



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**SOUTH BRONX CLASSICAL CHARTER SCHOOL
RENEWAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 SCHOOL YEAR
MAY 2015**

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Part 1: Summary of Renewal Recommendation

I. Charter School Overview:

Background Information

South Bronx Classical Charter School	
Board Chair(s)	Stephen Baldwin
School Leader(s)	Lester Long (Executive Director)
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	N/A
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 12
Physical Address(es)	977 Fox Street, Bronx
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	360 (for 2014-2015 school year only, 364)
Proposed New Charter Term	4 years [July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2019]
Proposed Authorized Grade Span for New Charter Term	K-8
Proposed Authorized Enrollment for New Charter Term	410
Proposed Sections per Grade for New Charter Term	Grades K-5: 3 sections per grade; Grades 6-8: 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	6	6	6	6	24
# Met	4	6	4	5	19
# Partially Met	0	0	0	0	0
# Not Met	2	0	0	1	3
# Not Applicable *	0	0	2	0	2
% Met	67%	100%	67%	83%	79%
% Partially Met	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
% Not Met	33%	0%	0%	17%	13%
% Not Applicable *	0%	0%	33%	0%	8%
% Met of All Applicable Goals	67%	100%	100%	83%	86%

* 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
South Bronx Classical Charter School	69.2%	90.4%	54.8%	56.9%
CSD 12	32.0%	32.1%	11.9%	10.9%
Difference from CSD 12 *	37.2	58.3	42.9	46.0
NYC	49.4%	51.2%	28.0%	28.7%
Difference from NYC *	19.8	39.2	26.8	28.2
New York State **	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	16.4	35.3	23.7	26.3

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
South Bronx Classical Charter School	91.7%	98.4%	64.7%	84.4%
CSD 12	42.0%	42.6%	12.1%	15.1%
Difference from CSD 12 *	49.7	55.8	52.6	69.3
NYC	60.0%	62.6%	32.7%	37.8%
Difference from NYC *	31.7	35.8	32.0	46.6
New York State **	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	28.4	33.6	33.6	48.2

* 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
South Bronx Classical Charter School – All Students	77.0%	81.0%	61.5%	60.0%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	81.6%	100.0%	59.2%	45.9%
City Percent of Range- All Students	75.6%	100.0%	42.3%	38.5%
South Bronx Classical Charter School – School's Lowest Third	77.0%	92.0%	71.0%	64.5%
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	63.6%	100.0%	56.7%	33.1%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	58.9%	100.0%	37.6%	21.9%

Median Adjusted Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
South Bronx Classical Charter School – All Students	87.0%	78.0%	61.0%	75.5%
Peer Percent of Range - All Students	95.5%	96.7%	54.9%	74.0%
City Percent of Range- All Students	93.6%	87.4%	45.8%	80.8%
South Bronx Classical Charter School – School's Lowest Third	85.5%	89.5%	82.5%	82.0%
Peer Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	91.4%	100.0%	76.6%	75.5%
City Percent of Range - School's Lowest Third	89.8%	100.0%	71.9%	76.5%

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 *	-	-	22.2%	16.7%
English Language Learner Students	-	33.3%	14.3%	11.1%
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	66.7%	100.0%	-	-
Percent in the 75th Growth Percentile - Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Students with Disabilities *	-	-	44.4%	50.0%
English Language Learner Students	-	50.0%	42.9%	66.7%
Students in the Lowest Third Citywide	-	-	-	-

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

II. Renewal Recommendation and Rationale

As part of the school's 2010-2011 charter renewal, the following conditions were placed on the school as a condition of the full-term renewal.

- **Academic Conditions: 3 of 3 applicable conditions met**

Achievement of Renewal Conditions

Academic Conditions	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.	Met	Met	Met	N/A
2. The Board must demonstrate a plan for sound oversight and evaluation of school leadership.	Met	N/A	N/A	N/A
3. The school must demonstrate attainment of charter goals each year.	Met	Met	Met	Met

Based on the evidence presented herein and detailed below in Part II, the NYC DOE recommends a 4 year short term renewal.

As part of the renewal application, South Bronx Classical Charter School submitted one material revision request. The NYC DOE determination is as follows: regarding the material revision to increase the authorized maximum enrollment to 410 students during the next charter term, the NYC DOE approves this material revision contingent on the school backfilling through second grade in each year of the charter term. Otherwise, maximum authorized enrollment will remain at 360 students.

A. Academic Performance

At the time of this school's renewal, South Bronx Classical Charter School 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)

- Improve student learning and achievement;
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- 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 South Bronx Classical Charter School indicates that the school has made progress towards meeting some of these objectives.

Mission and Vision

South Bronx Classical Charter School's mission is to prepare kindergarten through eighth grade scholars in the South Bronx to excel in college preparatory high schools. The school executes against this mission by providing a classical curriculum and highly structured setting, whereby students become liberated scholars and citizens of impeccable character who achieve proficiency in and advanced mastery of New York State Performance Standards.

School Specific Academic Performance

The school entered its ninth year of operation with the 2014-2015 academic year. The school was last renewed during the 2010-2011 school year in January 2011; as a result, 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 South Bronx Classical Charter School over the course of the retrospective charter term.

Annual aggregate English Language Arts (ELA) and math proficiency rates on NYS assessments for South Bronx Classical Charter School students have without exception significantly exceeded those of Community School District (CSD) 12, New York City, and New York State during the current charter term. The school's aggregate ELA and math proficiency rates have consistently been more than 35 percentage points higher than the aggregate CSD 12 proficiency rates for the same grade span and more than 15 percentage points higher than the citywide aggregate proficiency rates for the same grade span.

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 the 2012-2013 are not directly comparable.

