



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

**COMMUNITY ROOTS CHARTER SCHOOL  
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 SCHOOL YEAR  
JUNE 2015**

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## Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

### I. Charter School Overview:

#### Background Information

Community Roots Charter School	
Board Chair(s)	Scott Strasser and Tracey Strauss
School Leader(s)	Allison Keil & Sara Stone (Co-Founders and Co-Directors of the elementary school)
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 13
Physical Address(es)	51 Saint Edwards Street, Brooklyn (Grades K-5)
	50 Navy Street, Brooklyn (Grades 6-8)
Facility Owner(s)	DOE
School Opened For Instruction	2006-2007
Current Charter Term Expiration Date	6/30/2015
Current Authorized Grade Span	K-8
Current Authorized Enrollment	450
Proposed New Charter Term	5 years [July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020]
Proposed Authorized Grade Span for New Charter Term	K-8
Proposed Authorized Enrollment for New Charter Term	462
Proposed Sections per Grade for New Charter Term	Grades K-8: 2 sections per grade

## Overview of School-Specific Data

### School Evaluation of Academic Goals as stated in Annual Report to NYSED and Renewal Application to NYC DOE

Academic Goal Analysis					
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	Cumulative Charter Term Total
Total Achievable Goals	13	13	13	13	52
# Met	6	7	8	5	26
# Partially Met	1	2	0	1	4
# Not Met	5	4	2	3	14
# Not Applicable *	1	0	3	4	8
% Met	46%	54%	62%	38%	50%
% Partially Met	8%	15%	0%	8%	8%
% Not Met	38%	31%	15%	23%	27%
% Not Applicable *	8%	0%	23%	31%	15%
% Met of All Applicable Goals	50%	54%	80%	56%	59%

\* Some goals may not be applicable in all years. For example, goals related to the NYC Progress Report are not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year as Progress Reports were not issued that year.

### ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	66.7%	73.6%	43.8%	45.6%
CSD 13	47.4%	49.8%	25.4%	25.9%
Difference from CSD 13 *	19.3	23.8	18.4	19.7
NYC	49.4%	51.2%	26.8%	28.3%
Difference from NYC *	17.3	22.4	17.0	17.3
New York State **	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	13.9	18.5	12.7	15.0

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	71.3%	73.0%	46.8%	50.2%
CSD 13	53.3%	57.5%	25.0%	26.9%
Difference from CSD 13 *	18.0	15.5	21.8	23.3
NYC	60.0%	62.6%	31.7%	36.2%
Difference from NYC *	11.3	10.4	15.1	14.0
New York State **	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	8.0	8.2	15.7	14.0

\* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

\*\* New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

### Student improvement on the state tests compared to other students

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School - All Students</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>65.0%</b>	<b>64.0%</b>
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	27.3%	45.2%	54.5%	52.4%
City Percent of Range- All Students	41.7%	59.0%	52.7%	51.5%
<b>Community Roots Charter School – School's Lowest Third</b>	<b>65.5%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>	<b>70.0%</b>	<b>62.0%</b>
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	26.2%	60.8%	45.3%	4.1%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	25.9%	62.6%	34.7%	5.8%

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School - All Students</b>	<b>43.0%</b>	<b>39.0%</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>47.0%</b>
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	0.0%	0.0%	63.0%	0.0%
City Percent of Range- All Students	0.0%	4.5%	63.3%	3.4%
<b>Community Roots Charter School – School's Lowest Third</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>35.0%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>59.0%</b>
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	0.0%	0.0%	52.6%	7.3%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	0.0%	0.0%	44.5%	4.5%

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 its peer group/city.

## Closing the Achievement Gap

Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	47.6%	48.1%	47.7%
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	28.6%	53.3%	51.9%	50.0%
Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	9.5%	66.7%	36.4%
English Language Learner Students	-	-	-	-
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	11.1%	14.3%	51.4%	26.7%

\* Defined as students with a placement in Self-Contained, ICT, or SETSS.

## II. Renewal Recommendation and Rationale

Based on the evidence presented herein and detailed below in Part II, the NYC DOE recommends a 5 year full-term renewal.

As part of the renewal application, Community Roots Charter School submitted one material revision. The NYC DOE determination is as follows: regarding the material revision to increase the authorized maximum enrollment to 462 students during the next charter term, the NYC DOE approves this material revision.

As part of the school’s 2010-2011 charter renewal, the following condition was placed on the school consistent with the terms of the renewal application:

- **Academic Condition: 0 of 1 applicable condition met**

### Achievement of Renewal Conditions

Academic Condition	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. The school must demonstrate improved student achievement by scoring in the 25th percentile or above of all schools on the NYC DOE Progress Report within one year after renewal, in the 50th percentile or above of all schools on the NYC DOE Progress Report within two years after renewal, and in the 75th percentile or above of all schools on the NYC DOE Progress Report in each of the third, fourth and fifth years after renewal.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A

### A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school’s renewal, Community Roots Charter School (Community Roots) has demonstrated academic success.

#### **New York Charter Schools Act**

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 establishes a system of charter schools throughout New York State, with objectives that include:

#### **§ 2850 (2)**

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

Data available for Community Roots indicates that the school has made progress towards meeting most of these objectives.

#### **Mission and Vision**

Community Roots’ mission is for the school to be “a rigorous K-8 learning community where learning is embedded in meaningful real world context, and where children are deliberately taught to see the connections between school and the world. [Community Roots] students will meet or exceed the New York State standards and be prepared to excel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by being taught to be independent thinkers and to work productively within a diverse group of learners. At

[Community Roots], students will learn to combine curiosity with appropriate application of knowledge, which will lead them to have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take on challenges to become who they want to be.” The school executes against this mission by offering an integrated co-teaching model that allows the school to meet the diverse needs of its student population. In addition, the school emphasizes its core values, commitment to diversity, and student community building, in order to develop the learning environment that is central to the school’s mission.

### **School Specific Academic Performance**

The school entered its ninth year of operation with the 2014-2015 academic year. The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) has four years of New York State (NYS) assessment data and four years of other academic indicator(s) to evaluate the academic achievement and progress of the students at Community Roots Charter School over the course of the retrospective charter term.

Annual aggregate English Language Arts (ELA) and math proficiency rates for Community Roots have exceeded those of CSD 13, New York City, and New York State in every year of the current charter term.

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, NYS assessments were aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). As such, proficiency rates for school years prior to 2012-2013 are not directly comparable.

In 2012-2013, 46.8% of Community Roots’ students were proficient in math on the NYS assessments. Community Roots’ math proficiency was greater than that of 81% of all elementary/middle schools citywide. When compared to elementary/middle schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools), Community Roots outperformed 73% of similar schools. In addition, the school outperformed 67% of CSD 13 elementary/middle schools. In 2012-2013, 43.8% of Community Roots’ students demonstrated proficiency in NYS assessments in ELA. At this level of proficiency, Community Roots outperformed 85% of all elementary/middle schools citywide, 67% of its peer schools, and 83% of other elementary/middle schools in CSD 13.

The following year, in 2013-2014, the percent of students at Community Roots who were proficient in math rose to 50.2%. For 2013-2014, Community Roots’ math proficiency was higher than 75% of all elementary/middle schools citywide. When compared to its peer schools, Community Roots outperformed 63% of similar schools. Although the school’s absolute math proficiency level rose, its CSD percentile ranking fell to 50%; the school outperformed 50% of other elementary/middle schools in CSD 13. In 2013-2014, the percent of students at Community Roots who demonstrated proficiency on NYS assessments in ELA rose slightly to 45.6%. With this level of proficiency, Community Roots outperformed 86% of all elementary/middle schools citywide, 80% of its peer schools, and 83% of other elementary/middle schools in CSD 13.

In 2013-2014, Community Roots’ median adjusted growth percentile decreased in both ELA and math from the prior academic year. In 2013-2014, Community Roots’ ELA median adjusted growth percentile on the NYS assessments was 64.0% with a City Percent of Range of 51.5%, placing the school in the 42<sup>nd</sup> percentile of all elementary/middle schools citywide.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the school’s peer and CSD percentiles were 37% and 50%, respectively. This means that more than 50% of other elementary/middle schools across the city and in Community Roots’ peer group had ELA median adjusted growth percentiles greater than Community Roots’ ELA median adjusted growth percentile in 2013-2014.

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<sup>1</sup> A comparison range consists of all possible results within two standard deviations of the average. A percentile rank provides the percentage of schools that score lower than the school under consideration. A City Percent of Range of 51.5% indicates that the school’s ELA median adjusted growth percentile was above the average but less than one standard deviation above the average (that 51.5% of the range around the average represented scores lower than that of Community Roots), while a citywide percentile of 42% indicates that Community Roots’ ELA median adjusted growth percentile was higher than only 42% of all elementary/middle schools citywide.

In 2013-2014, Community Roots' math median adjusted growth percentile on the NYS assessments was 47.0% with a City Percent of Range of only 3.4%, placing the school in the bottom 4% of all elementary/middle schools citywide.<sup>2</sup> The school's peer and CSD percentiles both were 0%. This means that all other elementary/middle schools in Community Roots' peer group and in CSD 13, and nearly all other elementary/middle schools across the city, had math median adjusted growth percentiles greater than Community Roots' math median adjusted growth percentile in 2013-2014.

Over the four years that data is available for the retrospective charter term, Community Roots has met 59% of its applicable academic charter goals.<sup>3,4</sup> Community Roots met five of nine applicable academic performance goals in its most recent year. Because of the move to Common Core Learning Standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not evaluate goals that measure a school's academic performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math assessments for the 2012-2013 school year. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, due to a change in state regulation, the NYC DOE will not evaluate goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two; further, due to the elimination of the accountability instrument, the DOE will not evaluate goals related to NYC DOE Progress Report grades beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. The school has demonstrated a relatively stable trend of achievement of its stated charter goals during the retrospective charter term, with a goal achievement rate of at least 50% in each year of the retrospective charter term.

