are based on student progress, student performance, and school environment, with additional points for closing the achievement gap contributing to the overall grade. Scores are based on comparing results from one school to all schools citywide and also to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population based on economic needs, percent students with disabilities, percent Black/Hispanic students, and percent English language learners.

As part of the Ascend Learning Inc. network, Brownsville Ascend has prioritized student performance since the school opened in the 2009-2010 academic year. In 2011-2012, the first year that the school was eligible for a Progress Report, the school earned an overall grade of B. In 2012-2013, the school earned an overall grade of C on the Progress Report. Despite this drop in the overall grade, Brownsville Ascend was consistent in the Student Performance subsection, earning a B for both years.

Brownsville Ascend earned a C grade on the Student Progress subsection for both the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Reports. Median adjusted growth percentiles¹ are a major component for this subsection – in 2012-2013, Brownsville Ascend's English median adjusted

¹This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect averages differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

growth percentile placed it in the top 60% of elementary schools citywide; however, in math, the school ranked in the bottom 25% of elementary schools citywide.

The Student Performance section represents 25% of a school's total Progress Report score. Brownsville Ascend's percentage of students proficient in English and math surpassed CSD 23 in both subjects, and the New York City percentage in math, in both 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. At Brownsville Ascend, 24.6% of students are proficient in ELA, which ranks Brownsville Ascend in the top 40% of schools in the CSD. Brownsville Ascend's overall math proficiency is 39%, 28.3 percentage points higher than the CSD 23 average and 5.1 percentage points higher than the city average, which ranks the school in the top 1% of all elementary schools in the district and the top third in the city.

Over the course of the charter term, the school achieved 89% of its academic goals. In the most recent year, the school met 80% of its applicable charter goals.²

Over the course of its charter term, the NYC DOE has conducted five site visits: Annual Visits in the Spring of 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013, and as part of the renewal process, a two-day visit in the Fall of 2013. During the visits, reviewers noted that the school has a comprehensive assessment system and uses data to drive instruction and student achievement. The school uses internal assessments to measure the student progress. The assessments include those aligned to the school's SABIS curriculum, as well as STAR (a computer-adaptive literacy test) and Continuous Academic Tests.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Brownsville Ascend is a viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has seven members, more than the minimum number of five members delineated in the school's bylaws. As of July 1, 2013, the school's Board of Trustees moved to merge with the Boards of Brownsville Ascend Charter School, Bushwick Ascend Charter School and Brooklyn Ascend Charter School. At the time of this report, the Boards of all schools in the Ascend Learning, Inc. network are composed of the same seven members. The Board maintains authority over management, holding it accountable for performance as agreed under the charter contract, and requiring quarterly financial reports. The Board also ensures the delivery of services by Ascend Learning, Inc., (the schools' Charter Management Organization) as established in their contract with the management organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture. As indicated in the Annual Site Visit report from March 2012, the "school has established a goal-oriented environment that is safe, orderly, and focused on academic achievement" and "created a culture that is responsive to the needs of students' and teachers' development". However, the school has had leadership turnover over the course of the charter term, and is on its third school leader.

Brownsville Ascend has maintained strong grades for both years in the Learning Environment section of the Progress Report. In both years, Brownsville Ascend received a B on the Learning Environment section.

As it pertains to charter goals, Brownsville Ascend met enrollment goals as defined in its charter agreement. Further, Brownsville Ascend currently serves 665 students, which is within 15% of its

² It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. The school's charter goals also include the school being deemed in good standing with state and federal accountability which the met in 2010-2011.

full enrollment as defined in the school's charter agreement. In addition, the school has had a waitlist for each year that the school has been in existence. However, over the course of the charter term, Brownsville Ascend has fallen short of meeting the average daily attendance rate goal of at least 95%; it has only met this goal in the 2012-2013 school year.

Overall, the school is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations though the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, or 2011-2012 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, Brownsville Ascend has been compliant with some but not all applicable laws and regulations. The Board of Trustees for the school has been compliant with some but not all applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

Brownsville Ascend Charter School plans to continue its full grade expansion (K-12), growing from serving grades kindergarten through fifth, to serving kindergarten through tenth during its next charter term. The school also plans to increase the number of students it serves across grades by increasing class sizes by 2 to 3 students per class. The school's projected full grade span upon renewal and approval is kindergarten through twelfth, which it is expected to reach in 2018-2019.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a short-term renewal.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Explore Empower Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Tim Taylor
School Leader	Brian Ferreira, Principal
Management Company (if applicable)	Explore Schools Inc.
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 17
Physical Address	188 Rochester Ave., Brooklyn 11213
Facility	Public
School Opened For Instruction	2009
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	12/15/2013
Maximum Grade Levels / Authorized Enrollment at Expiry Date	K-6 / 372
Proposed Charter Term	3 years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Authorized Enrollment at New Expiry Date	K-8/ 540