In 2012-2013, 64.7% of South Bronx Classical Charter School's students were proficient in math on the NYS assessments. South Bronx Classical Charter School's math proficiency was higher than 91% of all elementary schools citywide and 100% of elementary schools in CSD 12. When compared to elementary schools with student populations most like its own (i.e. peer schools) South Bronx Classical Charter School outperformed 80% of similar schools. In 2012-2013, 54.8% of South Bronx Classical Charter School's students demonstrated proficiency on NYS assessments in ELA. With this level of proficiency, South Bronx Classical Charter School outperformed 92% of all elementary schools citywide, 100% of CSD 12 elementary schools, and 85% of its peer schools.

The following year, in 2013-2014, the percent of students at South Bronx Classical Charter School who were proficient in math on the NYS assessments rose almost 20 percentage points to 84.4%. South Bronx Classical Charter School's math proficiency was higher than 98% of all elementary schools citywide and 100% of CSD 12 elementary schools. When compared to its peer schools, South Bronx Classical Charter School outperformed 85% of similar schools. In 2013-2014, the percent of students at South Bronx Classical Charter School who demonstrated proficiency on the NYS assessments in ELA also rose, to 56.9%. With this level of proficiency, South Bronx Classical Charter School outperformed 90% of all elementary schools citywide and 100% of CSD 12 elementary schools. Additionally, South Bronx Classical Charter School again outperformed 85% of its peer schools.¹

¹ Please note that while South Bronx Classical Charter School began serving sixth grade students in 2013-2014, the school was classified as an elementary school for the 2013-2014 School Quality Reports.

In 2013-2014, South Bronx Classical Charter School's ELA median adjusted growth percentile on NYS assessments was 60.0% with a City Percent of Range of 38.5%, which placed the school in only the 26th percentile of all elementary schools citywide.² Similarly, the school's peer and CSD percentiles were 33% and 42%, respectively. This means that more than 60% of all other elementary schools in South Bronx Classical Charter School's peer group and more than 50% of other elementary schools in CSD 12 had an ELA median adjusted growth percentile greater than South Bronx Classical Charter School's median adjusted growth percentile in 2013-2014.

In 2013-2014, South Bronx Classical Charter School's math median adjusted growth percentile on NYS assessments was 75.5% with a City Percent of Range of 80.8%, placing it in the 90th percentile of all elementary schools citywide. The school's peer group and CSD percentiles were 78% and 100%, respectively. This means that only 10% of all other elementary schools in New York City and only 22% of other elementary schools in South Bronx Classical Charter School's peer group had math median adjusted growth percentiles greater than South Bronx Classical Charter School's median adjusted growth percentile in 2013-2014. South Bronx Classical Charter School had a higher math median adjusted growth percentile than all other elementary schools in CSD 12 in 2013-2014.

Over the four years that data is available for the retrospective charter term, South Bronx Classical Charter School has met 86% of its applicable academic charter goals.^{3,4} South Bronx Classical Charter School met five of six 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 exams 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 kindergarten through grade 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 trend of consistently high and relatively stable achievement of its stated charter goals over the four years of the charter term under review; in two of the four years in the retrospective charter term the school achieved 100% of its applicable academic goals.

South Bronx Classical Charter School has partially developed a responsive education program and supportive learning environment. Full evaluation of the education program and its support for all learners is challenging due to the very small populations of students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs) and students in the lowest third citywide served by the school. However, the school has reported that for these students, it does offer a comprehensive program of interventions. Further, as evidenced by observation at the school and as reported by the school, the school has a robust and fully-integrated data-driven instructional philosophy with a foundation in on-going interim assessment of student performance. The school provides

² 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 38.5% indicates that the school's ELA median adjusted growth percentile was below the average but less than one standard deviation below the average (that only 38.5% of the range around the average represented scores lower than that of South Bronx Classical Charter School), while a citywide percentile of 26% indicates that South Bronx Classical Charter School's ELA median adjusted growth percentile was higher than only 26% of all elementary schools citywide.

³ 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 2013-14 school year forward) 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 twelve students).

⁴ It should be noted that because of the move to Common Core Learning Standards in 2012-2013, the NYC DOE did not evaluate goals that measure a school's actual performance relative to 75% or greater absolute proficiency on the NYS ELA and math assessments 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 evaluate 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 kindergarten through grade two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

educational supports for students from special populations including ELLs and students with disabilities to include: Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS), counseling, and speech services. In addition to this, the school has a robust system in place to serve the school's struggling students. The school offers a learning specialist in first through seventh grades; during all core subjects, the learning specialist works with struggling students in a small group of four to five students using a differentiated lesson plan. Classroom teachers remain in the classroom with students, flexibly grouped by ability and regrouped for each new lesson or subject as appropriate. The school's extensive use of data and supports for struggling students, especially in the area of literacy, were noted by NYC DOE reviewers following a school visit in June 2012. Reviewers noted, "Data is present throughout the school. Staff indicated that they use assessment results to identify topics and skills for re-teaching. Data also informed curriculum development and instructional planning." Regarding a focus on literacy for at-risk students, reviewers noted, "Some students receive double and triple doses of guided reading and other literacy instruction. A daily 're-teach' period provides an opportunity for teachers to provide targeted supplemental instruction based on assessed need." These "re-teach" sessions were still in use during the renewal visit in March 2015.

On its 2012-2013 NYC DOE Elementary School Progress Report, South Bronx Classical Charter School received an Overall grade of A as well as an A grade in all sections except School Environment, for which the school received a B grade. This ranked South Bronx Classical Charter School in the 93rd percentile of all elementary schools citywide. On its 2011-2012 NYC DOE Elementary School Progress Report, South Bronx Classical Charter School received an A grade in all sections, including as its Overall grade. This ranked South Bronx Classical Charter School in the 100th percentile of all elementary schools citywide. As its Overall Grade, the school also earned an A grade in 2010-2011.

