





**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Allison Armour-Garb 

**SUBJECT:** Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools Authorized by the New York City Department of Education Chancellor

**DATE:** April 29, 2021

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

## SUMMARY

### **Issue for Decision**

Should the Board of Regents approve the proposed renewal charter for the following charter school authorized by the New York City Department of Education Chancellor pursuant to Article 56 of the Education Law (the New York Charter Schools Act):

**Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School** (short-term, four-year renewal).

### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute.

### **Proposed Handling**

This question will come before the P-12 Education Committee at its May 2021 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken. It will then come before the Full Board at its May 2021 meeting for final action.

### **Procedural History**

The New York City Department of Education Chancellor made the renewal recommendations being presented to the Board of Regents for approval and issuance as required by Article 56 of the Education Law.

## **Background Information**

The New York City Department of Education Chancellor and Board of Regents are bound by Article 56 of the Education Law regarding the criteria that can be considered in decision making pertaining to charter school renewals and revisions.

## **Related Regents Items**

### **Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School**

December 2009 [Initial Charter](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009/2009-12-36)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009/2009-12-36>)

April 2010 [Revision to Implement Lottery Preferences for ELLs](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010/2010-05-11)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2010/2010-05-11>)

December 2014 [First Renewal](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1214p12a3Revised.pdf)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1214p12a3Revised.pdf>)

March 2018 [Second Renewal](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/318p12a3revised.pdf)  
(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/318p12a3revised.pdf>)

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the **Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School**: (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 the **Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School** and that a renewal charter be issued, and that its provisional charter be extended for a term up through and including **June 30, 2025**.

## **Timetable for Implementation**

The Regents action for the above-named charter schools will become effective July 1, 2021.

## Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School

In accordance with Education Law, Article 56, Sections 2851(4) and 2852(2), and Commissioner’s Regulation 119.7, the **New York City Department of Education Chancellor recommends a short-term renewal for a period of four years for Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School. The charter term would begin on July 1, 2021 and expire on June 30, 2025.**

### Charter School Summary

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Tomas Almonte
<b>District of Location</b>	NYC CSD 6 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Initial Commencement of Instruction</b>	Fall 2010
<b>Charter Term(s)</b>	July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021
<b>Current Term Authorized Grades / Authorized Enrollment</b>	Grades 5-12 / 960 students
<b>Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades / Proposed Authorized Enrollment</b>	Grades 5-12 / 960 students
<b>Comprehensive Management Service Provider</b>	None
<b>Facilities</b>	433 West 204 <sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10034 – Private Space 3896 10 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, New York, NY 10034 – Private Space
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>Empower students to become agents for change through community-focused leadership, character development, and college preparedness.</i>
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended Day that includes a variety of programming for all students</li> <li>• Inclusive Environment</li> <li>• Individualized Instruction using multiple forms of assessment</li> <li>• Multiple Pathways to College and Career Readiness</li> <li>• Positive School Culture</li> </ul>
<b>Recommended Material Revisions</b>	None

Inwood Academy for Leadership Charter School (IALCS) is approaching or meeting most standards set forth in the New York City Department of Education Charter School Accountability Framework. The school is implementing the mission, key design elements, education program, and organizational plan set forth in the charter.

**Innovative and Noteworthy Programs:** The school has partnered with City College to offer additional tutoring and support through City College’s STEM Institute for students enrolled in Living Environment, Algebra, and Geometry courses. All teachers are trained through the AIM Institute for Learning and Research to support emergent and struggling readers at higher grade levels. The school also uses the Character Strong program to provide a robust 5-12 advisory program.

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<sup>1</sup> Twenty-one percent of all students residing in this district attend charter schools.

**Renewal Condition(s):**

By June 30 of each year of the next charter term, the school must demonstrate growth in meeting the community school district of location’s enrollment rates for English Language Learners (ELLs) and ultimately meet the community school district of location’s enrollment rates by the end of the charter term.

**Table 1: Current Grade Levels and Authorized Enrollment**

	<b>Year 1 2018 to 2019</b>	<b>Year 2 2019 to 2020</b>	<b>Year 3 2020 to 2021</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 5 - 12	Grades 5 – 12	Grades 5 - 12
<b>Total Authorized Enrollment</b>	960	960	960

**Table 2: Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment**

	<b>Year 1 2021 to 2022</b>	<b>Year 2 2022 to 2023</b>	<b>Year 3 2023 to 2024</b>	<b>Year 4 2024 to 2025</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 5 – 12	Grades 5 – 12	Grades 5 - 12	Grades 5 - 12
<b>Total Proposed Enrollment</b>	960	960	960	960