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	B	C	B
Student Progress	-	C	F	C
Student Performance	-	B	A	B
School Environment	-	A	A	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	1.0	1.0	2.2

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Explore Empower Charter School	-	56.6%	47.9%	19.8%
CSD 17	-	43.3%	42.8%	18.4%
Difference from CSD 17	-	13.3	5.1	1.4
NYC	-	48.1%	50.6%	28.0%
Difference from NYC	-	8.5	-2.7	-8.2
New York State	-	55.9%	57.5%	30.5%
Difference from New York State	-	-1.9	-10	-10.5

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Explore Empower Charter School	-	61.1%	73.1%	36.5%
CSD 17	-	48.8%	50.7%	21.2%
Difference from CSD 17	-	12.3	22.4	15.3
NYC	-	54.8%	61.3%	32.7%
Difference from NYC	-	6.3	11.8	3.8
New York State		59.6%	65.2%	33.5%
Difference from New York State		-0.6	7.8	3.5

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

Academic Goal Analysis (based on School's submission)					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	0	6	9	4	19
# Met	0	3	4	3	10
# Partially Met	0	0	1	0	1
# Not Met	0	3	4	1	8
% Met	N/A	50%	44.4%	75%	53%
% Partially Met	N/A	0%	11.2%	0%	5%
% Not Met	N/A	50%	44.4%	25%	42%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Explore Empower Charter School (Explore Empower) has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure". Explore Empower is meeting both of these objectives.

The mission of Explore Empower is to provide students the academic skills and critical-thinking abilities they need to succeed in a college-preparatory high school. Explore Empower is a replication of Explore Charter School, a 500+ student kindergarten through eighth grade school. In grades kindergarten through five, Explore Empower employs a co-teacher model with two lead teachers per classroom designed to maintain a student to teacher ratio of 15 to 1.

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. Therefore, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has three years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Explore Empower. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and are based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

In the first year that the school was eligible for a graded progress report (2010-2011), the school earned an overall grade of B. In the most recent year (2012-2013), the school also earned an overall grade of B on the Progress Report, an improvement from an overall grade of a C in the 2011-2012 academic year. However, most notably, Explore Empower has not yet achieved higher than a C on the progress sub-section and in 2011-2012 received an F on the progress sub-section, the most heavily weighted section (60%) of the NYC DOE Progress Report.

The student progress sub-section of the progress report is calculated using student growth percentiles. In English, the school saw minimal improvement in its student growth percentiles, moving from ranking in the bottom 1% of schools citywide to the bottom 7% of schools in 2012-2013. Explore Empower has demonstrated growth with its students in math. Based on Explore Empower's median adjusted growth percentile in math, the school ranked in the bottom 2% of elementary schools citywide in 2011-2012.¹ This year, Explore Empower ranks in the top 14% of all elementary schools in the city, as it pertains to its median adjusted growth percentile in math. The school improved its student progress grade on the 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report from an F to a C.

Contributing to the student performance grade of the progress report is the school's results on the NYS tests in English and math. This section represents 25% of a school's total progress report score. In 2012-2013, Explore Empower continued to outperform NYC Community School District (CSD) 17 in both English Language Arts (ELA) and math, and also outperformed the New York City average by a small margin in math. At Explore Empower, 20% of students are proficient in

¹ This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

ELA, which ranks Explore Empower in the top 31% of elementary schools in the district. Explore Empower's overall math proficiency is 15.3 percentage points higher than the CSD 17 average, which places the school in the top 6% of all elementary schools in the district.

Schools receive additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for exceptional progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. On the 2012-2013 state assessments, 77% of the school's students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level of math growth for students in the lowest third citywide ranks Explore Empower in the top 4% of elementary schools citywide.

Over the course of the charter term, the school achieved 53% of academic goals. In the most recent year that data is available, the school met 75% of its applicable charter goals.²

Over the course of its charter term, the NYC DOE conducted five site visits: Annual Visits in the Spring of 2010, 2011, and 2012, and as part of the renewal process, two additional visits in the Spring of 2013 and the Fall of 2013. During the visits, reviewers noted that the school has a comprehensive assessment system and used data to identify areas of improvement. The school uses internal assessments to measure the student progress. The assessments include Achievement Network (ANet), Journeys, Fountas & Pinnell for ELA, and Terra Nova for progress toward peers nation-wide. The school also uses interim assessments in math that are created internally by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Explore Schools Inc.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Explore Empower is a fiscally sound and viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has six members, which is more than the minimum number of five members delineated in the school's bylaws. In 2010-2011, the school's Board of Trustees moved to share board members with Explore Charter School, which allowed the Board to provide more effective oversight of school management. The Board maintains authority over management, holding it accountable for performance as agreed under the charter contract, and requiring quarterly financial reports. The Board also ensures the delivery of services by Explore Schools, Inc., as established in their contract with the management organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture. As indicated in the Annual Site Visit report from March 2012, the school administration established a clear vision for the school and has established goals for academic expectations and priorities. The school continued to refine and make changes to the structure including the hiring of a new principal for the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

Explore Empower has maintained strong grades for all years in the Learning Environment section of the Progress Report. In 2012-2013, Explore Empower received a B, with As in both 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 on the Learning Environment section.