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,⁵ 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, 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.

⁵ 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.

In 2013-2014, South Bronx Classical Charter School did not serve the minimum number⁶ of students classified as being in the lowest third citywide on NYS assessments to receive data on the percent of students in the lowest third citywide 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.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 50.0% of South Bronx Classical Charter School's 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 South Bronx Classical Charter School in the 63rd percentile of all elementary schools citywide. In the same year however, only 16.7% 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. The level of growth places South Bronx Classical Charter School in the bottom 1st percentile of all elementary schools citywide.

On the 2013-2014 NYS assessments, 66.7% of South Bronx Classical Charter School's English Language Learner students experienced growth in math that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other English Language Learner students citywide with the same starting math scores. This level of growth places South Bronx Classical Charter School in the 94th percentile of all elementary schools citywide. However, in the same year, only 11.1% of the school's English Language Learner students experienced growth in ELA that, with adjustments, matched or exceeded the growth of 75% or more of other English Language Learner students citywide with the same starting ELA scores; this level of growth places South Bronx Classical Charter School in the 3rd percentile of all elementary schools citywide.

B. Governance, Operations & Finances

South Bronx Classical 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:

- South Bronx Classical Charter School's FY11 through FY14 independent financial audits;
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's FY15 budget and five-year projected budget;
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's 2014-2015 student/family and staff handbook;
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's self-reported staffing data;
- On-site review of South Bronx Classical Charter School's financial and operational records;
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's Board of Trustees meeting minutes;
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's Board of Trustees bylaws; and
- South Bronx Classical Charter School's Board of Trustees financial disclosure forms.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the Board of Trustees has maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design. The level of Board membership is consistent with the minimum of seven and maximum of 13 members established in the Board's bylaws. The Board currently has nine active members. The school's founding Board Chair, Steven Baldwin, is still a member of the Board and is also still the Board Chair.

There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and the school leadership team as evidenced by the school's organizational chart and school leadership team's monthly updates on academic, financial, and operational performance to the Board and its committees, as recorded in

⁶ 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.

Board meeting minutes. Primarily, school performance and operational updates are presented by the school's Executive Director.

The Board's bylaws require only a standing Finance Committee. As recorded in Board meeting minutes, the Finance Committee is active and committees for Real Estate and Development are also active. The Board's bylaws indicate that the Board will hold at least nine regular meetings and one annual meeting. In the years of the retrospective charter term for which minutes were available and reviewed, the Board held the required number of meetings and these meetings met quorum.

Over the course of the school's charter term, the school has partially developed a stable school culture. The school is led by Lester Long, who is the school's founder and Executive Director and oversees all three chartered South Bronx Classical charter schools, only one of which is authorized by the NYC DOE Chancellor. Over the course of the retrospective charter term, the school has not had any changes in the school leadership team; however, the school has experienced high instructional staff turnover. The percentage of instructional staff not returning, either by choice or request, during the current charter term ranged between a low of 17% in the most recent year, 2013-2014, and a high of 44% the prior year, 2012-2013,

Average daily attendance for students during the retrospective charter term was 95.7%; the school met its attendance goal of 95% in each of the last three years of the charter term. During the 2013-2014 school year, the school had positive results on the NYC School Survey as parent, teacher, and student satisfaction levels were generally above citywide averages.

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations. The school has at least 350 days of operating expenses with cash on hand to meet current liabilities totaling \$4,564,870. The school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

There was no material weakness noted for the FY14 financial audit.

C. Compliance with Charter, Applicable Law and Regulations

Over the charter term, South Bronx Classical 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 thirteen members. The Board currently has nine active members.

The school's bylaws indicate that the Board is to hold one annual meeting and nine regular meetings per year. In school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, the Board did hold the required number of monthly meetings, as evidenced by the Board Yearly Meeting Schedule and Board meeting minutes. Required meetings are those which met quorum. The Charter Schools Act requires that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year.

The Board did consistently submit 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. However, the school has not posted to its website its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law. At the time of review, only the audit for the 2013-2014 school year was posted.

The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.

One or more of the school leaders were trained in General Response Protocols/Fire Emergency Drill Conductor for NYC, as mandated by the NYC Fire Department.

Over the course of the charter term, the school did consistently submit complete invoicing and reconciliation documents by the associated deadlines.

All 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 provided the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year. As identified in the school self-reported student discipline compliance checklist, the school's policy is compliant with federal law but has two areas of non-compliance with authorizer guidance for notice of removal.

D. Plans for Next Charter Term

In its next charter term the school plans to continue the phase-in of previously authorized grades such that the school will serve students in kindergarten through grade eight at scale.

The school has submitted a material revision to increase authorized enrollment in kindergarten through grade eight to 410 students in the next charter term.

Part 2: School Overview and History

South Bronx Classical Charter School is an elementary/middle school serving 370 students⁷ in kindergarten through grade seven 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 kindergarten through grade eight, which it is not expected to reach during its current charter term expiring on June 30, 2015.⁸ The school does not currently offer a public universal Pre-Kindergarten program in New York City. The school is located in a New York City Department of Education⁹-operated facility in Community School District 12 in the Bronx and is co-located with the School of Performing Arts and Entrada Academy.¹⁰

South Bronx Classical Charter School's mission is to prepare kindergarten through eighth grade scholars in the South Bronx to excel in college preparatory high schools. The school executes against this mission by providing a classical curriculum and highly structured setting, whereby students become liberated scholars and citizens of impeccable character who achieve proficiency in and advanced mastery of New York State Performance Standards. The school model features classes in Latin and Debate, a college-going culture, with classrooms named after universities, and an extended day and year schedule.