The school has consistently provided a supportive learning environment for students as well as a responsive education program. In a visit to the school in April 2012, reviewers noted that the school was "focused on meeting the diverse needs of its students," and that it provided "a supportive environment and ongoing coaching and feedback to teachers."<sup>5</sup> For the entirety of the charter term, the school offered collaborative team teaching<sup>6</sup> as the instructional model in each classroom, and has continued to improve on the co-teaching models, which give teachers the flexibility to differentiate to meet the students' educational needs. In the 2012-2013 school year, the school reported that teachers received on-going support throughout the school year on the co-teaching models.<sup>7</sup> As the school expanded into middle school grades, school leadership continued to implement an integrated co-teaching model in core subject areas in middle school classrooms, which provides more opportunities for in-class differentiation.<sup>8</sup>

On its 2012-2013 NYC DOE Progress Report, Community Roots received an overall grade of B, as well as B grades for Student Progress and Student Performance; the school received a grade of A for School Environment. This ranked Community Roots in the 57<sup>th</sup> percentile of all elementary schools citywide and represented an improvement over the prior year.<sup>9</sup> For the 2011-2012 NYC DOE Progress Report, the school earned an overall grade of C, with a D grade for Student Progress, a B grade for Student Performance, and an A grade for School Environment; the school ranked in the 33<sup>rd</sup> percentile of all elementary schools citywide in 2011-2012. In school year 2010-2011, the school also earned an overall grade of C on the NYC DOE Progress Report.

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<sup>2</sup> A City Percent of Range of 3.4% indicates that the school's math median adjusted growth percentile was more than one standard deviation below the average, and close to two standard deviations below the average. A citywide percentile of 4% indicates that Community Roots' math median adjusted growth percentile was higher than only 4% of all elementary/middle schools citywide.

<sup>3</sup> This calculation does not include goals which have not been evaluated (not applicable) either as a result of the goal no longer being measurable (e.g. NYC DOE Progress Report grades for 2013-2014 school year and beyond) or the goal not yet measurable for the school at the time of the annual reporting (e.g. high school graduation rate for an academic year in which the school was not serving grade 12 students).

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core Learning Standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that compared the school to the Community School District performance were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

<sup>5</sup> Community Roots Charter School Annual Visit Report 2011-2012

<sup>6</sup> The school used the terminology Collaborative Co-Teaching in its current charter term, but has revised to Integrated Co-Teaching to reflect new nomenclature in use in the future charter term.

<sup>7</sup> Community Roots Charter School Annual Comprehensive Review Report 2012-2013

<sup>8</sup> Community Roots Charter School Annual Comprehensive Review Report 2013-2014

<sup>9</sup> For purposes of the NYC DOE Progress Report, Community Roots Charter School was classified as an elementary school for the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years.

NYC DOE Progress Reports graded each school with an A, B, C, D, or F and were based on student progress, student performance, and school environment. Scores were based on comparing results from one school to a peer group of 40 schools with similar student populations and to all schools citywide. The Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report was the most heavily weighted of all sections; it constituted 60% of a school's grade. The grade in this section was primarily based on median adjusted growth percentiles,<sup>10</sup> which measure students' growth on state tests relative to other students with the same prior-year score. Although the NYC DOE Progress Report was discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, individual academic performance metrics from the former NYC DOE Progress Report are included in this renewal report for all years for which data was available in the current charter term.

### **Closing the Achievement Gap**

NYC DOE-authorized charter schools are also assessed based on their ability to close the achievement gap for specific student populations. In school years prior to the 2013-2014 school year, schools received additional credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report for progress and performance of students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), and students who start in the lowest third of proficiency citywide. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, charter schools will be assessed on the actual performance as well as the academic growth of students in these populations compared with public school students in the CSD and throughout New York City.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 26.7% of Community Roots' 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 growth places Community Roots in the bottom 1% of all elementary/middle schools citywide. In the same year however, 50.0% of Community Roots' students in the lowest third citywide experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting ELA scores; this level of growth in ELA places Community Roots in the 36<sup>th</sup> percentile of all elementary/middle schools citywide.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 36.4% of Community Roots' students with disabilities experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students with disabilities citywide with the same starting math scores. This level of growth places Community Roots in only the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile of all elementary/middle schools citywide. In the same year, 47.7% of the school's students with disabilities experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students with disabilities citywide with the same starting ELA scores; this level of growth in ELA places Community Roots in the 29<sup>th</sup> percentile of all elementary/middle schools citywide.

In 2013-2014, Community Roots did not serve the minimum number<sup>11</sup> of students designated as English Language Learners to receive data on the percent of English Language Learner students who experienced growth in math or ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other students citywide with the same starting scores.

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

Community Roots Charter School is an operationally sound and fiscally viable organization. This assessment was made based on a review of the following indicators of operational and fiscal viability:

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<sup>10</sup> A student's growth percentile compares his or her growth to the growth of all students in the City who started at the same level of proficiency the year before. To evaluate a school on its students' growth percentile, the NYC DOE 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 NYC DOE evaluates a school based on its median adjusted growth percentile, the adjusted growth percentile of the middle student when all students adjusted growth percentiles are listed from lowest to highest.

<sup>11</sup> The minimum number of students for each metric in the Closing the Achievement Gap section is five. Metrics are excluded for a school when student-sample-size criteria are not met because of confidentiality considerations and the unreliability of measurements based on small numbers.

- Community Roots Charter School's Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Community Roots Charter School's Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Community Roots Charter School's self-reported staffing data;
- Community Roots Charter School's financial disclosure forms;
- Community Roots Charter School's five-year projected budget;
- On-site review of Community Roots Charter School's financial and operational records;
- Community Roots Charter School's FY11, FY12, FY13, and FY14 independent financial audits;
- Community Roots Charter School's 2014-2015 staff handbook;
- Community Roots Charter School's 2014-2015 student and family handbook; and
- Community Roots Charter School's FY15 budget.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. Two-thirds of the current Board members have been with the Board since the start of the current charter term; seven of the current Board members have been with the school since 2006, an additional three Board members have been on the Board since 2010. The Board has two Co-Chairs, Scott Strasser and Tracey Strauss, who have served on the Board since 2010 and 2006, respectively. The level of membership, currently at 15 members, is consistent with the minimum of seven and maximum of 21 members established in the Board's bylaws.

There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school's organizational chart and school leadership's monthly reports to the Board, as recorded in Board meeting minutes.

The Board's bylaws require a standing Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, an Education Accountability Committee, a Nominating Committee, and an Audit Committee. According to the Board's roster and Board minutes, the Education, Nominating, and Finance Committees are in place. The Executive Committee is not listed on the board roster; however, it is referenced in Board minutes. Additionally, a Development committee is not included in the Board's bylaws, though it is referenced in meeting minutes. An Audit Committee is not referenced in the roster or meeting minutes.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture. The elementary school is led by the school's Co-Founders and Co-Directors, Allison Keil and Sara Stone, both of whom have both been at the school since its inception. Sarah Weeks joined as the Middle School Director in 2012-2013 when the school expanded to include middle school grades. The middle school is currently co-led by Sarah Weeks and Perren Peterson, who joined the school at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

Staff turnover has been inconsistent, ranging between a high of 29% in 2011-2012 to a low of 6% in 2010-2011 during the current charter term. The most recent two years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 saw a reduction in instructional staff turnover from the high point in 2011-2012 to 12% and 13%, respectively.

Average daily attendance for students during the retrospective charter term (2010-2011 through 2013-2014) was 95.9%;<sup>12</sup> the school met its attendance goal of 95% in all years of the current charter term. Across the charter term, the school has achieved favorable results on the NYC School Survey, with high rates of teacher and parent satisfaction in recent years. As the school phased-in to serve middle school grades, student satisfaction was measured for the first time by the NYC DOE in 2012-2013. Student satisfaction levels were generally above the citywide average in 2012-2013, but declined in the most recent year, 2013-2014.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations. The school has at least 66 days of cash on hand to meet current liabilities totaling \$661,733. However, there are concerns about the financial sustainability of the school based on its current practices.

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<sup>12</sup> Reflects attendance data taken from the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system for school years 2009-2010 through 2013-2014

There was no material weakness noted in the three independent financial audits from FY11 to FY13. However, the management letter noted one observation in the independent financial audit for FY14; the observation was associated with the school's limited amount of insurance coverage which totaled \$586,000. To address this issue the school increased its insurance coverage to \$1,000,000, which is above the recommended level of \$700,000, on August 11, 2014.

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

Over the charter term, Community Roots Charter School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others.

Over the charter term, the Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of seven and maximum of 21 members. The Board currently has 15 active members.

For the entirety of the current charter term, the school's bylaws indicated that the Board is to hold no fewer than six meetings per year. Six meetings were held in the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 school years. Four Board meetings have been held to date in the 2014-2015 school year with two more scheduled to take place before the end of the school year. All meetings held to date have met quorum. Board minutes were not available for review for the 2010-2011 school year. Although the number of meetings held during the current charter term is consistent with the school's bylaws, the current Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year. The Board has updated its bylaws to reflect this change.

The Board consistently submitted the Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term. The school has posted its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law.