As it pertains to charter goals, Explore Empower met both attendance and enrollment goals as defined in its charter agreement. Explore Empower has an average attendance rate of 95%, which meets the average daily attendance rate goal of at least 95%. Further, Explore Empower currently

² It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. The school's charter goals also include the school being deemed in good standing with state and federal accountability which the met in 2010-2011.

serves 416 students, meaning that it is within 15% of its full enrollment as defined in the school's charter agreement. In addition, the school has had a waitlist for each year that the school has been in existence.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, or 2011-2012 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Laws and Regulations

Over the charter term, Explore Empower has been compliant with applicable laws and regulations. The Board of Trustees for the school has been compliant with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

Explore Empower will continue to its full grade span, moving from serving grades kindergarten through six, to serving kindergarten through eight during its next charter term. The school will continue to add new students across all grades dependent upon seat availability.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYCDOE recommends a short-term renewal.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Growing Up Green Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Jeff Mueller
School Leader	Matthew Greenberg, Head of School
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 30
Physical Address	39-37 28th St., Queens 11101
Facility	Private
School Opened For Instruction	2009
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	12/15/2013
Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date	K-5 / 504
Proposed Charter Term	3 Years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at New Expiry Date	K-8 / 756

I. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	-	C	C
Student Progress	-	-	F	C
Student Performance	-	-	C	C
School Environment	-	-	B	B
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	-	1.9	2.1

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Growing Up Green Charter School	-	-	54.9%	27.8%
CSD 30	-	-	53.0%	30.0%
Difference from CSD 30	-	-	1.9	-2.2
NYC	-	-	49.0%	27.7%
Difference from NYC	-	-	5.9	0.1
New York State	-	-	55.5%	30.7%
Difference from New York State	-	-	-0.5	-1.7

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Growing Up Green Charter School	-	-	51.9%	28.6%
CSD 30	-	-	63.4%	36.8%
Difference from CSD 30	-	-	-11.5	-8.2
NYC	-	-	57.0%	34.2%
Difference from NYC	-	-	-5.1	-5.6
New York State			65.2%	33.5%
Difference from New York State			-13.2	-3.5

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

Academic Goal Analysis (based on School's submission)					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	3	5	12	5	25
# Met	3	3	4	1	11
# Partially Met	0	2	4	0	6
# Not Met	0	0	4	4	8
% Met	100%	60%	33%	20%	44%
% Partially Met	0%	40%	33%	0%	24%
% Not Met	0%	0%	33%	80%	32%

II. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Growing up Green Charter School (GUGCS) has partially demonstrated academic achievement and success.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure". Explore Empower is meeting both of these objectives.

GUGCS's mission is to empower children to be conscious, contributing members of their community through a rigorous curriculum and an engaging green culture. Graduates of GUGCS will be prepared to attend high-performing schools where their interdisciplinary academic foundation, knowledge of sustainability, and strong sense of self sets them apart as leaders of the future.

GUGCS entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. The school has received two New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Progress Reports and has only two years of New York State (NYS) assessment data at the time of its renewal. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and assess student progress, student performance, and school environment. Progress Report scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

The primary objective of charter schools, in accordance with the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998, is to improve student learning and achievement. With only two years of assessment data, GUGCS has demonstrated partial progress towards fulfilling this primary obligation. The school has established a proficiency baseline on NYS assessments that is comparable to citywide proficiency levels in ELA and math but has not yet demonstrated consistent improvement in student learning based on the Progress Report.

While GUGCS received a C grade on the overall progress report in both 2011-12 and 2012-2013, the school demonstrated growth by improving from an F to a C grade on the progress sub-section on the 2012-2013 Progress Report. Progress is the most heavily weighted section of the Progress Report. This section of the progress report is calculated using student growth percentiles.

GUGCS outperformed the district and citywide proficiency averages in ELA for the 2011-2012 NY State Assessment. Further, GUGCS performed above the citywide average in ELA proficiency for both years in which the school has NYS assessment results. Based on GUGCS 2012-2013 ELA proficiency data, the school surpassed 62% of all elementary schools citywide. Math proficiency at GUGCS was lower than the citywide average. However, GUGCS students exhibited significant growth in math from the year prior. With a math Median Adjusted Growth Percentile¹ of 73%, GUGCS ranked in the top 15% of all elementary schools in the district for math growth, and in the top 19% of all elementary schools citywide. GUGCS is peered with the other 40 elementary schools across the city that have student populations that are most similar across every student characteristic. Importantly, GUGCS was in the top 25% of elementary schools in its peer group.

