



THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS
INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT
ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY
PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL*

Report Date: December 10, 2019

Visit Date: September 18-19, 2019

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

518.445.4250
www.newyorkcharters.org



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

CONTENTS

2

Introduction & Report Format

4

Renewal Recommendation

7

School Background and Executive Summary

10

Academic Performance

26

Organizational Performance

33

Fiscal Performance

36

Future Plans

Appendices

A: School Overview

B: School Performance Summaries

C: District Comments

D: School Fiscal Dashboard

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

INTRODUCTION & REPORT FORMAT

This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the ***Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York*** (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).¹

THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON

A SCHOOL’S
APPLICATION
FOR CHARTER
RENEWAL

GATHERED DURING
THE CHARTER TERM

ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE

FISCAL SOUNDNESS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

RENEWAL
EVALUATION VISIT



Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the school’s record of academic performance and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.

1. Revised September 4,
2013 and available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Policies/.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
 SUNY Plaza
 353 Broadway
 Albany, NY 12246

REPORT FORMAT

This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the ***State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks*** (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),² which specify in detail what a successful school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the four interconnected renewal questions below for framing benchmark statements to determine if a school has made an adequate case for renewal.



RENEWAL QUESTIONS

1. IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?
2. IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?
3. IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND?
4. IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal.

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/.

This report contains appendices that provide additional statistical and organizationally related information including a largely statistical school overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, and the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school. If applicable, the appendices also include additional information about the education corporation and its schools including additional evidence on student achievement of other education corporation schools.



RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

Full-Term Renewal The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools' authority to operate Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School, and the amended Application for Charter Renewal for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in 6th – 8th grade with a projected total enrollment of 600 students.

The Institute further recommends that the SUNY Trustees renew for a full term of five years the provisional charter of Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools, the New York not-for-profit charter school education corporation that operates the school.

To earn an **Initial Full-Term Renewal**, a school must either:



have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks,³ is generally effective; or,



have made progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and have in place at the time of the renewal review an education program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is particularly strong and effective.⁴

REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees' specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act:

1:

the school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal, meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;

2:

the education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,

3. The Qualitative Education Benchmarks are a subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

4. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 12).

3:

given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.⁵

ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS

Enrollment and retention targets apply to all operating, SUNY authorized charter schools. The Act requires charter schools to make good faith efforts to meet enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program.

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it will put in place to meet or exceed SUNY’s enrollment and retention targets. SUNY and the New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”) finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012. Since that time, new schools receive targets during their first year of operation and others receive targets at renewal.

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School (“Atmosphere”) makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. The school exceeds its enrollment and retention targets for students who qualify for FRPL and exceeds its retention targets for ELLs and students with disabilities. The school does not meet its enrollment targets for ELLs and students with disabilities. The school uses the following strategies to make good faith efforts toward meeting its targets:

- providing recruitment materials in English and Spanish;
- highlighting the school’s programs for ELLs and students with disabilities in recruitment materials;
- conducting outreach to neighborhoods and schools with large populations of families that speak languages other than English;
- presenting information about the school at local community organizations, businesses, and faith-based organizations;
- hosting information sessions and open houses at the school; and,
- collaborating with local community organizations through helping with service projects and participating in community events to demonstrate Atmosphere’s close connection with the Kingsbridge community.

For additional information on the school’s enrollment and retention target progress, see Appendix A.

5. See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the district in which the charter school is located regarding the school's Application for Charter Renewal. The full text of any written comments received from the district appears in Appendix C, which also includes a summary of any public comments.

As of the date of this report, the Institute has not received district comments in response to the renewal application. A summary of public comments submitted to the Institute appears in Appendix C.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

The SUNY Trustees approved the original charter for Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools (the “education corporation”) on June 4, 2014. Atmosphere opened its doors in the fall of 2015 initially serving 120 students in 6th grade. The school is authorized to serve 342 students in 6th – 8th grade during the 2019-20 school year. If renewed, the school will continue to serve students in 6th – 8th grade, with a projected total enrollment of 600 students.