South Bronx Classical Charter School's Board of Trustees is led by Chair Stephen Baldwin, who has been on the board since the school's inception. The school is led by Executive Director Lester Long, who has been in this role for nine years, i.e. since the school's inception. Mr. Long also serves as the Executive Director for the two other South Bronx Classical charter schools, neither of which is authorized by the NYC DOE Chancellor. The Executive Director reports to the Board monthly on progress towards the school's goals and objectives; the Board evaluates the Executive Director annually. The founding Dean of Students as well as five trustees on the Board have also been with the school since its founding in 2006. The school's former full-time Director of Business and Operations is now in a role supporting operations at both South Bronx Classical Charter School and South Bronx Classical Charter School II.

The school typically enrolls new students in kindergarten through second grade only, though kindergarten is considered the primary entry grade. There were 1,487 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2014 lottery; the school received 1,600 applications for the 2014-2015 school year.¹¹ The school does not enroll new students mid-year.¹²

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.

⁷ ATS data as of October 31, 2014

⁸ NYC DOE internal data

⁹ NYC DOE internal data

¹⁰ NYC DOE Location Code Generation and Management System

¹¹ School self-reported as of April 2015; Spring 2014 lottery information provided by the school in April 2015 differs from that provided by the school in September 2014 via the 2014-2015 DOE Annual Charter School Survey

¹² 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	65	73	63	71
Grade 1	68	60	62	59
Grade 2	52	61	47	55
Grade 3	55	49	59	48
Grade 4	51	44	44	50
Grade 5	30	35	37	39
Grade 6	-	-	-	28
Grade 7	-	-	-	-
Grade 8	-	-	-	-
Total Enrollment	321	322	312	350

* 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	3	24
Grade 1	3	20
Grade 2	3	18
Grade 3	2	24
Grade 4	3	17
Grade 5	2	20
Grade 6	1	28
Students Admitted Through The Lottery	82	

* Lottery information and 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 South Bronx Classical 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 New York State Education Department.¹³

¹³ 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.¹⁴

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.

¹⁴ Please refer to the following website for more information:
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 March 19 and 20, 2015:

- Julian Cohen, Senior Executive Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- DawnLynne Kacer, Executive Director, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Ola Duru, Director of Operations, NYC DOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
- Lynnette Aqueron, Senior School Improvement Specialist, NYC DOE Division of English Language Learners and Student Support
- Laurie Price, Independent Consultant
- Jamal Young, Independent Consultant

Part 4: Findings

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

At the time of this school's renewal, South Bronx Classical 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 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 21st 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
South Bronx Classical Charter School	69.2%	90.4%	54.8%	56.9%
CSD 12	32.0%	32.1%	11.9%	10.9%
Difference from CSD 12 *	37.2	58.3	42.9	46.0
NYC	49.4%	51.2%	28.0%	28.7%
Difference from NYC *	19.8	39.2	26.8	28.2
New York State **	52.8%	55.1%	31.1%	30.6%
Difference from New York State	16.4	35.3	23.7	26.3

% Proficient in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
South Bronx Classical Charter School	91.7%	98.4%	64.7%	84.4%
CSD 12	42.0%	42.6%	12.1%	15.1%
Difference from CSD 12 *	49.7	55.8	52.6	69.3
NYC	60.0%	62.6%	32.7%	37.8%
Difference from NYC *	31.7	35.8	32.0	46.6
New York State **	63.3%	64.8%	31.1%	36.2%
Difference from New York State	28.4	33.6	33.6	48.2

* 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	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Overall Grade	A	A	A	Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
Student Progress	A	A	A	
Student Performance	A	A	A	
School Environment	A	A	B	

Mission and Academic Goals

According to the Renewal Application submitted to the NYC DOE by South Bronx Classical Charter School, as well as annual reports submitted to the New York State Education Department, over each of the four years in the retrospective charter term, the school achieved/met academic goals as follows:

- 4 of 6 applicable charter goals in the first year of the charter,
- 6 of 6 in the second year,
- 4 of 4 in the third year,¹⁵ and
- 5 of 6 in the fourth year.

Progress Towards Academic Charter Goals *

Academic Goals	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
1. Each year, 80% of all students who have been enrolled at the school for two full academic years or more will score at a Level 3 or higher on the New York State ELA exam.	Not Met	Met	N/A	Not Met
2. Each year, the school's average score on the New York State ELA exam will exceed the average score of District 12 and of the City as a whole.	Met	Met	Met	Met
3. Each year, 80% of all students who have been enrolled at the school for two full academic years or more will score at a Level 3 or higher on the New York State math exam.	Met	Met	N/A	Met
4. Each year, the school's average score on the New York State math exam will exceed the average score of District 12 and of the City as a whole.	Met	Met	Met	Met
5. Each year, 60% of all fourth grade students who have been enrolled at the school for two full academic years or more will score at Level 3 or higher on the New York State Science exam.	Met	Met	Met	Met
6. Each year, the school's average daily attendance rate will meet or exceed 95%.	Not 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.

¹⁵ 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 kindergarten through grade two in its analysis of progress towards goals.

Responsive Education Program

The school administers the TerraNova and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessments for students in kindergarten through grade two. The following was found for grade appropriate assessments:

- DIBELS pass rates have also fluctuated over the charter term, but have been consistently strong. In 2013-2014, the end-of-year pass rates for students in kindergarten, first grade and second grade were 87%, 96% and 88%, respectively.