¹ This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

During its current charter term, the school received annual site visits from the NYC DOE in the spring of 2011 and 2012. The reviewers cited the school's comprehensive professional development program, a range of practices to involve families, and supportive instructional leadership. The school was also noted for establishing a learning environment that promotes and ensures high expectations.²

The NYC DOE also notes that GUGCS has a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. The school provides a responsive education model that primarily uses a co-teaching instructional approach that has two teachers providing instruction in a class including Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes. GUGCS utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to provide learning supports for at-risk students and students with disabilities.

While it is noted that GUGCS has demonstrated academic gains over the course of its charter term, as discussed above, the NYC DOE has some concerns about GUGCS decline in the percent of academic charter goals met. In the first year of its charter, GUGCS met 100% (3 of 3) of its applicable academic charter goals. For the most recent year that data is available, GUGCS met 20% (1 of 5) of its applicable academic charter goals. Over the two years that data is available for the charter term, GUGCS met or partially met seventeen of twenty-five (68%) of its applicable academic charter goals.³

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

GUGCS is a fiscally sound and viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has a partially developed its governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has five members, which is aligned to the Board's bylaws. Aside from not consistently having quorum at all of its meetings, the Board has demonstrated effective oversight over the school as evidenced by regular leadership updates on academic progress to the Board, well established lines of accountability, and active committees.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture. In 2010, the school received its first NYC DOE School Survey and received high levels of satisfaction on all four sections: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement and Safety & Respect. On all subsequent NYC DOE School Surveys, the school has shown consistency with its scores, with "Above Average" or "Well Above Average" results across all four sections each year, with only one "Average" result in one category in 2012-2013.

GUGCS received a B on the School Environment sub-section of the Progress Report in each year that the school received a Progress Report.

As it pertains to charter goals, GUGCS has met all of its enrollment goals, and continues to show progress toward meeting its attendance goal. While the school did not meet, in any year, its goal of 95% average student attendance, GUGCS has made progress every year towards that goal. In the most recent 2012-2013 school year, GUGCS was 1% short of meeting its attendance goal. In regards to enrollment, GUGCS met its enrollment goals in each year of its charter. Additionally, there is currently a waitlist of over 1,500 students, evidence that the school is in high demand.

² Growing Up Green Charter School Annual Site Visit Reports, 2011, 2012

³ It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute proficiency or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and Math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. The school's charter goals also include the school being deemed in good standing with state and federal accountability which the met in 2011-2012.

Financially, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices. There was no material weaknesses noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, GUGCS has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations but not others. The board has not been consistent with holding the required number of meetings and posting documents over the course of their charter.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

GUGCS has applied to expand to serve grades 6-8 in its next charter term, to realize the founders' original plans for the school. The school provided a rationale for an expansion, citing the desire to continue the school's mission into middle school, and defined a detailed middle school educational program. To further evidence its case for expansion, GUGCS cites high demand, with a 2013 waiting list of over 1,500 students.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYC DOE recommends a short term renewal and approval to expand to serve grades 6-8 in its next charter term.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Summit Academy Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Gene Moore
School Leader	Natasha Campbell, Executive Director Thomas Gordon, Principal
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 15
Physical Address	27 Huntington Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231
Facility	Public
School Opened For Instruction	2009-2010 School Year
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	12/15/2013
Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date	6-10 / 444 (currently serving 291)
Proposed Charter Term	3 years
Proposed Maximum Grade Levels / Authorized Enrollment at New Expiry Date	6-12/ 391

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	C	B	B
Student Progress	-	C	C	A
Student Performance	-	C	B	B
School Environment	-	A	C	D
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	1.0	4.1	3.3

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Summit Academy Charter School	17.8%	17.6%	20.0%	14.1%
CSD 15	45.8%	50.3%	51.1%	35.6%
Difference from CSD 15	-28.0	-32.7	-31.1	-21.5
NYC	40.1%	40.0%	42.5%	24.8%
Difference from NYC	-22.3	-22.4	-22.5	-10.7
New York State	54.2%	51.8%	52.8%	31.6%
Difference from New York State	-36.2	-32.8	-33.8	-17.6

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Summit Academy Charter School	38.6%	46.1%	60.4%	18.8%
CSD 15	59.8%	64.8%	65.2%	33.4%
Difference from CSD 15	-21.2	-18.7	-4.8	-14.6
NYC	53.0%	55.8%	57.3%	26.5%
Difference from NYC	-14.4	-9.7	3.1	-7.7
New York State	54.2%	51.8%	52.8%	31.6%
Difference from New York State	-36.2	-32.8	-33.8	-17.6