The Board has inconsistently provided timely notification of Board member changes to the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP). Over the course of the charter term, five Board members have joined the Board, submitting all required documentation to OSDCP for approval in the required timeframe. However, six Board members resigned from the Board over the course of the charter term. The Board did not notify the NYC DOE of these resignations as required within five business days; however, resignation letters have since been shared with OSDCP.

All current Board members have not submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. Five of the 15 current Board members did not submit their conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms in the 2013-2014 NYSED Annual Report. The documents that have been submitted, however, do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.<sup>13</sup>

The Board has inconsistently made board minutes and agendas available to the public. Agendas are available at meetings for review, however, only some minutes are publically available following a meeting. As of the April 2015 review by OSDCP, Board meeting minutes are available on the school's website for all meetings held in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 and for two meetings held during the current 2014-2015 school year.

All Community Roots staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.

The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30% of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.

The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.

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<sup>13</sup> Source: New York State Education Department Annual Report

The school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy that is in use for the 2014-2015 academic year. This policy was determined to be compliant with federal law.

The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is not in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization. The school has a 92% immunization rate.

**D. Plans for Next Charter Term**

Although the school does not plan to serve any additional grades beyond its currently authorized grades of kindergarten through eight, it is requesting to increase its maximum authorized enrollment by 12 students.

## Part 2: School Overview and History

Community Roots Charter School is an elementary/middle school serving 454 students<sup>14</sup> in kindergarten through eighth grade during the 2014-2015 school year. It opened in the 2006-2007 school year with kindergarten and first grade and is under the terms of its second charter. The school's authorized full grade span is for grades kindergarten through eight, which it reached this year, 2014-2015.<sup>15</sup> The school does not currently offer a public universal Pre-Kindergarten program in New York City. The school is located in two NYC DOE-operated buildings in Community School District 13 in Brooklyn.<sup>16</sup> The school's elementary school grades are co-located with P.S. 67 Charles A. Dorsey and P.S. K369 Coy L. Cox School. The school's middle school grades are co-located with P.S. 287 Bailey K. Ashford.<sup>17</sup>

Community Roots' mission is for the school to be "a rigorous K-8 learning community where learning is embedded in meaningful real world context, and where children are deliberately taught to see the connections between school and the world. [Community Roots Charter School] students will meet or exceed the New York State standards and be prepared to excel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by being taught to be independent thinkers and to work productively within a diverse group of learners. At [Community Roots Charter School], students will learn to combine curiosity with appropriate application of knowledge, which will lead them to have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take on challenges to become who they want to be." The school implements against this mission by holding students to high standards of behavior and academic achievement while simultaneously instilling the school's core values, such as honoring one another, taking risks, and working as a team. The school's model (for which it was originally chartered) was based on a student population that reflected the demographic make-up of families in Fort Greene, the Brooklyn neighborhood in which the school is located. During its current charter term, in December 2011, the school revised its admissions policy to include a lottery preference for students who reside in the Ingersoll Houses, Walt Whitman Houses and Farragut Houses, which are the public housing complexes directly surrounding the school's facilities. This lottery preference was meant to ensure that at least 40% of incoming kindergarten students lived in the public housing complexes in the school's immediate vicinity. The school's intent behind having a demographically diverse student population is to foster an inclusive learning environment, which is implemented through the school's core values, social studies-based projects, and a social-emotional curriculum that is tied to the school's academic goals.

Community Roots' Board of Trustees is led by Co-Chairs Scott Strasser and Tracey Strauss, who have been on the Board since 2010 and 2006, respectively. Seven of the 15 current Board members have been on the Board since the school's inception. The school is led by its Co-Founders and Co-Directors Allison Keil and Sara Stone, who also have daily leadership responsibilities over the elementary school grades. Community Roots' middle school grades are led by Co-Directors Sarah Weeks, who is the founding Middle School Director and has been with Community Roots since the middle school opened in 2012-2013, and Perren Peterson, who has been with the school since the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

The school typically enrolls new students in grades kindergarten through eight, though kindergarten is considered the primary entry grade. The school reports backfilling students from the waitlist during the school year across all grades. There were 1,110 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2014 lottery; 1,205 applications were received for the 2014-2015 school year.<sup>18</sup>

Over the charter term, the school enrolled and served students as follows, with average class size and section count noted for the most recently completed school year, 2013-2014.

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<sup>14</sup> ATS data as of October 31, 2014

<sup>15</sup> NYC DOE internal data

<sup>16</sup> NYC DOE internal data

<sup>17</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System

<sup>18</sup> Self-reported information collected through the 2014-2015 DOE Annual Charter School Survey

## Enrollment

Grade-Level Annual Enrollment *	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Kindergarten	50	50	49	50
Grade 1	50	50	50	49
Grade 2	50	51	50	50
Grade 3	50	50	51	50
Grade 4	50	49	50	50
Grade 5	50	48	50	50
Grade 6	-	-	50	54
Grade 7	-	-	-	54
Grade 8	-	-	-	-
Total Enrollment	300	298	350	407

\* Enrollment figures reflect ATS data as of October 31 for each school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

## Additional Enrollment Data

School Year 2013-2014 Information	Section Count	Average Class Size
Kindergarten	2	25
Grade 1	2	25
Grade 2	2	25
Grade 3	2	25
Grade 4	2	25
Grade 5	2	25
Grade 6	2	27
Grade 7	2	27
Grade 8		-
Students Admitted Through The Lottery	80	

\* Lottery information is based on self-reported data from the 2013-2014 DOE Annual Charter School Survey. Section counts are based on self-reported information collected as part of the school's Renewal Application. Average Class Sizes were determined by dividing ATS enrollment as of October 31, 2013 by the appropriate grade-level section count.

Please see additional demographic data in Section 4 of this report for information regarding the enrollment of special populations at Community Roots Charter School. This information includes enrollment data for the percentage of students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities as compared to the CSD and citywide averages, as well as targets recently finalized by the NYSED.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, Board of Regents authorized charter schools, including those authorized by NYC DOE, will be held accountable to enrollment targets established by NYSED for students with disabilities, English Language Learner students, and students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Lunch. Please note that the recently finalized targets are currently based on enrollment in the 2010-2011 school year and may be updated in the future.

## Part 3: Renewal Report Overview

### Renewal Report

This report contains the findings and recommendations of the NYC DOE regarding the charter school's application for charter renewal. This report is based on a cumulative record of the school's progress during the current charter term, including but not limited to oversight visits, annual reports, and formal correspondence between the school and its authorizer, the NYC DOE, all of which are conducted in order to evaluate and monitor the charter school's academic, fiscal, and operational performance. Additionally, the NYC DOE incorporates into this report its findings from the renewal application process, which includes a written application, a report on student achievement data and a school visit by the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships and other staff from the NYC DOE.

Upon review of all the relevant materials, a recommendation is made to the NYC DOE Chancellor. The Chancellor's determination, and the findings on which that decision is based, is then submitted to the New York State Board of Regents.

### Is the school an academic success?

To assess whether a school is an academic success, the NYC DOE considers performance measures, including, but not limited to the following (as appropriate for grades served):

- New York State ELA and math assessment absolute results;
- New York State Regents exams passage rates;
- Comparative proficiency for elementary and middle schools, including growth rates for ELA and math proficiency;
- Comparative graduation rates and Regents completion rates for high schools;
- Closing the achievement gap performance relative to CSD or New York City public schools;
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) or other approved alternate assessments; and
- Performance data pertaining to college and career readiness.

Academic success is rated as **Demonstrated**, **Partially Demonstrated**, or **Not Yet Demonstrated**.

### Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?

To assess whether a school is a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization, OSDCP focuses on three areas: Governance Structure & Organizational Design, School Climate & Community Engagement, and Financial Health. This includes an analysis of the school's audited financial statements, based on the National Association of Charter School Authorizer's Core Performance Framework.<sup>20</sup>

The NYC DOE considers a variety of supporting materials and data, including but not limited to the following:

- Board of Trustee bylaws;
- Board of Trustee meeting minutes;
- Annual Reports submitted by schools to New York State Education Department;
- NYC DOE School Surveys;
- Data collection sheets provided by schools;
- Student, staff, and Board turnover rates;
- Audits of authorized enrollment numbers; and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed**, **Partially Developed**, or **Not Yet Developed**. A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

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<sup>20</sup> Please refer to the following website for more information:  
[http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/126547/q/%20q=performance\\*20framework&c=82](http://nacsa.mycrowdwisdom.com/diweb/catalog/item/id/126547/q/%20q=performance*20framework&c=82)

**Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?**

As it pertains to compliance, the NYC DOE identifies areas of compliance and noncompliance with relevant laws and regulations as identified in the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework.

**Staff Representatives**

The following experts participated in the review of this school, including the renewal visit to the school on February 9 – 10, 2015:

- Maria Campo, Senior Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Kaitlin Padgett, Director of Evaluation and Policy, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Ola Duru, Director of Operations, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Caitlin Robisch, Director of Analytics, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Paul Yen, Data Analyst, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Ama Awotwi, Manager, NYC DOE Office of Formative Assessment

## Part 4: Findings

### Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

At the time of this school's renewal, Community Roots Charter School has demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

#### High Academic Attainment and Improvement

- The school has four years of academic performance data and four years of NYS assessment data for the retrospective charter term at the time of this report. For detailed information on grade-level data on NYS assessments, please see Appendix A.

NOTE: The 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 ELA and math proficiency percentages should not be compared directly with prior-year results. Unlike prior years, proficiency on the NYS assessments for ELA and math in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 were based on the Common Core Learning Standards – a more demanding set of knowledge and skills necessary for 21<sup>st</sup> century college and career readiness.

#### ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments, compared to CSD, NYC and State averages

% Proficient in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	66.7%	73.6%	43.8%	45.6%
CSD 13	47.4%	49.8%	25.4%	25.9%
Difference from CSD 13 *	19.3	23.8	18.4	19.7
NYC	49.4%	51.2%	26.8%	28.3%
Difference from NYC *	17.3	22.4	17.0	17.3
New York State **	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	13.9	18.5	12.7	15.0

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	71.3%	73.0%	46.8%	50.2%
CSD 13	53.3%	57.5%	25.0%	26.9%
Difference from CSD 13 *	18.0	15.5	21.8	23.3
NYC	60.0%	62.6%	31.7%	36.2%
Difference from NYC *	11.3	10.4	15.1	14.0
New York State **	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	8.0	8.2	15.7	14.0

\* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

\*\* New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

## Performance on the NYC Progress Report

Elementary School Progress Report Grades <sup>21</sup>	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Overall Grade	C	C	B	Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
Student Progress	F	D	B	
Student Performance	C	B	B	
School Environment	A	A	A	

## Mission and Academic Goals

According to the Renewal Application submitted to the NYC DOE by Community Roots Charter School, as well as annual reports submitted to the NYSED, over each year of the retrospective charter term the school achieved/met academic goals as follows:

- 6 of 12 applicable charter goals in the first year of the charter,
- 7 of 13 in the second year,
- 8 of 10 in the third year,<sup>22</sup>
- 5 of 9 in the fourth year
- 

## Progress Towards Academic Charter Goals \*

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. Each year, 75% of students in grades three through eight will demonstrate proficiency (i.e. score at or above Level 3) on NYS ELA exams.	Not Met	Not Met	N/A	Not Met
2. Each year, 75% of students in grades three through eight will demonstrate proficiency (i.e. score at or above Level 3) on NYS math exams.	Not Met	Partially Met	N/A	Not Met
3. Each year, 75% of students in grades three through eight will demonstrate proficiency (i.e. score at or above Level 3) on the NYS Science exams.	Met	Met	Met	Met
4. Each year, at least 75% of students in grades kindergarten through eight will meet or exceed the school's Exit Outcomes in all content areas.	Met	Met	Met	Partially Met
5. Each year, 75% of kindergarten students will perform at Levels 1 and 2 on appropriate skill areas on the ECLAS2; 75% of first grade students will perform at or above Level 4 on appropriate skill areas on the ECLAS2.	N/A	Met	Met	Met

<sup>21</sup> For purposes of the NYC DOE Progress Report, Community Roots Charter School was classified as an elementary school for the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years.

<sup>22</sup> It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not include goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math exams or goals that measure reducing the performance gap of a cohort in ELA and math assessments in its analysis of progress towards goals for the 2012-2013 school year. Goals that refer to comparative academic performance of the school (e.g. to the Community School District) were included in the analysis. In addition, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE will not include goals that are related to NYC DOE Progress Report Grades or, due to a change in state regulation, goals that are related to standardized assessments for students in grades kindergarten through two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
6. Each year the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on NYS ELA and math exams will increase. In the event that the percentage of students in a grade level cohort of the same students demonstrating proficiency is below 75%, the grade level cohort will reduce by at least one half each year the difference between the percentage proficiency and 75%. In the event that the percentage of students in a grade level cohort of the same students demonstrating proficiency is at or above 75%, the grade level cohort will continue to demonstrate growth each year.	Partially Met	Partially Met	N/A	Not Met
7. Each year, the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on NYS ELA exams will be higher than that of CSD 13.	Met	Met	Met	Met
8. Each year, the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on NYS math exams will be higher than that of CSD 13.	Met	Met	Met	Met
9. Each year, the school will earn a score sufficient to place it in the 75th percentile of all schools on the "Performance" section of the NYC DOE Progress Report.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
10. Each year, the school will earn a score sufficient to place it in the 75th percentile of all schools on the "Progress" section of the NYC DOE Progress Report.	Not Met	Not Met	Not Met	N/A
11. Each year, the school will receive a 'B' or higher on the Student Progress section of the NYC DOE Progress Report.	Not Met	Not Met	Met	N/A
12. Each year, the school will be deemed "In Good Standing" on the NYS Report Card.	Met	Met	Met	N/A
13. Each year, the school will have an average daily student attendance rate of at least 95%. This will be measured using ATS.	Met	Met	Met	Met

\* Goals were self-reported by the school in the school's Renewal Application submitted to NYC DOE and 2013-2014 Annual Report documentation submitted to NYSED.

## Responsive Education Program

The school administered ECLAS-2 (which was replaced by Fox in a Box as the commercially available ECLAS-2 product), and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) for most of the charter term. The following was found:

- According to the results of the school-created Exit Outcomes, in the four areas of ELA, math, social studies, and social/emotional development, in the 2013-2014 school year the average percentage of Community Roots students' meeting or exceeding the Exit Outcomes was as follows: ELA- 83.6%, Math- 78.3%, Social Studies- 94.4%, and Social/Emotional Development- 82.9%. The school met its 75% performance goal in all applicable grade levels in all years of the charter term, with the exception of kindergarten and grade four in math in the 2013-2014 school year.
- According to the results of the ECLAS-2 assessment (and later Fox in the Box), Community Roots met a majority of its grade-specific goals related to this assessment over the course of its charter term.

As part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE visited the school on February 9 – 10, 2015. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- **Alignment with Common Core:**

- School leadership reported that they made adjustments to the curriculum to reflect the rigorous standards of the CCLS beginning in the 2011-2012 school year. The elementary school applies an integrated studies approach which is implemented through social studies-based project units. Along with the integrated studies units, the school also provides direct instruction in content areas.
- In ELA, the school utilized a literacy staff developer from LitLife to work with the elementary school instructional staff to ensure the alignment of the curriculum and instructional practice with the CCLS. The school made revisions to school-developed reading and writing units to ensure that CCLS alignment has occurred in grades kindergarten through five. This work focused on reading comprehension, independent thinking, and a protocol for reviewing student writing products.
- In ELA, the school adopted EngageNY for grades six through eight. The EngageNY curriculum is supplemented with a focus on the 6+1 Traits of Writing. At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, the middle school changed from an interdisciplinary Humanities course to an ELA period and a separate social studies period.
- In math, the school used a staff developer to assist teachers in redesigning lessons to refine alignment to the CCLS in the 2012-2013 school year. In the 2013-2014 school year, the school added two elementary-level math specialists to the staff, one to support kindergarten to grade two and the other to support grades three through five. The math specialists worked with classroom teachers to revise the math curriculum to be more aligned with the CCLS instructional strategies. The school also adopted EngageNY for math during the 2013-2014 school year, changing from TERC Investigations.
- In the 2013-2014 school year, the school partnered with the Achievement Network to increase curricular and interim assessment alignment with the CCLS.

- **Addressing the Needs of All Learners:**

- The school identifies students who are not making academic progress or are performing below grade level through frequent, targeted assessments. The school plans individual interventions for those students and then assesses the outcomes of those interventions. The interventions may include differentiated instruction provided by the classroom teachers, or push-in or pull-out strategies through a learning specialist. In the middle school grades, students are offered additional support during “office hours” in the morning or “academic lunches” with teachers during lunch periods.
- The school provides a special education program that includes integrated co-teaching (ICT) in each classroom for all grades, with one special education certified teacher and one general education certified teacher, as well as related services such as Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy. The school employs two Directors of Special Education, with one at the elementary school and one at the middle school, and five Learning Specialists who communicate with families and provide services to students as per the students’ Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.
- The school utilizes a Support Provider Team (SPT) comprised of a learning specialist, Director of Special Education, social worker, and related service provider, in collaboration with classroom teachers, to provide services not only for students with IEPs, but also for students who are considered at risk, including intervention in reading and writing.
- For students who are determined to be Limited English Proficient (LEP), as identified through the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), the school provides a structured English immersion program. The school provides further support services, such as pull-out instruction and/or assignment to a certified aide, teacher, or relevant consultant who speaks that student’s non-English language, if it is determined that the LEP student is struggling with the structured English immersion program.
- The school provides small group and/or individual support to students whose academic performance indicates that they are in need of acceleration. At the middle school level,

the school offers accelerated math to prepare students to take math Regents exams in the eighth grade.

- **Instructional Model and Classroom Instruction:**

- School leadership reported that the formal evaluation of and feedback to teachers is through a teacher evaluation rubric that was adapted from the Kim Marshall rubric. The evaluation process is specific to the seniority of the staff. If a teacher has been on staff at the school for more than three years, they have a self-directed evaluation rubric and work with school leadership to choose an area of focus for the school year. If a teacher has been at the school for less than three years, they are evaluated by school leadership using the full teacher evaluation rubric.
- The school has developed a calendar of regularly administered student assessments, including multiple forms of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. The school's assessments include norm-referenced interim exams, teacher-created assessments, exit outcomes and learning targets that are aligned to the CCLS, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)/Quantitative Reading Inventory (QRI) for reading assessments, and EngageNY math modules for math assessments.
  - The data from the assessments is used to inform small group instruction and allows teachers to help students set personal academic goals using specific data points. Teachers also meet three times a year to analyze student data and identify small group, class, and grade trends. In addition, they plan together how they can adapt their instruction in order to respond to the data. The teachers also use student assessment data as part of their reflection on their own practice, and to set goals based on student performance data.
- At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, the school partnered with Public Prep, a local charter management network, to develop a system of shared assessments, rubrics, and data analysis tools. The partnership also provides Community Roots with a larger collection of aggregate student data, allowing the school to compare the performance of its students to the performance of students at other schools.
- School leadership reported that the professional development provided for all teaching staff includes a two week "Summer Institute," weekly whole staff meetings, weekly grade-level team meetings, bi-monthly meetings with a co-director for direct observational feedback, and monthly sessions on writing, math, and ICT development. Examples of professional development focus areas for the 2014-2015 school year in the elementary school included diversity and the use of student assessment data; in the middle school, focus areas included the "big blocks" of curriculum, building community and culture, and common practices and structures. (The 2014-2015 school year is the first year that the middle school serves all grades.)

