




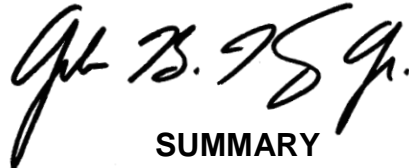
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Ken Slentz 

SUBJECT: Charter Schools: Renewal of a Charter School Authorized by the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of Buffalo: Westminster Community Charter School

DATE: May 12, 2014

AUTHORIZATION(S): 
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve the proposed renewal charter for Westminster Community Charter School which is authorized by the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of Buffalo ("Buffalo BOE")?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

Proposed Handling

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

Procedural History

The Buffalo BOE approved a two-year renewal for Westminster Community Charter School and submitted that proposed renewal charter to the Regents for approval and issuance of the renewal charter as required by Article 56 of the Education Law, The New York State Charter School Statute.

Background Information

The chart below provides some information about Westminster Community Charter School:

Name of Charter School	Westminster Community Charter School
District of Location	Buffalo City School District
Facilities	24 Westminster Avenue, Buffalo, NY
Terms and Date of Charter	Initial Term: July 2004 – June 2009 1 st Renewal: July 2009 – June 2014
Current Grade(s) and Approved Enrollment	Grades K-8, 550 students
Current Year of Operation	2013-2014: 10 th year of instruction
Management Company	N/A
Other Partner(s)	M&T Bank

In 2004, the Buffalo BOE, in its capacity as a charter school authorizer under Article 56 of the Education Law, approved the initial five-year charter for Westminster Community Charter School as a K-8 conversion charter school, and a charter was approved and issued by the Board of Regents. The School commenced instruction as a charter school in September 2004. It currently serves 550 students in grades K-8. The Buffalo BOE approved a five-year renewal charter in 2009 which was approved and issued by the Board of Regents. That charter expires on June 30, 2014.

In January 2014, citing some concerns about student performance at the School, the Buffalo BOE approved a two-year renewal charter for Westminster Community Charter School and in May 2014, submitted that proposed renewal charter to the Regents for approval and issuance of the renewal charter. The proposed renewal term is a two-year term expiring on June 30, 2016. The Buffalo BOE did not approve the School's request for permission to expand maximum enrollment from 550 students to 575 students. The letter from the President of the Buffalo BOE submitting the proposed renewal charter to the Board of Regents and Buffalo BOE's Renewal Report for Westminster Community Charter School are attached to this item. The Renewal Report includes additional information and rationale for the short-term charter renewal proposed by the Buffalo BOE.

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that **Westminster Community Charter School** authorized by the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of Buffalo: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of this article; and (4) granting the application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board

of Regents therefore approves the renewal application of Westminster Community Charter School as proposed by the Board of Education of the City School District of Buffalo and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a two-year term up through and including June 30, 2016.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action is effective immediately.

Attachment



DR. PAMELA C. BROWN
Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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February 26, 2014

Bill Clarke
Director, Charter School Office and School Turnaround
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Ave.
SN EB Mezzanine
Albany, New York 12234

Mr. Clarke,

I am pleased to submit the following documents to the Regents in support of a two-year renewal for Westminster Community Charter School:

- Renewal Application – submitted by Westminster Community Charter School in August 2013
- Approved Board of Education Recommendation for Renewal
- Charter Agreement
- 2013 Renewal Report

A public hearing was held on January 15, 2013. There were over ten speakers who spoke on behalf of Westminster Community Charter School and over 100 people in attendance. All speakers spoke in favor of renewal.

The District sees potential for academic growth based on the changes that have been implemented at Westminster Community Charter School. Under the current administrative team, there have been improvements in teacher supervision, increased focus on differentiation to meet the needs of the individual learner, and positive changes in school culture and climate. We believe that over the next charter term, those changes will lead to positive student gains.

We look forward to hearing back from you following the March Board of Regents meeting.