The current charter term expires on July 31, 2020. A subsequent charter term would enable the school to operate through July 31, 2025. Atmosphere is located at three privately leased spaces across the Kingsbridge neighborhood in the Bronx and all locations are in New York City Community School District (“CSD”) 10 (the “district”). The school’s 6th grade is located at 22 Marble Hill Avenue, the 7th grade is housed at 5959 Broadway, and the 8th grade is located at 3700 Independence Avenue.

The mission of Atmosphere is:



Through the creation of a highly engaging school setting, Atmosphere not only prepares students to be ready for college, career, and life, but to succeed once they get there. By actively contributing to the school’s shared learning community, Atmosphere students will acquire the character, skills, and knowledge they need to think, collaborate, and lead.

If renewed, Atmosphere requests an enrollment increase to 600 students in 6th – 8th grade. The school submitted plans that included a rationale for the increased enrollment as well as staffing, budgets, and instructional plans. The Institute reviewed the future plans and programmatic elements, and determined the school has the capacity to expand its enrollment. The school plans to hire additional general education and special education teachers, a social worker, an assistant dean, and an operations assistant to further support the leadership team. Given the significant improvements of the school’s academic program over the charter term and the quality of the school’s program in the final year of its current charter term, the Institute finds that the school’s plans for expansion are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school seeks to eventually enroll students in 6th – 12th grade and anticipates returning in the course of the next charter term to provide the curriculum and instructional design, and a track record of continued student achievement necessary to gain approval from the SUNY Trustees for the expansion.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the course of its initial charter term, Atmosphere demonstrated progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals until, in 2018-19, the school met its key academic Accountability Plan goals for ELA and mathematics. The school's educational program is also particularly strong and effective and continues to evolve and develop with strong collaboration among the leadership team.

Atmosphere demonstrates success in the following manner:

- In 2018-19, the school exceeded the target for all of the comparative and growth measures included in its English language arts ("ELA") and mathematics Accountability Plan goals. Atmosphere outperformed the district by 13 percentage points in ELA and 16 percentage points in mathematics.
- From 2017-18 to 2018-19, Atmosphere made greater achievement gains than its comparison district and dramatically improved its statewide ranking outperforming over 50 percent of schools statewide in ELA and mathematics. In ELA, Atmosphere increased its absolute proficiency rate by nine percentage points while the district's proficiency remained unchanged. In mathematics, while the district increased its absolute proficiency rate by four points, Atmosphere increased its performance by 20 points. Importantly, the school increased its statewide percentile rank by 10 percentile points in ELA and 33 percentile points in mathematics. In 2018-19, the school's jump in its mathematics percentile rank placed its performance higher than twice the number of schools it had outperformed in 2017-18.
- The school's ELLs demonstrated improved comparative performance in 2018-19. Atmosphere's ELLs surpassed the district ELLs by eight and seven points in ELA and mathematics, respectively. The school's ELLs posted high mean growth percentiles in 2018-19. In ELA, ELLs had an average growth of 68 percentile points and 77 percentile points in mathematics, which exceeds the target by 18 and 27 points, respectively.
- The school's students with disabilities also demonstrated commendable comparative performance in 2018-19. That year, Atmosphere's students with disabilities surpassed the district students with disabilities by eight and 11 points in ELA and mathematics, respectively. Students with disabilities posted high mean growth percentiles in 2018-19. In ELA, students with disabilities had an average growth of 60 percentile points and 70 percentile points in mathematics exceeding the target by 10 and 20 points, respectively.

Over the charter term, the school recruited and retained its leadership team and grew from serving 120 students in one grade to 342 students in three grades. School leaders and the education corporation board have increased their capacity to implement a consistent academic program at each of the three sites. Notwithstanding significant progress during the charter term, the board and school leaders recognize a need to continue to improve the school's academic program, specifically in programming for ELLs and students with disabilities, and build the capacity of the leadership team to train and develop staff, manage facilities, and provide oversight support for the school's budget. As a result, the school amended its Application for Charter Renewal to serve the current grades rather than expand to a high school program.

Based on the Institute's review of the school's performance as posted over the charter term; a review of the amended Application for Charter Renewal submitted by the school; a review of academic, organizational, governance and financial documentation; and a renewal visit to the school, the Institute finds that the school meets the required criteria for charter renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Atmosphere an Initial Full-Term Renewal of five years. The Institute further recommends that the provisional charter of Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools be renewed for the statutory maximum of five years.