As part of the renewal review process, representatives for the NYC DOE visited the school on March 19 and 20, 2015. Based on discussion, document review, and observation, the following was noted:

- **Alignment with Common Core:**

- The school reports that significant resources, in the form of staff hours, were invested during 2010 to 2012 to bring the school's curriculum into alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards, and that the newly revised curriculum was in place and in use starting in the 2012-2013 school year.
- To meet the increased rigor of the Common Core Learning Standards, the school revised scope and sequences, unit plans, and lesson plans in order to ensure that each grade had a complete curriculum aligned to the new standards.
- The school has a detailed process by which these instructional resources are continuously refined and improved so that they are not stagnant. Scope and sequences are managed by Instructional Coaches and modified each June. Modifications to unit plans are managed by grade team leaders and senior teachers. In July and August, teachers modify lesson plans as needed, with this work continuing throughout the academic year.
- The school deliberately works to ensure that the standards are embedded in assessments (along with scope and sequences, unit plans, and lesson plans) and considered when assessment data is analyzed.
- The school has aligned all data analysis practices to the Common Core Learning Standards, including four levels of internal assessment data: daily assessments, unit assessments, interim assessments (including DIBELS and TerraNova), and Fountas & Pinnell benchmark assessments.

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

- The school directly provides educational supports for at-risk students including ELLs and students with disabilities. The supports provided include SETSS, counseling, and speech services. The school works with the district to contract for additional services as needed.
- The Special Services team is comprised of a Director of Special Services (who is certified as a School Psychologist), a Special Education Coordinator (who also provides SETSS), a School Psychologist, and Speech Pathologist.
- In addition to these supports, the school has a comprehensive system in place to serve the school's struggling students. The school added a Learning Specialist position to each grade level (except kindergarten, which already has two instructional adults in each classroom). For all core subject classes, the Learning Specialist works with students identified as in need of intervention in a small group of four to five students using a differentiated lesson plan. Classroom teachers remain in the classroom with the other students, who are flexibly grouped by ability (groups are not static; they rotate with each lesson or subject). This leads to a beneficial teacher-student ratio for many portions of the instructional day.
- The Learning Specialists allow for delivery of content in four separate groups in each grade; the groupings are based on data from the previous unit assessment data analysis.

This design also allows for a “re-teach” block each day, which is organized based on data from the previous week’s assessments and analysis.

- The school’s At-Risk program is based on a Response to Intervention (RtI) model and was revamped at South Bronx Classical Charter School in 2010. Students who are one or more levels below grade receive additional daily guided reading instruction (in addition to the daily 20-minute guided reading block). A full-time At-Risk Learning Specialist provides direct and guided reading instruction and phonics remediation to scholars who are three or more levels below grade.

- **Instructional Model and Classroom Instruction:**

- Teachers at South Bronx Classical Charter School, as reported by the school leadership team, receive a minimum of 100 hours of professional development per academic year. The school’s focus in developing its instructional staff is to continuously develop teachers to eventually become grade level leaders, instructional coaches, and administrative team members.
- New teachers are also supported with additional observations and feedback from the instructional team and coaches; first and second year teachers are observed 25 times per academic year by grade level leaders and/or instructional coaches and provided immediate feedback. Teachers have an Individual Professional Improvement Plan, informed by a teacher evaluation rubric and the teacher’s self-reflection, to drive their professional development.

During the renewal visit, 55 classrooms in kindergarten through grade seven and were observed with the school’s instructional leaders: Jacqueline Davis, Instructional Coach; Rebecca Geary, Instructional Coach; Caroline Scott, 6th Grade Team Leader; Laura Driscoll, Director of Special Services; and Nicole Pucci, 2nd Grade Team Leader.

- In all observed classes, teachers were following one of the school’s models of instruction, with one teacher in the classroom, except during the guided reading blocks, when two teachers were present. Learning specialists were also observed working with smaller groups for more intensive instruction.
- Class sizes observed ranged from 11 to 18 students, with one teacher in all classrooms; learning specialists were observed working with groups ranging in size from four to 11 students. All kindergarten classes at the school had a teacher and a teaching assistant.
- Forms of questioning identified during the classroom observations included basic fact recall and demonstration of understanding, with a few examples of students being challenged to analyze and apply.
 - In one sixth grade math class, students were analyzing how the slope of line would change if the inputs changed. Another example was observed in a fifth grade reading class where students were asked how a story would change if the narrator changed from the first person to the third person omniscient.
- In most classrooms, checks for understanding that included questioning, choral responses, and frequent use of student turn and talk, were observed. Turn and talk sessions were very brief, typically lasting 30 seconds to one minute.
 - In a fourth grade literacy lesson, students were asked to turn and talk to neighbors to discuss why it was important to analyze secondary characters. In this same class, students were asked to make a prediction and discuss this with a neighbor during a turn and talk.
- In a few observed classrooms, differentiation of materials, tasks, and products was observed. Instead of materials or tasks the school attempts differentiation through the use of flexible small groupings in core subjects, with teachers working with different levels of students in different classrooms.
- In most observed classes, students were responsive to teacher directions and instruction.
- In most observed classes, students were either fully on task or mostly on task. Off-task students were off task for only a short duration.

- Based on debriefs with the school's leadership team members after classroom visits, most classrooms had instruction that aligned with the instructional model and current academic goals of the school.

Learning Environment

During the renewal visit to the school, NYC DOE representatives conducted one-on-one interviews with 11 staff members, including teachers, one learning specialist, and one grade team leader. The following was noted:

- Most interviewed staff indicated that considerable effort was directed toward CCLS alignment over a two-year period. In particular, the school dedicated extensive resources and personnel support to building curriculum internally that was aligned to the new standards, rigorous, and above the academic expectations established by the CCLS.
- Teachers consistently stated that data is widely used throughout the school, the school has a data-driven culture which stems from the leadership team, and that students are aware of their performance data and feel responsible for outcomes.
- Some teachers reported that professional development sessions were closely aligned to their needs around classroom management. Others reported that some sessions were not differentiated to meet their needs, especially for those not focused on literacy. All teachers were familiar with the school's teacher observation and evaluation protocols.