Sincerely,

Dr. Barbara A. Nevergold

Board Meeting Of: January 22, 2014		Presented to Committee: January 15, 2014	
Prepared By:	Angela Cullen	Division:	Office of School Leadership
Title of Agenda Item: Enterprise Charter School Charter Renewal			
Type of Item:	<input type="checkbox"/> Services Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Materials/Commodities Purchase	<input type="checkbox"/> Construction Project <input type="checkbox"/> Lease	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) Charter Renewal
Vendor:	NA		
Service Term:	NA		
Cost:	NA	Funding Source:	NA
If multi-year list, years and dollar amounts.			
Background Information, Description of the Need:	It is recommended that the Buffalo City School District Board of Education vote to approve a recommendation for a renewal for the Enterprise Charter School for a period of two years, expiring on June 30, 2016, at which time, the Buffalo City School District BOE as the chartering entity for Enterprise Charter School, will assess the School's progress at meeting performance benchmarks established for the school by the Buffalo City School District BOE and make a determination concerning renewal for the School's charter. The request to increase student enrollment is denied.		
Rationale/Benefit to the District:	As a Charter Authorizer, we are required to provide oversight and determination regarding renewal upon expiration of their current charter.		
Connection to Existing Goals:	As a Charter Authorizer, we are required to provide oversight and determination regarding renewal upon expiration of their current charter.		
Relevant Data and Expected Outcomes:	Data was provided in the full Renewal Report. It is expected that based on evidences outlined in the Renewal Report, student achievement will increase.		
RFP/Bid Date:	NA	Number of Proposals/Bids Received:	NA
Description of vendor evaluation:	NA		
Explanation if no RFP/Bid:	NA		

Approvals:

Name:	Signature:
Angela Cullen, Director, OSL	<i>Angela Cullen</i>
Dr. Yamilette Williams, CAO	<i>Yamilette Williams</i>
Keith Robertson (Grants Only)	<i>NA</i>
Barbara J. Smith, CFO/COO (Non Grants Only)	<i>NA</i>
Dr. Pamela C. Brown, Superintendent	<i>Pamela C. Brown</i>

BOARD of Education
APPROVED

JAN 22 2014

[Signature]
BOARD Office

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

School: Westminster Community Charter School		
Dates of Site Visits:	March 25, 2010	April 14, 2011
	January 11, 2012	January 13, 2012
	May 17, 2012	May 18, 2012
	June 6, 2012	October 10, 2012
	May 20, 2013	May 29, 2013
	June 10, 2013	July 11, 2013
	October 16, 2013	October 17, 2013
	October 18, 2013	December 11, 2013

The primary purpose of this report, prepared by Angela Cullen, Director in the Office of School Leadership, for the Buffalo Public Schools, a charter school authorizer, is to provide evidence about Westminster Community Charter School's (WCCS) performance, implementation of the educational and organizational program outlined in the charter, and compliance with laws and regulations over the course of the current renewal charter. On the dates listed above, central office administrators visited WCCS, located at 24 Westminster Avenue, Buffalo, New York, 14215. WCCS currently serves 550 students in grades kindergarten through 8. The school is in its tenth year of operation as a conversion charter school.

WCCS was granted their initial charter in 2004, opening the school year with an enrollment of 550. WCCS was subsequently renewed for a period of five years beginning July 1, 2009. Their current charter expires in June 30, 2014.

In the current renewal charter application, WCCS is requesting two changes. The first request is to increase their potential enrollment from 550 to 575. The second request is for approval to amend their charter to update their curriculum.

WCCS is part of a community-wide collaboration that began in 1993 between Westminster and M&T Bank and has grown to include the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood.

Site visits and classroom observations conducted from April of 2009 through May of 2012 are documented in the *Monitoring Matrix* and referenced as evidence throughout this report. During the renewal site visit on October 16, 17, and 18, 2013, the team conducted classroom observations, reviewed documentation, and interviewed the Board of Trustees (BOT), school administrators, teachers, parents and students. This evidence was triangulated to determine the findings presented in this report.

Three guiding questions serve as a lens to direct this report:

1. Is the school an academic success and able to operate in an educationally sound manner?
2. Is the school organizationally viable and able to operate in a fiscally sound manner?
3. Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter and has it adhered to applicable laws and regulations?

1. IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND ABLE TO OPERATE IN AN EDUCATIONALLY SOUND MANNER?

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

Finding 1a: WCCS has not met all of the academic performance goals as outlined in the current charter.

Evidence: WCCS current charter includes the following performance goals:

Goal 1: The adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the NYS Grade 4 English Language Arts and NYS Grade 4 Math test will be 150 or above.

Goal 2: The adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the NYS Grade 8 English Language Arts will be 125 and NYS Grade 8 Math test will be 150 or above.

Goal 3: The percentage of WCCS students who score in Level 3 and Level 4 will be higher than the percentage of students in the Buffalo Public School District on all New York State mandated tests.

Evidence of meeting or making progress towards goals:

Goals 1 & 2: The adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the NYS Grade 4 English Language Arts and NYS Grade 4 Math test will be 150 or above. The adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the NYS Grade 8 English Language Arts will be 125 and NYS Grade 8 Math test will be 150 or above. WCCS did not meet these targets over the duration of their current renewal charter. While all goals were met in 2009-2010, the first year of the current renewal charter, in 2010-2011, only the Grade 4 Math goal was met. In 2011-2012, the goal was once again met in Grade 4 Math and there were increase in Grade 4 ELA and Grade 8 ELA.

WCCS Performance Index Results				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	Goal
Grade 4 ELA	166	114	124	150
Grade 4 Math	184	159	167	150
Grade 8 ELA	160	109	121	125
Grade 8 Math	192	142	108	150

Goal 3: The percentage of WCCS students who score in Level 3 and Level 4 will be higher than the percentage of students in the Buffalo Public School District on all New York State mandated tests. WCCS has met this goal as shown in the following chart:

Percent of Students at Proficiency				
	ELA		Math	
	BPS	WCCS	BPS	WCCS
2009-2010	28%	32%	30%	47%
2010-2011	27%	28%	31%	50%
2011-2012	28%	31%	30%	47%

Finding 1b: While WCCS outperformed Buffalo Public Schools on the 2010, 2011, and 2012 3-8 New York State Assessments, they scored lower than the state average.

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

Evidence: WCCS, BPS, and NYS data is charted below:

ELA – Percent Proficient at all Grade Levels			
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
WCCS	32%	28%	31%
NYS	53%	53%	55%
BPS	28%	27%	28%

Math – Percent Proficient at all Grade Levels			
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
WCCS	47%	50%	47%
NYS	61%	63%	65%
BPS	30%	31%	30%

This provides evidence that the school is met or has come close to meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 1: Student Performance*.

Finding 1c: Preliminary data shows that WCCS scored lower than the District in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 on the 2013 ELA CC-aligned NY State assessment and in grades 6 and 7 on the 2013 Math CC-aligned State assessment. WCCS scored lower than the state average in all grade levels on the CC-aligned ELA and Math NY State 2013 assessments.

Evidence: Data charted below:

Percent Proficient by Grade Level – NYS State ELA Assessment 2013							
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Overall Proficiency
WCCS	16.9%	8.5%	3.0%	4.5%	9.6%	5.5%	7.99%
ECS	0%	4.4%	9.1%	12.7%	8.9%	7.7%	7.25%
BPS	12.0%	10.7%	9.8%	12.3%	10.5%	13.5%	11.45%
State	31.1%	30.3%	30.2%	29.6%	31.4%	33.7%	31.38%

Percent Proficient by Grade Level – NYS State Math Assessment 2013							
	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Overall Proficiency
WCCS	30.8%	18.5%	13.6%	6.0%	3.8%	9.1%	14.2%
ECS	0%	8.6%	11.4%	19.1%	2.2%	7.5%	8.34%
BPS	13.5%	10.2%	9.3%	10.7%	7.4%	6.8%	9.63%
State	34.2%	36.3%	29.9%	30.6%	27.7%	27.4%	31.06%

[http://www.necharters.org/articles/NYS%2012-13%20ELA%20SHARE%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.necharters.org/articles/NYS%2012-13%20ELA%20SHARE%20(1).pdf)

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/ela-math/2013/2013-08-06FINALELAandMathFULLDECK_rev.pdf

Finding 1d: In most classes observed, students were exposed to the main instructional practices of the school, as identified by the school leaders.