NOTEWORTHY

Atmosphere instills in its students a desire to serve others in their community, including their school community. Atmosphere provides a scholarship fund for its alumni students, in which alumni earn funds by giving back to the school community through tutoring current Atmosphere students. This school year, 40 alumni students chose to participate. As part of the alumni program the school also offers free Regents preparation courses, financial literacy courses, and visits to different career workplaces.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Atmosphere is an academic success as the school meets or comes close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals. The instructional leadership team has developed systems to support staff across all three grade levels, which has led to significant improvements in students' ELA and mathematics achievement over the school's initial charter term.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,⁶ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. The Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures to determine ELA and mathematics goal attainment. Because the Act requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"⁷ and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents"⁸ for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present schools':

ABSOLUTE PERFORMANCE, I.E., WHAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORE AT A CERTAIN PROFICIENCY ON STATE EXAMS?

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW DID THE SCHOOL DO AS COMPARED TO SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS THAT SERVE SIMILAR POPULATIONS OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

GROWTH PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW MUCH DID THE SCHOOL GROW STUDENT PERFORMANCE AS COMPARED TO THE GROWTH OF SIMILARLY SITUATED STUDENTS?

6. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a school in an initial charter term, the Accountability Period covers the first four years the school provides instruction to students. In this renewal report, the Institute uses "charter term" and "Accountability Period" interchangeably.

Every SUNY authorized charter school has the opportunity to propose additional measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. Atmosphere did not propose any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

The Institute analyzes every measure included in the school's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success, including the extent to which the school has established and maintained a record of high performance, and established progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the initial charter term. Since 2009, the Institute has examined but consistently de-emphasized the two absolute measures under

7. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

8. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

each goal in elementary and middle schools' Accountability Plans because of changes to the state's assessment system. The analysis of elementary and middle school performance continues to focus primarily on the two comparative measures and the growth measure while also considering the two required absolute measures and any additional evidence the school presents using additional measures identified in its Accountability Plan. The Institute identifies the required measures (absolute proficiency, absolute Measure of Interim Progress ("MIP") attainment,⁹ comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, student growth, and high school graduation and college going rates, as applicable) in the Performance Summaries appearing in Appendix B.

The Institute analyzes all measures under the school's ELA and mathematics goals (and high school graduation and college preparation goals for enrolling students in high school grades) while emphasizing the school's comparative performance and growth to determine goal attainment. The Institute calculates a comparative effect size to measure the performance of Atmosphere relative to all public schools statewide that serve the same grade levels and that enroll similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. It is important to note that this measure is a comparison measure and therefore any changes in New York's assessment system do not compromise its validity or reliability. Further, the school's performance on the measure is not relative to the test, but relative to the strength of Atmosphere's demonstrated student learning compared to other schools' demonstrated student learning.

The Institute uses the state's growth percentile analysis as a measure of Atmosphere's comparative year-to-year growth in student performance on the state's ELA and mathematics exams. The measure compares a school's growth in assessment scores to the growth in assessment scores of the subset of students throughout the state who performed identically on previous years' assessments. According to this measure, median growth statewide is at the 50th percentile. This means that to signal the school's ability to grow student achievement at the same rate as schools serving similar students across the state in one year's time the expected percentile performance is 50. To signal a school is increasing students' performance above their peers (students statewide who scored previously at the same level), the school must post a percentile performance that exceeds 50.

The Accountability Plan also includes science and ESSA goals, the latter of which replaces the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB") goals. Please note that for schools located in New York City, the Institute uses the CSD as the local school district.

9. During the 2017-18 school year, the state finalized and approved its Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") plan. As such, the Institute established changes to required goals and measures in order to align with the new accountability system. The Institute now requires schools to report a Performance Index ("PI") with the target of meeting or exceeding the state's MIP.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
1A****HAS THE SCHOOL MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING
ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?**

Atmosphere made progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals over its initial four year Accountability Period and met its ELA and mathematics goals in 2018-19 with consistent growth from one year to the next. In 2016-17, the first year in which all measures were applicable in its plan, the school did not meet its Accountability Plan goals in ELA or mathematics. By 2018-19, the school had increased its overall proficiency rate by 18 percentage points in ELA and 23 points in mathematics. During the two years for which data are available, the school made progress towards meeting its science goal. Atmosphere met its NCLB and ESSA goals over the term. The school's leaders have a program in place to continue the strong growth in a future charter term.