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

Credit Accumulation

% 1st-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Summit Academy Charter School	-	-	-	2012-2013
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	12.2%
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	0.0%
% 2nd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Summit Academy Charter School	-	-	-	-
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	-
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	-
% 3rd-Year Students Earning 10+ Credits				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Summit Academy Charter School	-	-	-	-
Peer Percent of Range	-	-	-	-
City Percent of Range	-	-	-	-

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

Academic Goal Analysis (based on School's submission)					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	5	10	10	4	24
# Met	0	1	0	1	2
# Partially Met	0	0	0	0	0
# Not Met	5	9	10	3	22
% Met	0%	10%	0%	25%	8%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Not Met	100%	90%	100%	75%	92%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Summit Academy Charter School (Summit Academy) has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." NYS English Language Arts (ELA) and math assessment data shows that Summit Academy has made little progress toward these objectives.

Summit Academy's mission is to bridge the gap between aspirations and realities by preparing students in grades six through twelve to gain acceptance to, excel in and graduate from college. Summit Academy established the following three pillars of success: mastery of core subjects, character building, and community leadership.

The school entered its fifth year of operation at the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. Therefore, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has four years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Summit Academy. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and are based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

On its first three NYC DOE Middle School Progress Reports, for its overall grade, Summit Academy earned a C, a B, and a B, in 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, respectively. (Schools receive an ungraded progress report in their first year serving students. Summit Academy received its first ungraded High School Progress Report for the 2012-2013 school year but will not receive a graded one until it has its first graduation class.) On the progress section, since 2010-2011, the school has improved, earning a C, a C, and then an A in each subsequent progress report. Summit similarly improved its student performance grade from a C in 2010-2011 to a B in both 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

The data shows some gains in the levels of proficiency in both ELA and math, closing the difference in proficiency between the school and Community School District (CSD) 15. In ELA, Summit Academy increased its proficiency between the years of 2010-11 to 2011-2012; in math, the school made gains in its proficiency rates from 2009-10 to 2011-12.

In terms of student progress, Summit Academy has demonstrated gains in the 2012-2013 school year, despite previous years of mediocre growth in ELA and steady growth in math, as indicated by the Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report. The school improved its Student Progress grade on the 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report from a C to an A. The main growth metrics in the Student Progress section are Median Adjusted Growth Percentiles¹. Summit increased its ELA Median Adjusted Growth Percentile by 21 points from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013. Based on Summit Academy's ELA Median Adjusted Growth Percentiles, the school ranked in the

¹ This measure calculates the median (middle) adjusted growth percentile of a school's eligible students. A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. A student's growth percentile is a number between 0 and 100, which represents the percentage of students with the same score on last year's test who scored the same or lower than the student on this year's test. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the Progress Report uses an adjusted growth percentile. Growth percentile adjustments are based on students' demographic characteristics and reflect average differences in growth compared to students with the same starting proficiency level. The Progress Report evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

top 17% of all middle schools citywide in 2012-2013, whereas it was in the bottom 5% of all middle schools in 2011-2012. Similarly, Summit Academy's Math Median Adjusted Growth Percentiles increased slightly and placed the school in the top 6% of all middle schools citywide in 2012-2013 and in the top 11% of middle schools citywide in 2011-2012.

As it pertains to applicable charter goals, Summit Academy met only 8% of its academic charter goals over the course of the four years that data is available for the charter term. Summit Academy did show improvement in the most recent year though, and met 25% of its goals.² For all of the years of its charter period, the school did not meet its goal of having students reach the 75th percentile on its internal assessments in reading and math.³ The school's charter goals include being deemed in good standing with state and federal accountability, which the school did not meet in 2011-2012 or in 2012-2013.

Further, the school has partially developed a responsive education program and supportive learning environment. In comparison to previous site visits, the 2012 annual visit revealed that the school had made some efforts in creating a responsive education program that included professional development of teachers and the use of data to improve instruction; however, the school is still not adequately meeting the needs of the most at-risk learners.⁴

This was evidenced by the following:

- Review of Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) files, correspondence with the school, and interviews confirmed that current copies of IEP documents for 12 students were unavailable on the day of the visit.
- The school reported that it has a list of names and mandated services for these students, but not the original IEPs.
- For students, in the 2013-2014 school year, whose IEPs indicate self-contained classes, which Summit Academy does not provide, due process letters, indicating that the students' parents have been informed and are in agreement with the programs and services being provided, were not available at the time of the visit.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Summit Academy is a fiscally sound and viable organization.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has partially developed its governance structure and organizational design. The Board currently has nine members, which is more than the minimum number of seven members outlined in the school's bylaws. The Board holds management accountable for performance as agreed under their evaluation plan, and requires monthly financial reports given by the Board's Finance Committee.