**Summary of Evidence for Renewal**

**Key Performance Area: Educational Success**

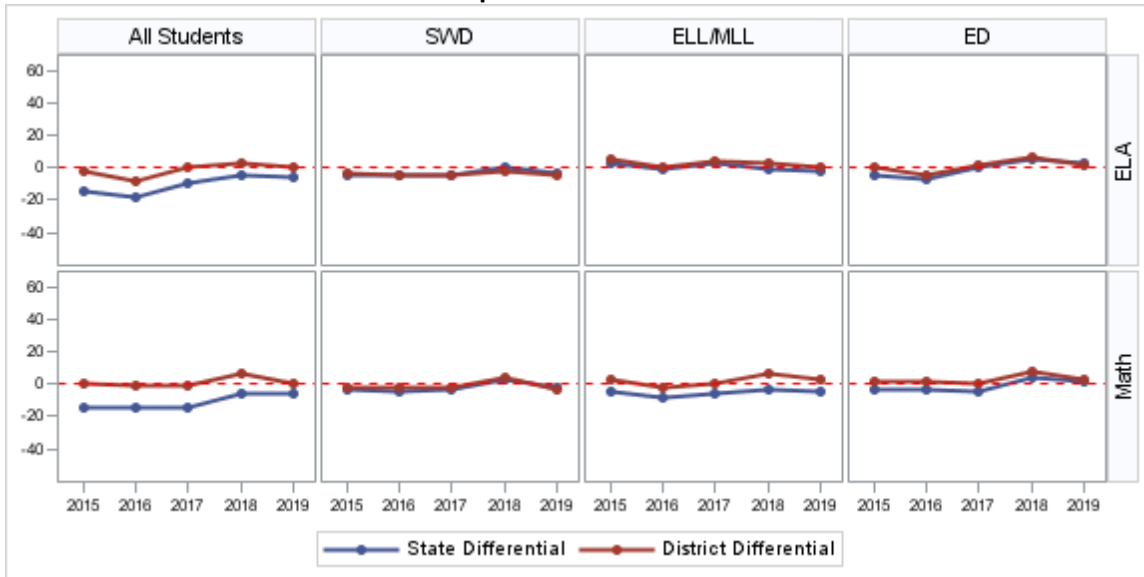
**Student Performance – Elementary/Middle School Outcomes**

See Figure 1 regarding assessment proficiency in 3-8 math and ELA. See Table 3 below regarding 3-8 math and ELA exam aggregate and subgroup student performance compared to the district and State average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESEA accountability designations, IALCS is *In Good Standing*.**

**Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:** IALCS offers curricula and coursework aligned to New York State Next Generation learning standards in ELA, math, social studies, and science. The school offers the Algebra I Regents Exam to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students; in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, 76 percent and 100 percent of students tested, respectively, passed the exam. The school also offers Spanish, art, physical education, and drama classes, as well as advisory.

**Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):** The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) and 12:1+1 sections for middle school grades. The school provides Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for students with disabilities (SWDs), as well as counseling. The school employs three English as a New Language (ENL) specialists to provide push-in and pull-out services for ELL students.

**Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to NYC CSD 6**



**Table 3: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District & NYS**

		ELA					Math				
		Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	16%	18%	-2	31%	-15	22%	22%	0	36%	-14
	2015-2016	18%	26%	-8	36%	-18	21%	22%	-1	36%	-15
	2016-2017	30%	29%	+1	39%	-9	22%	23%	-1	37%	-15
	2017-2018	39%	36%	+3	43%	-4	35%	29%	+6	41%	-6
	2018-2019	37%	37%	0	43%	-6	37%	36%	+1	43%	-6
SWD	2014-2015	2%	5%	-3	6%	-4	6%	8%	-2	9%	-3
	2015-2016	3%	7%	-4	8%	-5	6%	8%	-2	10%	-4
	2016-2017	6%	10%	-4	10%	-4	7%	9%	-2	10%	-3
	2017-2018	14%	16%	-2	14%	0	16%	12%	+4	13%	+3
	2018-2019	10%	15%	-5	13%	-3	12%	15%	-3	14%	-2
ELL	2014-2015	10%	5%	+5	7%	+3	12%	9%	+3	16%	-4
	2015-2016	7%	7%	0	8%	-1	7%	9%	-2	15%	-8
	2016-2017	11%	7%	+4	8%	+3	8%	8%	0	14%	-6
	2017-2018	19%	16%	+3	20%	-1	20%	14%	+6	23%	-3
	2018-2019	17%	16%	+1	19%	-2	21%	18%	+3	25%	-4
ED	2014-2015	17%	16%	+1	21%	-4	22%	20%	+2	25%	-3
	2015-2016	19%	24%	-5	26%	-7	22%	20%	+2	25%	-3
	2016-2017	29%	27%	+2	28%	+1	21%	21%	0	26%	-5
	2017-2018	39%	33%	+6	34%	+5	34%	26%	+8	30%	+4
	2018-2019	36%	34%	+2	33%	+3	35%	32%	+3	33%	+2

**Student Performance – High School Outcomes**

The school has demonstrated mixed academic performance in regard to cohort Regents exam outcomes in the high school grades, under-performing the State average in some subjects. Graduation rates outperform the State average. **According to the 2018-2019 school year ESEA accountability designations, IALCS is In Good Standing.**

**Academic Program for High School:** The school offers courses that lead to Regents exams in Common Core Algebra and Algebra II, Geometry, US History, ELA, Earth Science, Living Environment, and Global History. In addition, the school offers AP courses and exams for AP English Language and Composition and AP English Literature and Composition, and electives in Art. The school provides SAT prep for all students through partnerships with Menking Tutoring.

**Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners (ELLs):** The school offers Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) for high school grades. The school provides Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for SWDs, as well as counseling. The school employs two English as a New Language (ENL) specialists to provide push-in and pull-out services for ELL students.

**Table 4: High School Cohort Graduation Rates**

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Charter Total Cohort	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYS	Differential to NYS
2014 Cohort	4 Year	84	95%	83%	+12	11	82%	60%	+22	.	.	.	.	76	95%	76%	+19
	5 Year	84	99%	86%	+13	10	90%	66%	+24	.	.	.	.	72	99%	81%	+18
	6 Year	84	99%	87%	+12	10	90%	68%	+22	.	.	.	.	72	99%	83%	+16
2015 Cohort	4 Year	96	90%	83%	+7	22	86%	62%	+24	12	58%	58%	0	85	89%	77%	+12
	5 Year	94	96%	87%	+9	20	95%	67%	+28	11	82%	68%	+14	82	95%	82%	+13
2016 Cohort	4 Year	106	90%	85%	+5	22	91%	63%	+28	11	100%	63%	+37	90	91%	80%	+11

**Key Performance Area: Organizational Soundness**

**Financial Condition**

IALCS appears to be in sound financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

NYCDOE reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school’s capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school’s capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.<sup>2</sup>

**Financial Management**

NYCDOE reviewed IALCS’s 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. For both years, the auditor identified two opportunities to strengthen internal controls but did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

**Key Performance Area: Faithfulness to the Charter and Law**

**Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention**

Through efforts toward increasing the percentage of at-risk students enrolled, the school is meeting its targets for economically disadvantaged (ED) students and SWDS. The school is not meeting its target for ELLs (see Table 5 below).

<sup>2</sup> These rigorous indicators of fiscal soundness are aligned with those recommended by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers.

The school is making efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students.<sup>3</sup> The school has an enrollment preference for ELL students. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include:

- Going door to door to hand out over 6,000 application packages in New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing;
- Advertising in Spanish-language newspapers; and
- Placing ads on MTA bus shelters in the area.

**Table 5: Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, ELLs, and Economically Disadvantaged**

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2015-2016	22%	21%	+1	20%	37%	-17	71%	86%	-15
2016-2017	23%	20%	+3	18%	32%	-14	79%	85%	-6
2017-2018	24%	20%	+4	22%	40%	-18	94%	89%	+5
2018-2019	25%	21%	+4	20%	38%	-18	89%	89%	0
2019-2020	25%	21%	+4	22%	38%	-16	91%	88%	+3

<sup>3</sup> Education Law §2854(2)(a) requires that schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain a comparable or greater enrollment of students with disabilities, FRPL-eligible students and English language learners when compared to the enrollment figures for such students in the school district in which the charter is located. SUNY and the Regents were charged with setting specific enrollment and retention targets for each charter school and have done so (Education Law §2852(9-a)(b)(i)). All charter schools that were initially chartered after August 2010 or renewed after January 1, 2011 are expected to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the Regents and SUNY. When submitting an application for renewal of the charter, schools are required to provide information detailing the means by which they will meet the enrollment and retention targets (Education Law §2851(4)(e)), and this information is considered by the Regents in the review of the school's performance over the charter term. A school's plan to change its enrollment practices, whether by weighting the lottery or preferencing, may also be considered when determining whether the school will meet the targets in the upcoming charter term. A school's repeated failure to meet or exceed its enrollment and retention targets, when combined with a failure to show that extensive efforts to meet the targets have been made, may be cause for termination or revocation of the charter, pursuant to Section Education Law §2855(1)(e).



**Table 6: Aggregate and Subgroup Retention**

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2015-2016	91%	75%	+16	94%	77%	+17	94%	77%	+17	91%	76%	+15
2016-2017	87%	77%	+10	89%	74%	+15	86%	78%	+8	88%	78%	10
2017-2018	85%	77%	+8	86%	75%	+11	81%	77%	+4	86%	77%	9
2018-2019	89%	77%	+12	88%	76%	+12	89%	79%	+10	88%	78%	10
2019-2020	91%	78%	+13	93%	78%	+15	90%	79%	+11	92%	78%	14

**Table 7: Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted – Target = 100%**

Inwood Academy for Leadership CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2015-2016	1,020	698	68%
2016-2017	1,020	811	80%
2017-2018	1,020	892	87%
2018-2019	960	916	95%
2019-2020	960	952	99%

**Legal Compliance**

IALCS operates in accordance with applicable law, regulations, rule, and other policies, including the terms of its charter, by-laws, and other school-specific policies. It is also in compliance with federally mandated disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities and the Dignity for All Students Act. The board holds meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. At the school’s last renewal, they had a condition to work toward meeting the school’s community school district of location ELL enrollment rates by the end of the charter term. Only modest progress was made toward that goal.

**Summary of Public Comment**

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education on November 10, 2020. One-hundred eighty-three people attended, and 65 spoke. All 65 were in favor of the renewal. None were opposed. A letter from the local Community Education Council was received supporting this renewal.