During the renewal visit, the NYC DOE observed 24 classrooms across grades kindergarten through eighth with the school's Co-Directors at both the elementary and middle school level and with the elementary school's Math Intervention Specialist.

- In a majority of the observed classes, teachers were following a team teaching model, mostly consisting of two instructors. In a few of the observed classes, teachers followed a lead and assist model. Most special education services were provided via ICT. In a few instances, students received pull-out services.
- Class-sizes observed ranged from 17 to 25 students, with two teachers in all classrooms.
- The form of questioning most frequently observed during the classroom observations was challenging students to demonstrate understanding, through explaining or restating, along with basic fact recall questions. In a few of the classrooms, questioning included challenges for students to analyze and apply.
- In most classrooms, the checks for understanding that were observed included questioning, observing, performance-based activities, and classwork.
- In some observed classrooms, there was evidence of differentiation, including differentiated tasks and materials. For example, during a writers' workshop, in the fourth grade, the class was broken into several small groups with different focus areas and levels of support in each group. In one group students gave peer-feedback, which was

moderated by the teacher. In another group students worked closely with instructional staff to craft their narratives. Other students in the class worked independently.

- In most observed classes, students demonstrated awareness of classroom rules or procedures.
- In all observed classes, students were either fully on task or mostly on task with two to three students being off-task. In those cases, teachers usually redirected the student through a one-on-one conversation.
- Based on debriefs with the school's leadership team members after classroom visits, all classrooms had instruction that aligned with the instructional model and current academic goals of the school.

## Learning Environment

NYC DOE representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with 17 teachers, three special education staff members, the Director of Finance, the Director of Middle School Operations, and the Director of Social Work and Community Programs. The following was noted:

- Most interviewed teachers reported that professional development happens weekly. The professional development opportunities discussed by the interviewed teachers included the summer training, trainings off-site at different schools, and trainings that are led by partner organizations in-house. Topics range from diversity and inclusion in the classroom to analyzing data from interim assessments.
- Most interviewed teachers mentioned that observations take place regularly by members of the school's leadership team. Feedback is then provided to teachers via email. Over the course of the year, teachers and the Co-Directors engage in a self- and staff-evaluation. Teachers mentioned that the rubric used for the evaluation was developed in-house by the school's leaders.
- Some of the interviewed teachers mentioned that the school made several changes to become better aligned to the CCLS. Some of the changes discussed included a shift to higher level questioning and focusing more deeply on reading, writing, and math.
- Many of the interviewed teachers discussed the use of data to drive their instruction and to determine groupings by both abilities and needs. The teachers gather data from informal assessments such as observations and questioning, as well as formal assessments such as Fox in a Box, DRA, and the NYS ELA and math assessments.
- Several interviewed teachers mentioned a diversity working group that is comprised of teachers across different grade levels. One focus of the group is to discuss how to best talk to students about issues of diversity that come up both in the classroom and in the outside world.

One group of 10 fifth grade students and one group of 14 eighth grade students were interviewed. Based on student interviews conducted during the February, 2015 visit to the school, the following was noted:

- Students interviewed reported that the school work was challenging, with some classes being more difficult than others. They felt that the teachers had high academic expectations for them and are also encouraging.
- Students interviewed also reported that the purpose of homework is to keep learning throughout the whole day and for the teachers to better understand how the students are doing.

According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 99% of parents agree "that the school has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss [their] child" and 97% of parents who responded to the survey agree "that the school has high expectations for [their] child."<sup>23</sup>

According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 92% of teachers agree that "order and discipline are maintained at the school" and 95% disagree with the statement that "at my school students are often harassed or bullied in school."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 86% of parent respondents strongly agree that Community Roots has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss their child; another 13% agree with the statement. Similarly, 73% of parent respondents strongly agree that Community Roots has high expectations for their child; another 24% agree with the statement.

<sup>24</sup> According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 36% of teacher respondents strongly agree that order and discipline are maintained at Community Roots; another 56% agree with the statement. Of teacher respondents, 39% strongly disagree that students are often harassed or bullied in the school; 56% of teacher respondents disagree with the statement; 6% agree with the statement; and 0% strongly agree with the statement.

## **Essential Question 2: Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?**

### **Governance Structure & Organizational Design**

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has developed its governance structure and organizational design.

On February 9, 2015, as part of the renewal review process, a representative for the NYC DOE attended a meeting of the school's Board of Trustees and met with a representation of the school's Board of Trustees independent of the school leadership team. Based on document review and observation, the following was noted:

- The Board currently has 15 active members. This level of membership is consistent within the minimum of seven members and maximum of 21 members established in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board's two Co-Chairpersons and Secretary roles are specified positions in the Board's bylaws and are currently filled; however, the bylaws also reference a Vice Chairperson and a Treasurer position, neither of which is currently filled.
- The Board held, or is scheduled to hold, a number of meetings that is consistent with its bylaws. All board meetings that were held over the course of the charter term achieved quorum.
- The Board is updated by school Directors as recorded in all available meeting minutes.
- There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school's organizational chart.
- The Board's bylaws require a standing Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, an Education Accountability Committee, a Nominating Committee, and an Audit Committee. According to the Board's roster and minutes reviewed, the Education, Nominating, and Finance Committees are in place. The Executive Committee is not listed on the Board roster; however, it is referenced in Board minutes. Additionally, a Development Committee is not included in the Board's bylaws, though it is referenced in meeting minutes. An Audit Committee is not referenced in the roster or meeting minutes.
- The Board has two Co-Chairs, Scott Strasser and Tracey Strauss, who have served on the Board since 2010 and 2006, respectively. Prior to becoming a Co-Chair, Scott Strasser served as the Board Treasurer. The elementary school is led by the school's Co-Founders and Co-Directors, Allison Keil and Sara Stone, both of whom have been at the school since its inception. Sarah Weeks joined as the Middle School Director in 2012-2013 when the school expanded to include middle school grades. At that time, she was supported by Adam Weinstock, the Assistant Middle School Director who left before the start of the 2014-2015 school year. Perren Peterson joined the middle school leadership team at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, and the model for the middle school was changed to include a Co-Directorship.

### **School Climate & Community Engagement**

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has developed a stable school culture.

- The school met its charter goal of having an annual average student attendance rate of at least 95% in every year of the charter term. Average daily attendance for students over the course of the retrospective charter term is 95.9% according to the data in the table below.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> The table reflects average daily attendance data taken from the NYC DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) system for school years 2010-2011 through 2013-2014. Please note that the school self-reported different attendance rates in its Renewal Application than those recorded in ATS for the most recent three years, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, though the differences are not significant. The school self-reported attendance rates of 96.0% for school years 2011-2012, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014.

## Average Attendance

Elementary and Middle School Attendance				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School*</b>	<b>96.3%</b>	<b>95.9%</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>95.5%</b>
NYC**	93.2%	93.9%	93.6%	93.2%
Difference from NYC	3.1	2.0	2.2	2.3

\* Attendance was taken from ATS.

\*\* NYC attendance figures reflect average attendance across all general education district schools as reflected in ATS.

- The school has experienced inconsistent levels of instructional staff turnover during the course of the charter term, with turnover ranging between a low of 6% in 2010-2011 and high of 29% in the next year, 2011-2012. The two most recent years, 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, saw a reduction in instructional staff turnover from the high in 2011-2012 to 12% and 13%, respectively. For the most recent period, 2013-2014, six out of 47 instructional staff did not return, either by choice or by request, at the start of the following school year.<sup>26</sup>
- Student mobility is presented below for the charter term without comparison to other schools, the CSD, or NYC as final student retention goals were not yet finalized by the New York State Education Department for the retrospective charter term at the time this report was created. Based on the NYC DOE's evaluation and not in comparison to any other school, the CSD, or NYC averages, the school has not had significant challenges with retaining students.

## Mobility

Student Mobility out of Community Roots Charter School *				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Number of Students who Left the School	10	25	22	52
Percent of Students who Left the School	4.0%	8.4%	6.3%	12.8%

\* Figures are based on student enrollment as of October 31 for each respective school year with the exception of the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012. Students in terminal grades are not included.

- The NYC DOE has made changes to the NYC School Survey during the entirety of the retrospective charter term. Questions asked have been altered, added, or deleted from year to year. Also, beginning with the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, survey categories will not be measured in total points out of 10 possible points. To allow for consistency during the evaluated charter term, selected questions, consistent with the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework were identified as relevant for charter schools. These are presented below for the duration of the retrospective charter term. In the most recent year of survey results, 2013-2014, the percentage of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for all of the four selected questions, and the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for all of the three selected questions. However, the percentage of students agreeing or strongly agreeing was below citywide averages for all of the three selected questions.
- NYC School Survey Response Rates should be comparable over time, however, as the measurement of these has remained consistent. Response rates for parents, teachers, and students (if participating) are presented below for each year of the charter term. The response rates for Community Roots' students and parents were above NYC averages in all years. However, the response rates for Community Roots' teachers were above the NYC averages in only one of the most recent four years.