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

Evidence: The school identified specific instructional characteristics that should be present in all classrooms. These instructional characteristics were as follows: student inquiry, emphasis on literacy and numeracy, and blend of balanced literacy approaches (small group, conferences). Instruction was consistent with the school's description of practice and at least one of the aforementioned instructional practices was demonstrated by partial evidence or clear and consistent evidence where applicable in 17/22 classrooms observed.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning*.

Finding 1e: The school's curriculum is based on rigorous standards.

Evidence: The school is using the engageNY Math Modules at grades kindergarten – 2 and using a blended approach at grades 3 – 8 with 1:1 iPad model and Khan Academy. WCCS uses a hybrid version of the Balanced Literacy approach (through Teacher's College) with Readers and Writers workshop and the Lucy Calkins units of study. Both the math and the ELA curriculum are aligned to the CCLS.

In science, WCCS is using the Next Generation Science Standards. These are also CCLS aligned including additional support for the CCLS reading standards.

To assist with understanding and implementing the common core curricula, teachers received full day professional development before the start of the school year and also receive half day professional development monthly throughout the school year. The administration monitors the implementation of this professional development during informal walkthroughs.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning*.

Finding 1f: Data from assessments are used by teachers to inform, guide and improve instructional practice.

Evidence: The school administers common formative assessments which provide insight into student understanding, teacher effectiveness, and overall effectiveness of the instructional units. Pre and post tests are administered with each unit of study (same standards, different questions). The assessments provide the teachers with real time data and allow them to make instructional adjustments for students following the pre-test and re-teaching strategies after the post-test. Enrichment and remediation is provided for students daily during the RtI block, during which time students are provided skill specific instruction. In literacy, the program is offered in 10 week intervals and Leveled Literacy Intervention is used with small groups. In math, Khan Academy is utilized and students work at their own pace along with teacher instruction in small groups.

Teachers have time built into their schedule for professional development and common planning, including data analysis. When asked why they think previous improvement efforts have failed at WCCS, a teacher replied, "I don't believe we knew how to use data properly, being able to now look at data, understand it, and make changes to my instructional practice, to push my teaching forward has made a huge difference and I know it will be reflected on the state assessments."

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning*.

Finding 1g: Climate is characterized by high, clear expectations for student behavior and routines and students are actively engaged in learning.

Evidence: Classroom climate is characterized by high, clear expectations for student behaviors and routines. There was clear and consistent evidence in 21/25 classrooms observed and partial evidence in 4/25 classrooms observed. Students participate and are engaged in learning. There was clear and consistent evidence in 18/25 classrooms observed and partial evidence in 2/25 classrooms observed.

The school has developed a tool for supporting their PBIS implementation. ROCKS (responsibility, organization, character, knowledge) are a universal Tier 1 behavior management system. The teachers also use ClassDoJo, a behavior management tool that captures data quickly and easily which teachers can then share with parents and administrators. According to a parent, “You can tell what kind of day your child had by the Dojo – parents have access and we can check daily.” ClassDoJo was seen being used in most classrooms observed.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning and Performance Framework Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement*.

Finding 1h: The school establishes and maintains an environment for students, staff, and other stakeholders that is physically safe and free from harassment and discrimination.

Evidence: Relationships among stakeholder groups appear to be positive and productive with cordial and respectful relationships between teachers and students, as evidenced by classroom observation evidence gathered during the current renewal charter. The school practices lockdown and fire drills as required. WCCS works in collaboration Buffalo Public Schools and emergency personnel to prepare and facilitate drills.

WCCS uses the visitor management tool LobbyGuard system for parents and other visitors to the building. This addition was part of the school’s updated safety plan and it allows the school to track everyone who enters the building, stopping potential threats at the door. According to parents, “we love the new policy where everyone has to sign in and sign their kids out – that is a change, but it gives me added security.”

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Framework Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement*.

Finding 1i: WCCS has established core values which guide their professional learning communities.