During the renewal visit to the school, NYC DOE representatives conducted group interviews with 20 students in grades three through seven. The following was noted:

- Most interviewed students reported feeling academically challenged at the school, but at a level that was appropriate for them.
- Students were aware of their academic performance and expressed confidence in their abilities to be successful based on their relationship to the data. Students expressed openness and enthusiasm around their own achievement data and their parents knowing about their achievement data.
- All interviewed students reported that their teachers had high academic expectations for them and also felt supported by teachers in trying to reach those expectations.

According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 97% of parents agree or strongly agree “that the school has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss [their] child” and 99% of parents who responded to the survey agree or strongly agree “that the school has high expectations for [their] child.”¹⁶

According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey 100% of teachers agree or strongly agree that “order and discipline are maintained at the school” and only 6% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that “at my school students are often harassed or bullied in school.”¹⁷

¹⁶ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 66% of parent respondents strongly agree that South Bronx Classical Charter School has teachers who are interested and attentive when they discuss their child; another 31% agree with the statement. Similarly, 75% of parent respondents strongly agree that South Bronx Classical Charter School has high expectations for their child; another 24% agree with the statement.

¹⁷ According to the 2013-2014 NYC School Survey, 94% of teacher respondents strongly agree that order and discipline are maintained at South Bronx Classical Charter School; another 6% agree with the statement. Of teacher respondents, 55% strongly disagree that students are often harassed or bullied in the school; 39% of teacher respondents disagree with the statement; 3% agree with the statement; and 3% 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 maintained a developed governance structure and organizational design.

On April 21, 2015, as part of the renewal review process, a representative for the NYC DOE observed a regularly scheduled meeting of the school's Board of Trustees. Based on document review and observation, the following was noted:

- The Board currently has nine active members. This level of membership is consistent within the minimum of seven members and maximum of 13 members established in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board's Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer positions, as specified in the bylaws, are currently filled with no vacancies.
- The Board has consistently achieved quorum, as evidenced by a review of Board meeting minutes for meetings held during the retrospective charter term; selected minutes reviewed for the prior two academic years show quorum was achieved in 16 out of 16 board meetings.
- There are clear lines of accountability between the Board and school leadership as evidenced by the school's organization chart and school leadership's monthly updates on academic, financial, and operational performance to the Board and its committees, as recorded in Board meeting minutes. Primarily, the Executive Director of the school updates the Board at each board meeting regarding the school's academic and operational performance.
- As a condition of the retrospective charter term, the Board was to demonstrate a plan for sound oversight and evaluation of school leadership. In June 2011, the Board refined the existing plan and fully implemented a comprehensive plan of school accountability including an annual evaluation of the Executive Director which includes benchmarks for performance, an interview by the Board, and a self-evaluation.
- The Board's bylaws require that the Board have a standing and active Finance Committee; there is evidence of this committee being active in Board meeting minutes. The Board also has active and functioning Real Estate and Development committees, as recorded in meeting minutes reviewed.
- The Board's recent strategic focus, as school self-reported and evidenced in meeting minutes reviewed, has been on fundraising to increase the range of supports available to the school's students. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Board set a goal for fundraising to add an outplacement consultant to the team for the rising eighth grade students, as well as to enhance student enrichment services in the coming school year.
- The school's founding Board Chair, Steven Baldwin, is still a Board member and is currently Chair of the school's Board of Trustees. The school's Executive Director is Lester Long, who has been at the school for nine years, since the school's inception. Mr. Long also serves as the Executive Director for two other chartered South Bronx Classical charter schools, neither of which is authorized by the NYC DOE Chancellor.

School Climate & Community Engagement

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

- To date, the school has met its charter goal of having an annual average student attendance rate of at least 95% in the last three years of its retrospective charter term. Average daily attendance for students over the course of the charter term is 95.7% according to the data in the table below.¹⁸

¹⁸ 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 all school years. The school self-reported attendance rates of 94.3%, 95.0%, 95.0%, and 93.0% for school years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, respectively.

Average Attendance

Elementary and Middle School Attendance				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
South Bronx Classical Charter School*	94.7%	96.7%	95.5%	96.0%
NYC**	93.2%	93.9%	93.6%	93.2%
Difference from NYC	1.5	2.8	1.9	2.8

* Attendance was taken from ATS.

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

- Staff turnover has been high during the retrospective charter term; however turnover was at its lowest in the most recent year, 2013-2014. In 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, the percentage of instructional staff who did not return, either by choice or request, at the start of the following school year was 29%, 39%, 44%, and 17%, respectively.¹⁹ There is no evidence, however, that this level of instructional staff turnover has negatively affected student performance.
- 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 of the creation of this report. Based on the NYC DOE's evaluation and not in comparison to any other school, the CSD, or NYC averages, the school has had challenges with retaining students.

Mobility

Student Mobility out of South Bronx Classical Charter School *				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Number of Students who Left the School	49	38	38	59
Percent of Students who Left the School	16.8%	13.2%	12.2%	16.9%

* 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. The percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for all of the three selected questions. The percentage of students agreeing or strongly agreeing was above citywide averages for two 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 each parents, teachers and students (if participating) are presented below for each year of the charter term. The response rate for South Bronx Classical Charter School students was above the citywide average in 2013-2014 and the response rates for South Bronx Classical Charter School parents and teachers were above citywide averages in all years of the retrospective charter term. Additionally, in 2013-2014, the response rate for each students, parents, and teachers of South Bronx Classical Charter School was 100%.