<sup>26</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form in January 2015

## NYC School Survey Results

Percent of Respondents that Agree or Strongly Agree						
Survey Question		Community Roots Charter School				Citywide Average
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014
Students*	Most of my teachers make me excited about learning.**	-	-	66%	47%	62%
	Most students at my school treat each other with respect.	-	-	68%	52%	60%
	I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, cafeteria, etc.	-	-	88%	75%	79%
Parents	I feel satisfied with the education my child has received this year.	99%	99%	99%	97%	95%
	My child's school makes it easy for parents to attend meetings.	98%	96%	98%	98%	94%
	I feel satisfied with the response I get when I contact my child's school.	99%	99%	99%	97%	95%
Teachers	Order and discipline are maintained at my school.	100%	101%	94%	92%	80%
	The principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school.	96%	97%	100%	97%	88%
	School leaders place a high priority on the quality of teaching.	100%	94%	100%	100%	92%
	I would recommend my school to parents.***	-	97%	100%	100%	81%

\* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

\*\* This question was phrased as "My teachers inspire me to learn" in the 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 School Surveys.

\*\*\* This question was not introduced until the 2011-2012 School Survey.

## NYC School Survey Results

		Response Rates			
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students*	Community Roots Charter School	-	-	88%	88%
	NYC	-	-	83%	83%
Parents	Community Roots Charter School	58%	73%	80%	70%
	NYC	52%	53%	54%	53%
Teachers	Community Roots Charter School	79%	100%	80%	79%
	NYC	82%	81%	83%	81%

\* Students in grades kindergarten through five do not participate in the NYC School Survey.

- The school’s charter goals include, “parents will express satisfaction with the school’s program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and Respect; the school will only have met this goal if 50% or more parents participate in the survey.” The school met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. This goal was not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school’s charter goals include, “teachers will express satisfaction with school leadership and professional development opportunities as determined by the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and Respect; the school will only have met this goal if 50% or more teachers participate in the survey.” The school met this goal in the 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years. This goal was not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.
- The school’s charter goals include, “students will express satisfaction with the school’s program, based on the NYC School Survey in which the school receives scores of 7.5 or higher in each of the four survey domains: Academic Expectations, Communication, Engagement, and Safety and Respect; the school will only have met this goal if 50% or more students participate in the survey.” This goal was not applicable for the 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 school years because the school did not serve students in surveyed grades. The school partially met this goal in the 2012-2013 school year.<sup>27</sup> This goal was not applicable for the 2013-2014 school year.

As part of the renewal process, representatives for the NYC DOE have collected evidence relevant to the school’s climate and community engagement over the school’s charter term. Based on discussion, document collection and review, and observation, the following was noted:

- Community Roots maintains an active parent group called the Community Council, which meets regularly throughout the school year.
- The NYC DOE conducted a public renewal hearing on February 10, 2015 at Community Roots Charter School located at 51 Saint Edwards Street, Brooklyn, NY 11205 for the school in an effort to elicit public comments. Approximately 200 participants attended the hearing with 41 people speaking in support of the school’s renewal and none in opposition.
- The NYC DOE made randomized phone calls to parents/guardians from a roster provided by the school for students of all grades. Calls to school parents/guardians were made in January 2015 until 20 phone calls were completed. Of these calls, 100% of parent/guardian respondents provided positive feedback and 0% provided negative feedback regarding the school.

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<sup>27</sup> If the school received less than 7.5 points in one or more of the Survey categories based on student responses, the goal was considered ‘partially met.’ In the 2012-2013 school year, Community Roots received fewer than 7.5 points in both the Engagement and Safety and Respect categories.

## Financial Health

**Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations.**

- Based on the fiscal year 2014 (FY14) financial audit and follow up, the school's current ratio of 2.20 indicates a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit and follow up, the school had 66 days of cash on hand; this is sufficient unrestricted cash to meet operating expenses for at least two months without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2014-2015 budget to the actual enrollment as of September 30, 2014 revealed that the school had met its enrollment target, supporting its projected revenue.
- As of the FY14 financial audit, the school had no debt obligations.

## Financial Sustainability

**Overall, there are concerns about the financial sustainability of the school based on its current practices.**

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY14, the school generated an aggregate surplus of 4% over these audited fiscal years, though in FY14 the school operated at a deficit.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit and follow up, the school's debt-to-asset ratio of 0.37 indicated that the school had more total assets than it had total liabilities.
- Based on the financial audits from FY11 through FY14, the school generated overall negative cash flow from FY11 to FY14, and the school generated negative cash flow in each measurable year. While the overall cash flow for the charter term is negative, the school does maintain unrestricted cash reserves of \$1.5 million.

There was no material weakness noted in the four independent financial audits from FY11 to FY14. However, the management letter noted one observation in the independent financial audit for FY14; the observation was associated with the school's limited amount of insurance coverage, which totaled \$586,000.

- “[The audit] noted insurance coverage under business personal property is limited to \$586,000. This coverage appears low based on the replacement cost of property and equipment of approximately \$700,000 at June 30, 2014. Therefore, [the auditors] believe the School is underinsured in regards to the above coverage.”
  - To address this issue, the school increased its insurance coverage to \$1,000,000, which is above the recommended level of \$700,000, on August 11, 2014.

### **Essential Question 3: Is the School Compliant with its Charter and All Applicable Law and Regulations?**

Over the charter term, Community Roots Charter School has been compliant with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others.

As of the review in April 2015, the Board of Trustees for Community Roots Charter School is in compliance with:

- **Membership size.** Over the charter term, the Board has consistently had a membership size that falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws, a minimum of seven and maximum of 21 members. The Board currently has 15 members.
- **Timely submission of documents.** The Board consistently submitted the Annual Report to the NYSED by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term. The school has posted its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law.
- **Notification of Board Member Resignations/Submission of New Board Members for Approval.** Five new members joined the Board over the course of the charter term. The new Board members submitted the required documents for approval by OSDCP in the required timeframe. Six people resigned from the Board over the course of the charter term. The Board did not notify the NYC DOE of these resignations within the required five business days; however, resignation letters have since been shared with the OSDCP.
- **Required number of board meetings.** The Board's bylaws state that the Board is to hold no fewer than six meetings each year. Six meetings were held in the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 school years. Four Board meetings have been held to date in the 2014-2015 school year with two more scheduled to take place before the end of the school year. All meetings to date have met quorum. Minutes were not available for review for the 2010-2011 school year.
  - The current Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year. The Board has updated its bylaws to state the following: "Regular meetings shall be held monthly or otherwise in accordance with the requirements of §2851 of the New York State Charter Schools Act."

As of the review in April 2015, the Board of Trustees for Community Roots Charter School is out of compliance with:

- **Submission of all required documents.** All current Board members have not submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. Five out of the 15 current Board members did not submit their conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms in the 2013-2014 NYSED Annual Report. The documents that have been submitted do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.<sup>28</sup>
- **Posting of minutes and agendas.** The Board has inconsistently made Board minutes and agendas available to the public. Agendas are available at meetings for review, however, only some minutes are publicly available following a meeting. As of the April 2015 review by the OSDCP, Board meeting minutes are available on the school's website for all meetings held in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, but only two of the four meetings held this school year.

As of the review in April 2015, the charter school is in compliance with:

- **Fingerprint clearance.** All staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- **Teacher certification.** The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification. The Charter Schools Act prohibits more than five staff members or more than 30% of the teaching staff from not being certified in accordance with requirements applicable to other public schools.
- **Insurance.** The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.
- **Application and Lottery.** For enrollment in the 2014-2015 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 8, 2014, adhering to charter law's requirement of accepting applications up to at least April 1. Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently adhere to this requirement.
- **Safety Documents.** The school has submitted the required safety plan. The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.

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<sup>28</sup> Source: New York State Education Department Annual Report

- **Fire Emergency.** One of the school leaders was trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.
- **Timely Submission of Invoicing and Reconciliation Documents.** Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.
- **Student Discipline Plan.** The school has provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy that is in use for the 2014-2015 academic year. This policy was determined to be in compliance with federal law.

As of the review in April 2015, the charter school is out of compliance with:

- **Immunization.** The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is not in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization. The school has a 92% compliance rate.

### Enrollment and Retention Targets

- Amendments to Article 56 of the New York State Consolidated Laws: Education, which relates to Charter Schools, call for charter schools, as a consideration of renewal, “to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets” for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program. The amendments further indicate “Repeated failure to comply with the requirement” as a cause for revocation or termination of the charter.
  - The law directs schools to demonstrate “that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students” in the event it has not yet met its targets.
  - The NYC DOE, as authorizer, will annually monitor the school’s performance against these targets and the efforts it makes to meet this state requirement.
  - As of the creation of this report, charter school enrollment and retention targets as required by the NYS Charter Schools Act were still in a proposed status; these targets have since been finalized. The information presented below for enrollment is compared to NYC CSD and NYC averages, as well as the recently finalized current enrollment targets developed by NYSED. It should be noted that these targets were developed using a different methodology than that used to develop the school-specific enrollment rates for each special population as presented below.<sup>29</sup>
- In all years of operation, including the most recently completed school year 2013-2014, Community Roots Charter School:
  - served a lower percentage of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Lunch compared to both the CSD 13 and citywide percentages;
  - served a higher percentage of students with disabilities compared to both the CSD 13 and citywide percentages, with the exceptions of the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, in which the school served a lower percentage of students with disabilities than the citywide rate but still served a higher percentage than the CSD 13 rate; and
  - served a lower percentage of English Language Learner students compared to both the CSD 13 and citywide percentages.