Evidence: The school has four core values that guide their instruction and professional learning communities:

Value 1: *Insatiable* – teachers are required to create learning moments for their students that foster inquiry. During professional learning communities (PLC), teachers work with instructional coaches to

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

develop authentic learning and performance tasks that push students to demonstrate their understanding. PLCs meet after school Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Instructional coaches meet with teachers and help them plan as well as modeling lessons.

Value 2: *Willing to play in the sandbox* – faculty and staff at WCCS believe that learning is a team sport. Through feedback, modeling and professional development, staff are challenged to develop and use cooperative learning activities to increase student accountability and teacher facilitation.

Value 3: *Travel to where the sidewalk ends...* – teachers are asked to use all means to make content come to life, whether that be emerging technologies or poetry, and foster students curiosity through reading books (at their level) and by making connections to other content areas.

Value 4: *Prepared to fail* – teachers are encouraged to take instructional risks. Risk taking, within a structured process, leads to greater teacher and student understanding. When a teacher decides to take an instructional risk, they are supported by the administrative team during the lesson planning and unit development process as well as the instructional coaches through feedback and debriefing sessions. According to a teacher, “Dr. Rudolph gives us feedback, he poses questions to push my thinking, “yes, this is good, but what if?” I love the feedback, they want us to be the best you can be and they give you feedback and suggestions to do that, it is inspiring. I want to be the best and now I have a way to get there.”

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning* and *Performance Framework Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement*.

Finding 1j: School leaders effectively communicate with all members of the school community including parents/families, students, and other stakeholders.

Evidence: WCCS has ongoing communication with parents/families and students via phone calls, emails, Twitter accounts, progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, and a variety of family events. Parents have access to monitor their child’s behavior daily through Class DoJo and can also view their academic progress in Khan Academy. A parent stated, “the website is always up to date and information is easily accessible, parents can email teachers, who are also very accessible, and they always get right back to you.” Additionally, parents indicated that their child has a daily folder where communications are sent back and forth. WCCS also offers monthly nutrition classes; attendance was referenced by parents and evidenced during the document review. A parent stated, “This is not a paycheck, this is their passion, their love, we have the right people in the right place to get our kids to the next level.”

WCCS is part of the Promise Neighborhood network of schools and works with community agencies and businesses through this project on the cradle to career initiative. There is also a Kaleida Health Clinic on site that serves the children and families of WCCS. Other partnerships include, but are not limited to, AmeriCorps, Medialle College, and the Boys and Girls Club.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement*.

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

2. IS THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONALLY VIABLE AND ABLE TO OPERATE IN A FISCALLY SOUND MANNER?

Finding 2a: The school is fiscally healthy.

Evidence: The BOT provides financial oversight as evidenced by the BOT and committee minutes provided. The Board approves the annual operating budget, reviews monthly budget reports, reviews quarterly cash flow and fund balances, and requires an annual independent financial audit. Monthly submissions of documents requested by the Buffalo Board of Education are timely and complete. WCCS adheres to a balanced budget, follows generally accepted accounting practices, is operating pursuant to long range financial planning, tracks grant funds, and follows appropriate accounting procedures for managing payroll.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 4: Financial Condition, Performance Framework Benchmark 5: Financial Management, and Performance Framework Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance.*

Finding 2b: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.

Evidence: Board minutes, reviewed monthly, provide evidence that the BOT provide appropriate oversight to school operations. During the BOT focus group interview, one BOT member stated, “this board has a variety of experts, together we collaborate and make decisions, if we have difficulty coming to a decision, we meet, talk it out until we have an understanding and then we make a decision.” The BOT includes experts in the field of finance and education, as well as community leaders.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance and Performance Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity.*

Finding 2c: The board has avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible and, where not possible, has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner.

Evidence: All BOT members have a signed conflict of interest form on file. In keeping with the Operations Agreement with Buffalo Public School District (the authorizer), ECS notifies the district whenever there is a change to in the Board roster and forwards all signed conflict of interest forms prior to appointment.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Framework Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance and Performance Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity.*

3. IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF ITS CHARTER AND HAS IT ADHERED TO APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS?

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

Finding 3a: The school demonstrates a degree of faithfulness to the mission, vision, and educational philosophy defined in the current charter, with certain qualifications, and the school provided evidence that each of the key elements are being addressed to some extent.