While the school's founder, Natasha Campbell, is still serving as Executive Director for the school, and as an ex-officio Board member, the school leadership has experienced significant turnover in the last two years. The founding principal, Shahara Jackson, left mid-year in the fourth year of the school's operation. For the remainder of that school-year, the school was led by two interim-acting co-principals. The school recently hired a new principal, Thomas Gordon, who was brought on in July 2013.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture. For the 2012 and 2013 school years, the school has received a C and a D, respectively, in the Learning Environment section of the NYC DOE Progress Report. The school received mixed

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

³ Summit Academy uses the Stanford 10 assessment to monitor student growth annually and has two charter goals related to this measure.

⁴ Summit Academy Charter School Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012, March 2012

results on the NYC School Survey over the charter term, with Average ratings across three out of four categories for the last two years. However, parent response rates for the NYC School Survey have fallen below the citywide average. In 2012-2013, the greatest percent of parents to date, 38%, responded to the survey. This falls below the citywide response rate of 54%.

As it pertains to related charter goals, Summit Academy did not meet its attendance goal of having an average daily attendance rate of at least 95% for three of the last four years (2009-2010: 94%; 2010-2011: 95%; 2011-2012: 92%; and 2012-2013: 94%). The school also failed to meet its enrollment goal, as defined in the school's charter agreement, for the last three years.

Financially, the school is in a position to meet near-term financial obligations and the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, or 2011-2012 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, the Board of Trustees for the school has been compliant with some applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract but not others.

Over the course of the charter term, Summit Academy has been compliant with applicable laws and regulations, with the exception of special education guidelines and mandates, and its annual enrollment per its charter agreement.

Based on the most recent visit, the school is out of compliance with students' IEPs. Since IEPs have not been reviewed, formalized progress reports regarding goals have not been done and shared with parents. In addition, the school does not have in place a formalized Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to provide a pre-referral process or intervention for students with disabilities.

The school has also been out of compliance with its stated charter enrollment for the last three school years.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

Summit Academy will continue to expand to its full grade span, growing from grades six through ten, to serve students in grades six through twelve.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYC DOE recommends a short-term renewal, with a total authorized enrollment for grades 6-12 of 391 students, with the following conditions:

- As indicated in the charter agreement between the NYC DOE and Summit Academy, the school must have at least 85% of its authorized enrollment by BEDS Day each year.
- As it pertains to meeting the needs of the most at-risk students, Summit must:
 - comply with IDEA and NYS guidelines and mandates in the first year of the new charter term;
 - develop a pre-referral/referral process that includes parent notification;
 - report on progress toward IEP goals for all students with IEPs in a timely manner, and develop a tracking system for Related Services of students with IEPs;
 - conduct timely annual reviews of all IEPs.

Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Name of Charter School	Fahari Academy Charter School
Current Board Chair(s)	Jason Starr
School Leader	Stephanie Clagnaz, Principal
Management Company (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 17
Physical Address	72 Veronica Place, 4th Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11226
Facility	Public
School Opened For Instruction	2009-2010 School-Year (Planning year in 2008-2009)
Current Charter Term Expiry Date	12/15/2013
Maximum Grade Levels / Enrollment at Expiry Date	5-8 / 409 (school was chartered for 5-9)
Proposed Charter Term	Non-renewal
Proposed Maximum Grade / Enrollment at New Expiry Date	N/A

II. Overview of School-Specific Data:

Performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report

Progress Report Grade	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Overall Grade	-	D	C	F
Student Progress	-	F	D	F
Student Performance	-	D	C	F
School Environment	-	B	B	C
College and Career Readiness			-	-
Closing the Achievement Gap Points	-	1.0	2.5	2.7

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

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

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Fahari Academy Charter School	36.4%	34.1%	41.1%	7.5%
CSD 17	38.7%	39.5%	38.9%	16.7%
Difference from CSD 17	-2.3	-5.4	2.2	-9.2
NYC	46.2%	46.3%	46.9%	25.7%
Difference from NYC	-9.8	-12.2	-5.8	-18.2
New York State	52.5%	54.8%	55.2%	31.2%
Difference from New York State	-16.1	-20.7	-14.1	-23.7

% Proficient in Math				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Fahari Academy Charter School	48.9%	45.7%	61.7%	10.6%
CSD 17	47.9%	48.6%	50.8%	14.7%
Difference from CSD 17	1.0	-2.9	10.9	-4.1
NYC	59.7%	59.5%	60.6%	27.3%
Difference from NYC	-10.8	-13.8	1.1	-16.7
New York State	64.6%	64.6%	65.7%	28.9%
Difference from New York State	-15.7	-18.9	-4.0	-18.3

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

Academic Goal Analysis					
	1st Year 2009-2010	2nd Year 2010-2011	3rd year 2011-2012	4th Year 2012-2013	Cumulative 4 Year Total
Total Achievable Academic Goals	3	7	9	4	23
# Met	1	0	6	1	8
# Partially Met	0	0	0	0	0
# Not Met	2	7	3	3	15
% Met	33%	0%	67%	25%	35%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Not Met	67%	100%	33%	75%	65%

III. Rationale for Recommendation

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, Fahari Academy Charter School (Fahari) has not demonstrated academic achievement or progress.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include, "(a) Improve student learning and achievement;" and "(b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure." Data available for Fahari indicate that the school has not made progress towards meeting this objective.