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<sup>29</sup> Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

## Enrollment of Special Populations<sup>30</sup>

Special Population		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 State Enrollment Target (Current)
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>27.2%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>85.7%</b>
	CSD 13	78.7%	77.5%	76.2%	74.1%	
	NYC	81.8%	84.1%	83.0%	82.4%	
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>
	CSD 13	15.3%	14.5%	15.7%	19.2%	
	NYC	17.4%	17.3%	18.2%	20.1%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
	CSD 13	6.4%	6.1%	5.7%	5.8%	
	NYC	17.6%	17.0%	16.0%	15.1%	

Additional Enrollment Information				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-5	K-5	K-6	K-7
CSD(s)	13	13	13	13

<sup>30</sup> Comparisons of a charter school's special populations to the CSD and City are made relative only to the grades served by the school. For example, if a charter school serves grades kindergarten through five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to grades kindergarten through five in the CSD and citywide. CSD comparisons are particular to the grades served in each CSD each year. Enrollment rates reflect demographic characteristics as of June 1 and enrollment as of October 31 for each given school year, with the exception of enrollment in the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.

State enrollment targets were generated by a calculator developed by the State Education Department (SED). Once a school's CSD, total enrollment and grade span are entered, the calculator generates a school-specific enrollment target. The CSD for a multi-district school is the primary CSD as determined by each school. The enrollment is determined by the total number of students enrolled as of October 31, 2013. Any school with an unusual grade configuration (i.e. K, 6-9) should use an available grade configuration provided by SED that is most aligned as determined by the DOE, otherwise a school's actual grade span is used. For more information regarding SED's methodology behind the calculation of charter school enrollment and retention targets, please refer to the memo at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2012Meetings/July2012/712brca11.pdf>.

## **Essential Question 4: What are the School's Plans for the Next Charter Term?**

As reported by school leadership and the school's Board, the following was noted:

- The school does not plan any further grade-level expansion or replication in its next charter term.
- The school is requesting a material revision to increase its maximum authorized enrollment from 450 students to 462 students. The additional 12 students would be added in the middle school grades, with an additional four students per grade (in grades six through eight).
- The school plans to refine its programmatic and structural practices, in particular related to school culture, to ensure vertical alignment between the elementary and middle schools now that the school is at full operating scale.
- The 2010 amendments to the NYS Charter Schools Act require charter schools to attract and retain at-risk students, specifically students who are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, students with disabilities, and English Language Learner students, at rates proportional to their schools in their districts of location. In response to this regulation, Community Roots Charter School has demonstrated efforts to attract and retain these students.
  - Since the school's enrollment rate of students with disabilities has exceeded that of Community School District 13 in every year of its current charter, the school recognizes that it needs to focus recruitment efforts on students who qualify for Free or Reduced Price Lunch and English Language Learner (ELL) students. To attract students in the former group, the school includes information on the meal program during school open houses, on the school application, and during school tours. The school also provides support to assist eligible families in completing necessary paperwork for enrollment into the lunch program. Along with the school's lottery preference for students who live in neighboring housing complexes, the school targets recruitment in neighborhoods directly surrounding the school facilities and in the local district.
  - To attract ELL students, the school conducts outreach through multi-lingual staff to immigrant communities and specialized feeder schools and programs. In addition, the school translates marketing materials, the school application, and school brochures into multiple languages and ensures that they are distributed to immigrant advocacy groups in the district. The school also uses word of mouth by encouraging current ELL families to share their experiences and information about the school with their communities.

## Part 5: Background on the Charter Renewal Process

### Renewal Process

In the final year of its charter, a NYC DOE Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during the current charter term and establish goals and objectives for the next charter term. Ultimately, the renewal process offers an opportunity for the school community to reflect on its experiences during its prior term, to make a compelling, evidence-based case that it has earned the privilege of an additional charter term and, if renewed, to carry out an ambitious plan for the future.

The NYC DOE does not automatically grant charter renewal, and no charter operator is entitled to renewal. Rather, a school must prove that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City public school students. To make such determinations, the NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) renewal team performs a comprehensive review of the school's academic, operational and fiscal performance over the course of the charter, which includes an analysis of the school's renewal application. This application is built around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and includes a retrospective analysis of the school's prior track record as well as a prospective plan for the school. In reviewing this information, a school must be able to demonstrate that it can satisfy the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

The school presents evidence to support its application for renewal by providing a compelling response to these overarching questions that demonstrates its students have made significant academic progress, is serving students equitably, has sustainable operations to be successful in the next charter term, and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its current charter. In addition, the school will describe challenges it has faced during its charter term, the strategies that were used to address those challenges and the lessons learned.

While the academic performance of students is the foremost determining factor of a school's success, a school's ability to demonstrate an effective educational program, a financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are also important factors that inform a renewal decision. For more information on how OSDCP makes renewal recommendations to the Chancellor, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework overview in Part 6 of this report.

### Statutory Basis for Renewal

The New York State Charter Schools Act ("the Act") authorizes the creation of a system of charter schools to provide opportunities for teachers, parents, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently of existing schools and school districts in order to accomplish the following objectives:

#### **§2850:**

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

When granted, a charter is valid for up to five years. For a school chartered under the Act to operate beyond the initial charter term, the school must seek and obtain renewal of its charter.<sup>31</sup>

The Act states the following regarding the renewal of a school's charter:

**§2851.4:**

Charters may be renewed, upon application, for a term of up to five years in accordance with the provisions of this article for the issuance of such charters pursuant to section twenty-eight hundred fifty-two of this article; provided, however, that a renewal application shall [also] include:

(a) A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in the charter.

(b) A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private. Such statement shall be in a form prescribed by the board of regents.

(c) Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school required by subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-seven of this article, including the charter school report cards and the certified financial statements.

(d) Indications of parent and student satisfaction.

(e) The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable, of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal. When developing such targets, the board of regents and the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall ensure (1) that such enrollment targets are comparable to the enrollment figures of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the charter school is located; and (2) that such retention targets are comparable to the rate of retention of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the proposed charter school would be located.

Such renewal application shall be submitted to the charter entity no later than six months prior to the expiration of the charter; provided, however, that the charter entity may waive such deadline for good cause shown.

The determination of whether to approve a renewal application rests in the sole discretion of a charter school's authorizer.

A school seeking renewal of its charter must submit a renewal application to the charter entity to which the original charter application was submitted.<sup>32</sup> As one such charter entity, the New York City Department of Education ("NYC DOE") institutes a renewal application process that adheres to the Act's renewal standards:

- A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in its charter;
- A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private;
- Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school including the charter school report cards and certified financial statements;
- Indications of parent and student satisfaction; and
- The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and

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<sup>31</sup> See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

<sup>32</sup> See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal.<sup>33</sup>

Where the NYC DOE approves a renewal application, it is required under the Act to submit the application and a proposed charter to the Board of Regents for its review and approval.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> § 2851(4)(e) added with the 2010 amendments to the Act.

<sup>34</sup> See § 2852(5).

## Part 6: NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) team may recommend to the Chancellor three potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal (with or without conditions), short term renewal (with or without conditions), or non-renewal.

After the OSDCP renewal site visit, the OSDCP team incorporates its findings from the visit into this renewal report. The evidence and findings align to the four essential questions of the NYC DOE accountability framework and may include classroom observations, leadership interviews, assessment results, School Survey results, public hearings and other community feedback, as well as a variety of other data. Schools will be given the opportunity to correct factual errors in this report. If the OSDCP renewal team determines that renewal is not warranted, the school will be informed in writing of the reasons for the non-renewal. If OSDCP approves the renewal application and the Chancellor recommends renewal for the school, prior to the school's charter expiration date, OSDCP will send the renewal report and recommendation along with the school's renewal application and other supporting evidence to the Board of Regents for its approval.

### ***Full-Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions***

In cases where a school has demonstrated exceptional results with its students, a five-year renewal will be granted. A school must show that its program has clearly and consistently demonstrated high academic attainment and/or consistent and significant student academic progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has demonstrated operational viability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

### ***Short Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions***

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has two years or fewer of state-assessment results, or where any school has demonstrated mixed academic results or has uncertain organizational or financial viability, a short-term renewal with or without conditions may be considered.

### ***Non-Renewal***

Renewal is not automatic. Schools that have not demonstrated significant progress or high levels of student achievement and/or are in violation of their charter will not be renewed.

### ***Grade Expansions or Enrollment Changes***

A school may seek material charter revisions as part of the renewal process. In the case of a grade expansion or change in authorized enrollment, these material charter revisions are considered separately from the charter renewal. Charter renewal, with or without conditions, is not a guarantee of approval for a proposed material charter revision.

## The NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

To help Chancellor-authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the OSDCP team has developed an Accountability Framework built around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of factors (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. These factors include academic, fiscal, operational and environmental indicators of a charter school's performance. Additionally, some of the indicators we evaluate relate to expected performance as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act including evidence of improved student learning and achievement, special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, use of different and innovative teaching methods, parent and student satisfaction, and enrollment and retention of special student populations. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided beginning on page 17 of the NYC DOE Chancellor-Authorized Schools Accountability Handbook for 2014-2015.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what OSDCP looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions, and the duration of the charter term recommended by NYC DOE. As schools use the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so the schools are high-quality choices for families. This reminder should help a school apply this framework to its own performance analysis, underscoring the state and city's commitment to superior academic performance as the most important factor in a school's performance, while also recognizing the importance of closing the achievement gap and offering high-quality learning opportunities for all students.