Evidence: The schools mission statement is “To challenge the status quo – to encourage people to think differently about their station in life. We do this through assuring that there are high levels of learning, by creating a safe and caring environment, and promoting community involvement in order to prepare students for a successful secondary experience.”

Community involvement is a requirement for 8th grade students. However, other grade levels also complete community service throughout the year. For example, during the month of October, each grade level completed community service and will again in April. Grade levels work on various ideas, for instance, this past October, students visited patients at a nursing home, collected money for cancer, sent letters to the Veterans hospital, and cleaned up adjoining streets to WCCS.

The schools key elements are:

Balanced Literacy: For the development of strong readers through the use of multiple literary texts

1:1 iPad Initiative: All students in grades 3 through 8 have been provided with an Ipad and a keyboard to develop technology skills and help prepare students for the work environment after WCCS. Students were observed using the iPads for multiple applications during classroom observations.

Extended learning day and summer enrichment program: Programs include a five week summer program and after school activities such as Medaille tutoring for special education students, tutoring for grades 7-8 through Americorps, and various clubs and sports.

Departmentalization: WCCS is departmentalized starting in grade 2. This allows teachers to establish mastery in their content area and to participate in vertical meetings for subject matter and professional development.

Looping: WCCS loops from kindergarten to grade 1 which allows for academic continuity and supports students’ social and emotional needs

Healthy Living: Emphasis on healthy living through physical fitness and nutrition which was supported by a federal PEP grant

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements*.

Finding 3b: The school has failed to meet annual targets for students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Evidence: WCCS has 10.8% students with disabilities, 0.6% English Language Learners, and 90% students who are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program.

Buffalo Public School District WCCS Renewal Report – 2013

	Enrollment			Retention		
Population	FRPL	LEP	SWD	FRPL	LEP	SWD
Target	83.70%	8.90%	19.10%	81.30%	36.40%	73.00%
Actual	90.00%	0.60%	10.80%	101.50%	100.00%	129.00%

WCCS has failed to meet annual targets for students with disabilities and English Language Learners. In order to recruit students, school flyers, brochures, applications, and website clearly indicate that enrollment is open without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, and/or limited English proficiency. WCCS places advertisements for applications for enrollment in community newspapers, local community centers, and churches and school personnel present at local community centers and churches. WCCS distributes flyers to neighborhood homes and sends notices home with existing students. Additionally, advertisements on radio are done in both English and Spanish.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention*.

Finding 3c: The school adheres to the New York State Charter School Act and Federal Charter Law.

Evidence: There are no instances noted where the school failed to adhere to the New York State School Act or Federal Charter Law.

This provides evidence towards meeting the standard for *Performance Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance*.

RECOMMENDATION FOR RENEWAL

It is recommended that WCCS be renewed for a term of 2 years, from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2016, with the data from the 2012 – 2013 CC-aligned ELA and Math NY State Assessments providing the baseline data from which academic growth will be measured. Subsequent renewals will be based upon the schools ability to provide families of the Buffalo Public Schools with a high quality school (as evidenced by the academic success, faithfulness to their charter, organizational and fiscal viability, and adherence to applicable federal and state charter laws) where student achievement improves through the use of innovative teaching techniques. Therefore, the following conditions are recommended, to be determined following approval of a 2 year renewal term:

- In the case where the school is faithful to their charter, organizationally and fiscally viable, and adhering to applicable federal and state charter laws, academics will be the determining factor for subsequent renewals
 - Academic performance goals will be included in the operating agreement
 - The 2013 New York State CC-aligned ELA and Mathematics Assessment data for ECS grades 3 – 8 will serve as the baseline from which growth will be measured
- Oversight to be aligned to the New York State Education Department’s *Charter School Performance Framework and Renewal Protocol* to monitor progress toward any compliance issues identified, with site visits, at minimum, but not limited to, four times annually

***Buffalo Public School District
WCCS Renewal Report – 2013***

The request is to increase potential enrollment from 550 to 575 is denied.
The request to amend their charter and update their curriculum is approved.