Fahari's mission is to educate, support, challenge and train scholars in Brooklyn's Flatbush neighborhood for success in college. The school was founded with the goal of providing the Flatbush neighborhood with a quality college preparatory option. Fahari is a Swahili word which means pride and helps define the school's core values: Perseverance, Respect, Independence, Discipline and Excellence. All scholars are expected to exemplify these values daily.

The school entered its fifth year of operation with the start of the 2013-2014 academic year. Therefore, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has four years of New York State (NYS) assessment data to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Fahari. NYC DOE Progress Reports grade each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and are based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores are based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of up to 40 schools with the most similar student population and to all schools citywide.

Fahari has consistently struggled with poor performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report. On its 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report, Fahari received an F grade in all sections except School Environment, for which they received a C grade. This ranks Fahari in the bottom 1% of all middle schools citywide. On its prior two NYC DOE Progress Reports, as its Overall Grade, the school earned a D, and C, in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, respectively. (Schools receive an ungraded progress report in their first year serving students.)

The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report is the most heavily weighted of all sections; it constitutes 60% of a school's grade. The grade in this section is based on median adjusted growth percentiles¹, which are a measure of how much a school's students perform on state tests relative to other students with the same prior score. Over the course of the charter term, the school did not fare well in this section; earning an F, a D, and an F in 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013, respectively.

In 2012-2013, Fahari's English Median Adjusted Growth Percentile was 49%, placing the school in the bottom 2% of middle schools citywide. Fahari's Math Median Adjusted Growth Percentile of 37% placed it in the bottom 1% of middle schools citywide. Additionally, all other middle schools in Community School District (CSD) 17 and in Fahari's peer group had a median adjusted growth percentile greater than Fahari's.

The Student Performance grade is based on results on the state tests in English and math, and core course pass rates, representing 25% of a school's total Progress Report score. Over the charter term, Fahari's Performance section grades were a D, a C, and an F for the years 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, respectively. In 2012-2013, only 10.6% of Fahari's students were proficient in math. Fahari's math proficiency was higher than 45% of middle schools citywide. However, when compared to middle schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools); Fahari outperformed only 18% of similar schools. In 2012-2013, only 7.5% of Fahari's students demonstrated proficiency in state tests in English. With this level of proficiency, Fahari outperformed just 25% of middle schools citywide. Additionally, Fahari only outperformed 3% of its peer schools.

Schools receive additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. On the 2012-2013 state assessments, 35% of Fahari's students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level places Fahari in the bottom 4% of middle schools citywide. Similarly, only 35% of students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in English that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting English scores; this result places Fahari in the bottom 2% of all middle schools citywide.

Over the four years that data is available for the charter term, Fahari has met only 35% of its academic charter goals. Fahari met none of its performance goals in its most recent year.² It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% absolute

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

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

proficiency³. This should have theoretically improved a school's percentage of goals met because 5 of 10 charter goals for the current year were not applicable. However, Fahari's percentage of goals met actually dropped to 25%.

The school has shown only mixed evidence of a developed responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Reports from past NYC DOE visits to the school indicate that in the first two years of the charter, the school provided a safe environment, conducive to learning. In a visit to the school in May 2011, reviewers noted that the school, "has high academic expectations and employs strategies for the full range of students" and in March 2012, that the "school dedicates significant resources to teaching and learning". The school also uses a co-teaching model for classrooms with at-risk learners. However, the staff turnover at the school made it difficult to establish a culture to meet students' needs. For example, as noted in the May 2011 site visit report, "the loss of the Science teacher midyear made it necessary to replace Science with Science Fiction."⁴ The school made improvements and 85% percent of eighth-grade students passed the Living Environment Regents examination at the end of the 2012-2013 school year.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

Fahari Academy Charter School is a fiscally sound, but only partially viable organization.

At many points during the charter term, the Board of Trustees has had only a partially developed governance structure and organizational design. Fahari's governance has suffered from high turnover of its Board of Trustees members, as well as its school leadership team.

The Board has experienced complete turnover over the course of the charter term. None of the founding Board members remain. Jason Starr, the Board's third Chair during the charter term, assumed this position in July 2012. He was preceded by Dirk Tillotson, who resigned to take on the role of Executive Director of the school. The Board has not provided effective oversight of school management as demonstrated by the school's failure to show evidence of academic success, stable school culture, and stable school leadership.