Atmosphere demonstrated strong improvement across all of its ELA measures in its initial term, meeting the goal in the final two years of its four year Accountability Period. In 2016-17, the first year the school enrolled students for at least two years, students posted proficiency rates slightly below the district. Similarly, the school posted comparative effect sizes below the target of 0.3 in 2015-16 and 2016-17, performing lower than expected in comparison to demographically similar schools statewide. In 2016-17 Atmosphere posted a mean growth percentile one point above the target of 50 after narrowly missing the target the year before. In 2017-18 Atmosphere met its ELA goal when the school outperformed the district by four percentage points, with 38% of its students enrolled for at least two years scoring at or above proficient. Atmosphere exceeded its effect size target, performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree compared to demographically similar schools. The school's mean growth percentile exceeded the target of 50 by six points. In 2018-19, Atmosphere increased its performance by nine percentage points and grew the gap between the district and the school to 13 percentage points. The school exceeded its effect size target, posting an effect size of 0.85. Concurrent with its improvement in absolute proficiency and effect size, the school continued to post strong growth in 2018-19: the school's mean growth percentile exceeded the target by 11 points.

Atmosphere made progress in mathematics over its four year Accountability Period, meeting its mathematics goal in the final year. Although the school did not meet the goal in 2015-16, 2016-17, or 2017-18, the school posted strong improvement over the charter term and significant improvement against all of its measures in 2018-19. In 2016-17, the school's performance met the district's, when 20% of its students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency. The school posted an effect size of -0.29, falling below the target of 0.3. However the school met the target under its growth measure when it posted

a mean growth percentile of 52. The following year, the school's absolute performance improved but continued to remain at the same level as the district's. Although the school did not meet its targeted effect size measure, its effect size of 0.03 meant the school performed slightly higher than expected compared to schools with similar proportions of economically disadvantaged students. Additionally the school posted strong growth, exceeding the target by nine percentage points. In 2018-19 Atmosphere continued its improvement, demonstrating strong mathematics achievement and surpassing the target for all of its comparative and growth measures. With 43% of its students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency, the school outperformed the district by 16 percentage points. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, the school performed higher than expected to a large degree. Further, the school again posted exceptional mean growth, exceeding the target by 23 percentile points. This level of growth indicates that the school grew the learning of its students faster than their peers across the state.

On the state's science exam, in 2017-18, the first year the school enrolled students in 8th grade, Atmosphere's 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year posted a proficiency rate of 37%, falling below the district and the absolute target of 75%. The following year, the school continued to underperform the absolute target but increased its performance by 14 percentage points. District comparison data are not yet available.

Atmosphere remained in good standing under the state's accountability system over the charter term.

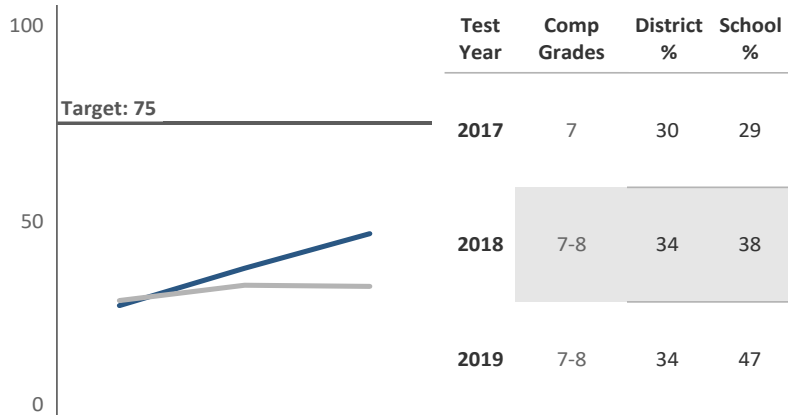
SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