¹⁹ Self-reported information collected through the Renewal Application Data Collection Form

NYC School Survey Results

Percent of Respondents that Agree or Strongly Agree						
Survey Question		South Bronx Classical Charter School				Citywide Average
		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014
Students*	Most of my teachers make me excited about learning.**	-	-	-	58%	62%
	Most students at my school treat each other with respect.	-	-	-	65%	60%
	I feel safe in the hallways, bathrooms, locker room, cafeteria, etc.	-	-	-	92%	79%
Parents	I feel satisfied with the education my child has received this year.	98%	100%	99%	99%	95%
	My child's school makes it easy for parents to attend meetings.	98%	94%	94%	96%	94%
	I feel satisfied with the response I get when I contact my child's school.	94%	98%	96%	97%	95%
Teachers	Order and discipline are maintained at my school.	100%	100%	96%	100%	80%
	The principal at my school communicates a clear vision for our school.	88%	93%	100%	100%	88%
	School leaders place a high priority on the quality of teaching.	92%	90%	100%	97%	92%
	I would recommend my school to parents.***	-	68%	34%	91%	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*	South Bronx Classical Charter School	-	-	-	100%
	NYC	-	-	-	83%
Parents	South Bronx Classical Charter School	95%	100%	93%	100%
	NYC	52%	53%	54%	53%
Teachers	South Bronx Classical Charter School	100%	100%	86%	100%
	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, “85% of parents will consider the school a ‘safe school’ according to the NYC DOE School Survey.” The school met this goal in all four school years of the retrospective charter term, 2010-2011 through 2013-2014.²⁰
- The school’s charter goals include, “85% of parents will indicate strong communication between school and home regarding student achievement according to the NYC DOE School Survey.” The school met this goal in all four school years of the retrospective charter term, 2010-2011 through 2013-2014.²¹

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:

- The school organizes Community Gatherings six times per year to celebrate student accomplishments. Each Community Gathering has a character pillar theme (Citizenship, Respect, Trustworthiness, Caring, Responsibility, and Fairness) and a different grade hosts each one.
- A Family Advisory Council (FAC) has been active at the school since its inception in 2006. The primary goal of the FAC is to develop and enhance communication among South Bronx Classical Charter School families and the school, and serve as a network for parents to obtain relevant information and support in their child’s education. The FAC meets monthly.
 - In conjunction with the Dean of Students, the FAC runs the Parent Academy, a monthly resource for parents where experts from various fields are invited to give workshops. Over the past five years, sample workshops have included ‘Using Character Pillars to Motivate Scholars’, ‘Asthma Awareness’, ‘Financial Literacy’, and ‘Resolving Family Conflicts’.
- The NYC DOE conducted a public renewal hearing on March 18, 2015 at South Bronx Classical Charter School at 977 Fox Street, Bronx, NY for the school in an effort to elicit public comments. Three participants attended the hearing with one speaking in support of the school’s renewal and none speaking in opposition.
- The NYC DOE made randomized phone calls to parents from a roster provided by the school for students of all grades. Calls to school parents/guardians were made during April of 2015 until 20 phone calls were completed. Of these calls, 90% provided positive feedback regarding the school and 10% of the respondents were neutral.

²⁰ According to the NYC School Survey for years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “At my child’s school my child is safe” was 99%, 100%, 97%, and 99%, respectively.

²¹ According to the NYC School Survey for years 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, the percentage of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “My child’s school keeps me informed about what my child is learning” was 98%, 99%, 99%, and 98%, respectively.

Financial Health

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

- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school's current ratio of 11.98 indicated a strong ability to meet its current liabilities.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school had sufficient unrestricted cash in the amount of \$4,564,870 to cover its operating expenses for at least 350 days without an infusion of cash.
- A comparison of the enrollment projections for the 2014-2015 budget to the actual enrollment as of October 31, 2015 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, the school is financially sustainable based on its current practices.

- Based on the financial audits from FY11 to FY14, the school generated an aggregate surplus over these audited fiscal years, and in FY14, the school operated at a surplus.
- Based on the FY14 financial audit, the school's debt-to-asset ratio of 0.08 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 positive cash flow from FY11 to FY14 and the school had positive cash flow in each measurable year.

There was no material weakness noted in the four independent financial audits.

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

Over the charter term, South Bronx Classical 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 South Bronx Classical 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 13 members. The Board currently has nine active members.
- **Notification of Board Member Resignations/Submission of New Board Members for Approval.** The Board has consistently submitted Board resignation notices or new Board member credentials within the required five days of change to OSDCP for review and, if necessary, approval.
- **Timely submission of documents.** The Board did consistently submit the Annual Report to the New York State Education Department by the deadline of August 1 (or by the NYSED granted extension date) for each year of the current charter term.
- **Posting of minutes and agendas.** The Board's policy is to make Board minutes and agendas available upon request to the public via email. During the retrospective charter term, as reported by the school, no such request was made. Neither Board meeting minutes nor agendas are posted online as of the review by OSDCP in March and April 2015.

As of the review in April 2015, the Board of Trustees for South Bronx Classical Charter School is out of compliance with:

- **Posting of documents.** The school has not posted to its website its annual audit for each year of the charter term, as required in charter law. It has only posted the audit for 2013-2014.
- **Submission of all required documents.** All but one current Board member has submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms. The documents submitted do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.²²
- **Required number of monthly meetings.** The school's bylaws indicate that the Board is to hold one annual meeting and nine regular meetings per year. In school years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 of the charter term, the Board did hold the required number of monthly meetings, as evidenced by the Board Yearly Meeting Schedule and Board meeting minutes. Required meetings are those which met quorum. The posted Board Meeting Schedule for 2014-2015 indicates the Board plans to hold 11 meetings during this academic year.
 - The Charter Schools Act requires however that the Board hold monthly meetings over a period of 12 calendar months per year. The Board has not revised its bylaws to be complete with this requirement.

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

- **Application and Lottery.** For the 2014-2015 school year, the school had an application deadline of April 1, 2014 and lottery date of April 4, 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.
- **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.
- **Safety Documents.** The school has submitted the required safety plan. The school has the required number of staff with AED/CPR certification.