### 1. Is the School an Academic Success?

#### **1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement**

Schools that are academic successes have many of the characteristics below:

- Meet absolute performance goals established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- Meet other rigorous academic goals as stated on school charter
- Demonstrate increasing student achievement/growth
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing academic performance measures of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing academic performance measures compared with district/city proficiency averages

Evidence for success might include, but not be limited to, the following depending on school configurations:

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- Grades 8-12 College Readiness Credit Accumulation
- Percentage of Students Applying to and Being Admitted to College
- Percentage of Students Taking AP Courses and/or Percentage of Students Passing AP Courses
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic Goals
- School-reported internal assessments
- NYC DOE Progress Reports or School Quality Reports<sup>35</sup>

### **1b. Instructionally Sound and Responsive Education Program**

Schools with successful education programs have many of the characteristics below:

- Are self-reflective and examine practice based on outcomes against goals
- Have well-thought out curricular programs that are aligned with NYS learning outcomes as described by state and Common Core Learning Standards
- Use instructional models and resources that are consistent with school mission and flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Utilizes a coherent and effective interim assessment system (e.g., use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data) for monitoring progress, predicting performance, and adjusting instruction
- Have an effective process for supporting improved classroom instruction, including frequent observation and feedback
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Use a defined process for evaluating and supporting curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

<sup>35</sup> Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-2013 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

Evidence for successful education programs, in addition to positive results, may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- Instructional planning documents (alignments, scope and sequences, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans, etc.)
- Instructional leader and staff interviews
- Special Education/ELL progress monitoring documentation
- Professional development plans and resources
- Student/teacher schedules
- Student Intervention / Response to Intervention program description and resources
- Interim assessment results
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation

### **1c. Learning Environment**

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Provide a safe, respectful, and stable academic environment conducive to student learning (one with efficient transitions and safe hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.)
- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best effort academically and to actively engage in their own learning and the life of the school
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Have formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

Evidence for successful learning environments may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- NYC DOE School Survey results (students, parents and teachers)
- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Interviews with school leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, students
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)
- School calendar and class schedules

## 2. Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

### 2a. Mission and Goals

Schools with a successful mission and goals have many of the characteristics below:

- Have an animated mission statement and clearly articulated goals (both academic and non-academic) that staff, students and community embrace
- Demonstrate an active self-evaluation process that involves regular monitoring, an examination of practices based on outcomes against goals, and reporting on progress towards school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

Evidence for a successful mission and goals might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Mission Statement
- School charter and external documents (student/family handbooks, school website, etc.)
- Annual Reports, school improvement plans, leadership/Board reports
- Board agendas and minutes
- Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction surveys
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs
- Stakeholder interviews (board, parents, staff, students, etc.)

## 2b. Leadership and Governance Structure

Schools with successful leadership and governance structures have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly, but not limited to, Open-Meeting Law and conflict of interest laws, and is fully compliant with its Board approved by-laws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)
- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provides regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

Evidence for school governance and organizational design may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, calendar of meetings, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Board resources for evaluating school leadership and staff, including rubric/performance metrics
- Board resources for self-reflection and professional growth
- Board development plan
- Board interviews
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook and core operational policies
- School calendar
- Professional development plans
- Stakeholder interviews (board, school leadership and staff)

## 2c. School Climate and Community Engagement

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student-centered, and open to parents and community support
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the NYC DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships that support and advocate for the school
- Engage families actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Share instructional and operational practices with the larger NYC school community and actively seek opportunities for partnering and collaboration
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives

Evidence for school climate and community engagement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- NYC DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs
- Participation in NYC DOE initiatives and efforts to collaborate/partner with other NYC schools
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- School Professional Development Plan and staff feedback on professional development events
- Resources for evaluations and observations, scheduled opportunities for professional collaboration, staff feedback on professional development events
- Student/Family and Staff Handbooks

## 2d. Operational Health

Schools that are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Demonstrate efficient and orderly daily operations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage and insurance and facility documents
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, supporting, and evaluating school leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets as established by SED (applicable to schools renewed after 2010)
- Communications with NYC DOE are timely, comprehensive, and appropriate
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees

Evidence of an operationally viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational organizational chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan
- Immunization completion rate information
- Appropriate AED/CPR certifications

## 2e. Financial Sustainability

Schools that are responsible stewards of public funds and are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, at school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Consistently clean financial audits and compliant escrow accounts
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school's design and academic program
- School leadership and Board maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- School leadership and Board oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Demonstrate financial planning for future school years, including per-pupil and space-related cost projections

Evidence for a financially sound, viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Financial audits, escrow accounts and other fiscal reporting documents
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships

### **3. Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations?**

#### **3a. Approved Charter and Agreement**

Schools in substantial compliance with the school's charter and charter agreement have the characteristics below:

- Implement the key features of their charter as described in the original charter and, if appropriate, as modified in approved revisions to their charter, including but not limited to mission, academic program, school organization, grade configuration, enrollment, goals, etc.
- Ensure that up-to-date charter is available on request to staff, parents, and school community
- Implement comprehensive academic, behavioral, oversight, management, and operational policies and procedures that are substantially aligned with the charter and the school's stated mission and vision

Evidence for a school's compliance with the terms of its charter and charter agreement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Annual Comprehensive Review reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/Board and staff interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

#### **3b. Applicable Federal and State Law**

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have the characteristics below:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, ELL and Special Education students to those of their community school district of location<sup>36</sup> or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention
- Implement school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage enrollment process and annual waiting lists with integrity
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and meet all certification requirements

Evidence for compliance with applicable federal and state law may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School reporting documents
- School's NYSED Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student/Family Handbook
- Student discipline policy and records
- Parent complaint/grievance records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Demographic data (school, district, and other as appropriate)
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

<sup>36</sup> School-specific targets for enrollment and retention were developed by the NY State Education Department. This requirement of the New York State Charter Schools Act applies to schools renewed after 2010.

### 3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have the characteristics below:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and complete all other financial reporting as required
- Boards that meet requirements for size, meeting frequency, public notice, applicable open-meeting and conflict of interest regulations, as well as comply with NYC DOE OSDCP's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members
- Inform NYC DOE OSDCP, and where required, receive OSDCP approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

Evidence for compliance with applicable regulations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School or building safety plan; appropriate inspection documents
- Annual audits, escrow accounts, other financial reporting documents
- Board roster, calendar, agenda and minutes, conflict of interest documents, notification of changes/approval of new member request documents
- Charter revision requests
- Revised or new contracts
- Parent association calendar of meetings, identified officers, parent association agenda and minutes, parent satisfaction survey results
- Stakeholder interviews

## 4. What Are the School's Plans for its Next Charter Term?

### 4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

In anticipation of a new charter term, a school may consider various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment, or alteration of its model in some significant way. Successful schools generally have processes for:

- Conducting needs/opportunity assessments
- Forming Board and leadership committees or subcommittees to investigate options, develop action plans, ensure capacity and resources are aligned, etc.
- Engaging school community in articulating charter revisions (or a new charter in cases of replication) to determine community needs and to communicate regarding the school's proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

Evidence for likely success in planning for school growth in a new charter term may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Charter revision or merger applications
- Leadership and Board interviews

### 4b. Organizational Sustainability

Successful schools consistently perform despite change. While there is no single path for ensuring sustainability, successful schools often have the following features:

- School anticipates organizational opportunities/needs and plans for resource development (for example, human resource policies for growing your own talent, or fundraising or budget management to take care of anticipated capital needs and to mitigate risks for the unexpected, or board development to bring new talent or specific needs-based expertise to the school)
- School develops contingency plans especially for facilities or financial scenarios

Evidence for organizational sustainability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Charter renewal application
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organizational chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

#### 4c. School or Model Improvements

Successful schools are thoughtful about the continued appropriateness of school design features and elements of their models. They:

- Review performance carefully and even without major changes through expansion or replication, are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission

Evidence for successful improvements to a school's program or model may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with partners or important vendors

## Appendix A: School Performance Data

### Students scoring at or above Level 3

Grade-Level Proficiency in English Language Arts				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>				
Grade 3	66.0%	74.0%	43.1%	46.9%
Grade 4	66.0%	74.0%	68.0%	50.0%
Grade 5	68.0%	72.9%	32.7%	68.0%
Grade 6	-	-	31.4%	28.8%
Grade 7	-	-	-	34.7%
<b>DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 13 *</b>				
Grade 3	20.7	26.5	14.3	16.9
Grade 4	15.1	23.6	41.9	19.5
Grade 5	22.1	21.0	5.0	35.5
Grade 6	-	-	13.4	11.6
Grade 7	-	-	-	17.5
<b>DIFFERENCE FROM NYC</b>				
Grade 3	17.9	25.0	15.0	17.0
Grade 4	15.0	21.6	40.8	18.9
Grade 5	19.0	20.7	4.0	39.6
Grade 6	-	-	8.1	3.6
Grade 7	-	-	-	7.9

Grade-Level Proficiency in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
<b>Community Roots Charter School</b>				
Grade 3	74.0%	80.0%	47.1%	59.2%
Grade 4	68.0%	72.0%	70.0%	46.0%
Grade 5	72.0%	66.7%	42.0%	70.0%
Grade 6	-	-	28.8%	40.4%
Grade 7	-	-	-	35.4%
<b>DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 13 *</b>				
Grade 3	25.3	25.6	16.8	24.9
Grade 4	14.0	13.9	40.3	13.0
Grade 5	14.4	6.2	18.0	37.5
Grade 6	-	-	14.8	20.3
Grade 7	-	-	-	23.5
<b>DIFFERENCE FROM NYC</b>				
Grade 3	19.2	23.0	13.9	20.5
Grade 4	5.7	6.3	34.8	6.0
Grade 5	9.1	1.5	12.4	31.3
Grade 6	-	-	0.0	6.6
Grade 7	-	-	-	5.8

\* CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

## Appendix B: Additional Accountability Data

### NYC DOE Accountability Reports

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2013-2014](#)

[Annual Comprehensive Report 2012-2013](#)