School leadership has also experienced complete turnover in the last two years, with the founding school Executive Director, Catina Venning, leaving during the school's third year of operation. An interim leadership team was brought in, which included Dirk Tillotson, former Board Chair as Interim Acting Executive Director, and Glenn Liebeck and Joanne Falinski as interim acting academic leaders. They remained with the school until the end of the fourth year of operation (June 2013). The Board of Trustees then hired current principal, Stephanie Clagnaz, in May 2013, who fully transitioned into the role over the summer of 2013. As reported by the school, the title of Executive Director was discontinued in May 2012 in favor of Principal, however, the school did not request a revision to its charter to reflect this and NYC DOE was not informed of this change for the current charter term.

Fahari has also struggled with several operational problems. Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has not developed a stable school culture. The school received a Notice of Deficiency in August 2011, after a NYC DOE site visit conducted on May 16, 2011 raised concerns about the school's ability to hire and retain quality staff, maintain student enrollment, maintain an appropriate behavior management system, and effectively serve its students. In August 2012, the school received a Notice of Probation, which is described in more detail in Section C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations, below.

Although in its first year, the school's results on the NYC School Survey were Above Average; for academic years 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, the results have been consistently low,

³ For more information on Fahari's student achievement, please see Appendix A

⁴ Fahari Academy Charter School Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012, March 2012

with most categories falling in the Below Average range. For the last three years, the school has received two Bs and one C in the Learning Environment section of the NYC DOE Progress Report.

The school has also experienced high teacher rates over the course of its charter. As indicated by information submitted by the school, instructional turnover rates for the last 4 years have been at 40% and above (2009-2010: 43%; 2010-2011: 73%; 2011-2012: 40%; 2012-2013: 44%.⁵ The school retained 87.5% of staff from October 1, 2013 through the start of the 2013-2014 school year. The school's teaching staff voted to unionize in October 2011, and was recognized as a bargaining unit by the school's Board in November 2011.

While the school met its attendance goal of having an average daily attendance rate of at least 92%, Fahari failed to meet its goal of maintaining at least 85% of its authorized enrollment number from November 2010 through March 2011. Over the course of the year, the average enrollment was 83%.

Financially, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on its current practices. There was no material weakness noted in the 2009-2010, 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 independent annual financial audits.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Laws and Regulations

Over the course of the charter term, Fahari did not comply with all applicable laws and regulations; in particular, with teacher certification and chartered student enrollment requirements.

After a site visit to the school in the 2011-2012 school year, the NYC DOE issued the Fahari Board of Trustees a Notice of Probation on August 27, 2012. The visit revealed that the school was not in full compliance with the NYS Charter Schools Act, which requires that charter schools employ "at least 70% certified teaching staff and establish procedures for conducting criminal history checks of individuals who have regular access to the students." At the site visit in March 2012, NYC DOE discovered that many instructional staff had joined Fahari midway through the year, yet Fahari had not provided NYC DOE with an updated roster with certification and fingerprint clearance.⁶ By August of 2012, the NYC DOE had still not received updated rosters to indicate that the school was in compliance.

Further, over the 2011-2012 academic year, the school's enrollment averaged just 83% of its authorized student enrollment. This meant that Fahari, was out of compliance with Section 2.2 of its Charter Agreement with the NYC DOE, which requires that the school maintain at least 85% of its authorized enrollment. Fahari was therefore also out of compliance with its charter application, which established a 90% student retention goal for that academic year. (Additionally, according to information submitted by the school, the school did not meet the 90% student retention goal for the 2009-2010 or 2010-2011 academic years)

Additionally, the Notice of Probation expressed concerns about the school's suspension rate, as well as concerns about its ability to reach its approved academic goals. According to a document submitted by the school in March 2012, between September 2011⁷ and March 2012, the school had 91 out-of-school suspensions and 8 in-school suspensions, out of a total student body of only 225 students. Lastly, the school was out of compliance with Fahari's bylaws, which requires that the school have at least five voting members on the Board of Trustees. At the start of the 2012-2013 school year, the board had only four voting members.

The Board and school leadership responded and implemented a corrective action plan. Upon monitoring and document reviews by the NYC DOE, the Notice of Probation was allowed to expire

⁵ Self-reported by school in May 2012; 2012-13 CSAS Renewal Template, Staff Sheet V, Row 12, Columns D-G

⁶ Fahari Academy Charter School Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012, March 2012

⁷ Self-reported by the school, FACS ASV School Visit Data Collection 3.22.12

on August 31, 2013. However as part of the renewal review process the NYC DOE is continuing to monitor Fahari in the areas cited in the Notice.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

The original terms of Fahari's current charter included high school grades. Fahari delayed expansion until both programmatic capacity and operational capacity were increased. The school proposes to begin serving 9th grade in the 2017-2018 school year.

For the aforementioned reasons, the NYC DOE is denying Fahari's renewal application.