²² Source: New York State Education Department Annual Report

- **Immunization.** The school has submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 99% for immunization.
- **Insurance.** The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents to the NYC DOE.
- **Fire Emergency.** One or more 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.

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

- **Student Discipline Plan.** The school did not provide the NYC DOE with a current and complete copy of its Student Discipline Policy for the 2014-2015 academic year prior to the annual accountability deadline of October 31. At the time of this report, however, the school has submitted its Student Code of Conduct to the NYC DOE and it has been reviewed. As identified by the school on its self-reported student discipline compliance checklist, the school's policy is compliant with federal law but has two areas of non-compliance with authorizer guidance for notice of removal.

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.²³
- In all years of the retrospective charter term, including the most recently completed school year 2013-2014, South Bronx Classical Charter School:
 - served a lower percentage of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Lunch compared to the CSD 12 rate but served a higher percentage of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Price Lunch compared to the citywide rate;
 - served a lower percentage of students with disabilities compared to both the CSD 12 and citywide percentages; and
 - served a lower percentage of English Language Learner students compared to both the CSD 12 and citywide percentages.

²³ Please see the following website for more information: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/enrollment-retention-targets.html>

Enrollment of Special Populations²⁴

Special Population		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 State Enrollment Target (Current)
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	South Bronx Classical Charter School	86.3%	87.0%	90.7%	88.3%	94.5%
	CSD 12	98.0%	97.3%	97.6%	96.8%	
	NYC	81.8%	84.1%	83.0%	82.4%	
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	South Bronx Classical Charter School	6.2%	6.2%	9.0%	9.7%	16.9%
	CSD 12	18.9%	18.8%	19.0%	20.7%	
	NYC	17.4%	17.3%	17.9%	19.9%	
English Language Learners (ELL)	South Bronx Classical Charter School	5.9%	7.8%	7.1%	8.3%	20.6%
	CSD 12	20.4%	19.9%	19.0%	17.7%	
	NYC	17.6%	17.0%	16.6%	15.6%	

Additional Enrollment Information				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Grades Served	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-6
CSD(s)	12	12	12	12

²⁴ 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 kindergarten through grade five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to kindergarten through grade 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 will continue its planned phase-in of previously authorized grades to serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade in the 2015-2016 school year, at which point the school will be at full scale. The school is currently working on developing its eighth grade curriculum, including unit plans, lesson plans and assessments that are detailed, rigorous and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards.
- The school is also proposing to increase maximum enrollment from 360 students to 410 students. The school plans to do this by increasing kindergarten enrollment by 10 students (from 60 to 70) in 2015-2016, and backfilling first and second grades. The school's kindergarten waitlist has increased in each of the past six years, rising from 497 applications in 2009-2010 to 1,600 applications in the 2014-2015 lottery.
 - This increase will not have any impact on the number of classrooms utilized by the school.
- The school will continue its efforts to recruit students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Efforts during the retrospective charter term which will be continued and may be enhanced to improve the outcomes of these efforts (increased enrollment of students with disabilities and ELLs) include:
 - Distribution of translated materials and student applications to nursery schools, Head Starts, and community organizations (these materials include information about the special services the school provides for special populations and struggling students);
 - School information sessions which are facilitated by a bilingual Operations Manager;
 - School attendance at several student recruitment fairs to share information about the school and its programming;
 - School presentations to local community organizations that serve ELL populations, including Mott Haven Community Partnership Program and various South Bronx community churches; and
 - Distribution of information about South Bronx Classical Charter School in both English and Spanish to seven local New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) housing developments.

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 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.²⁵

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.²⁶ 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;

²⁵ See §§ 2851(4) and 2852 of the Act.

²⁶ See generally §§ 2851(3) and 2851(4).

- 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 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.²⁷

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.²⁸

²⁷ § 2851(4)(e) added with the 2010 amendments to the Act.

²⁸ See § 2852(5).

Part 6: NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships 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 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 Reports²⁹

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

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

²⁹ 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.

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 location³⁰ 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

³⁰ 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.

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

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
South Bronx Classical Charter School				
Grade 3	64.2%	89.4%	48.2%	57.4%
Grade 4	66.7%	93.0%	67.4%	67.3%
Grade 5	82.8%	88.6%	50.0%	55.3%
Grade 6	-	-	-	38.5%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 12 *				
Grade 3	33.9	58.6	35.5	44.7
Grade 4	31.4	60.5	56.4	54.7
Grade 5	52.6	55.6	38.3	45.2
Grade 6	-	-	-	30.4
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC				
Grade 3	16.1	40.4	20.1	27.5
Grade 4	15.7	40.6	40.2	36.2
Grade 5	33.8	36.4	21.3	26.9
Grade 6	-	-	-	13.2

Grade-Level Proficiency in Mathematics				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
South Bronx Classical Charter School				
Grade 3	88.7%	95.7%	47.5%	78.7%
Grade 4	92.2%	100.0%	84.1%	85.7%
Grade 5	96.6%	100.0%	69.4%	86.8%
Grade 6	-	-	-	88.5%
DIFFERENCE FROM CSD 12 *				
Grade 3	52.6	57.9	33.0	63.5
Grade 4	46.6	54.5	70.7	68.2
Grade 5	52.2	55.3	60.9	72.0
Grade 6	-	-	-	75.6
DIFFERENCE FROM NYC				
Grade 3	33.9	38.7	14.3	40.1
Grade 4	29.9	34.3	48.9	45.7
Grade 5	33.7	34.8	39.9	48.1
Grade 6	-	-	-	54.7

* 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 Review 2013-2014](#)

[Annual Comprehensive Review 2012-2013](#)

[Annual Site Visit Report 2011-2012](#)