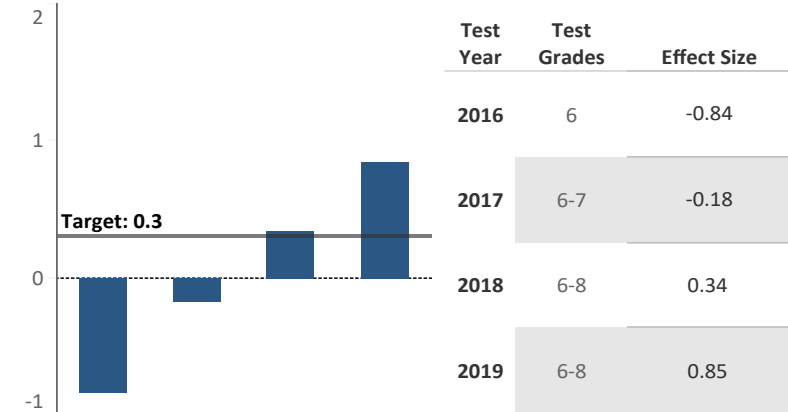
ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

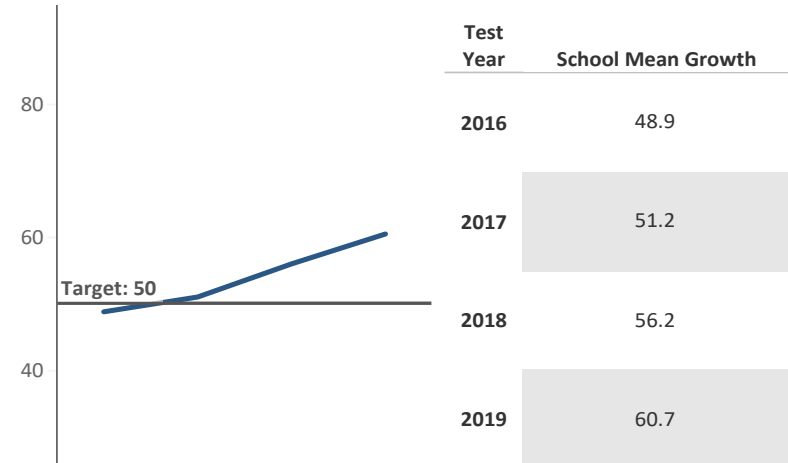
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in ELA will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



Comparative Measure: Effect Size. Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



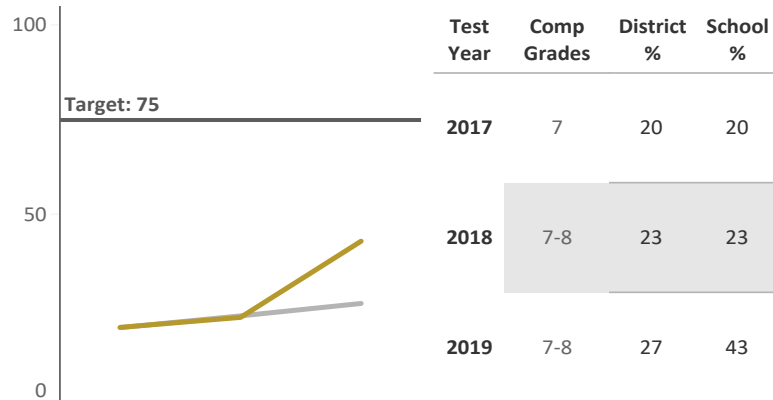
SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

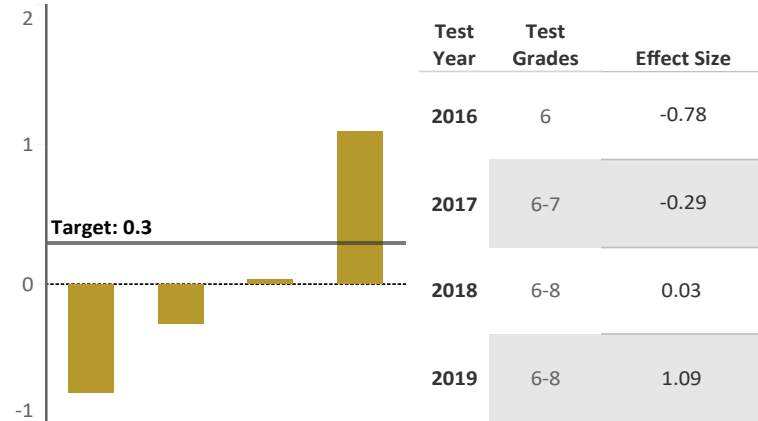
ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

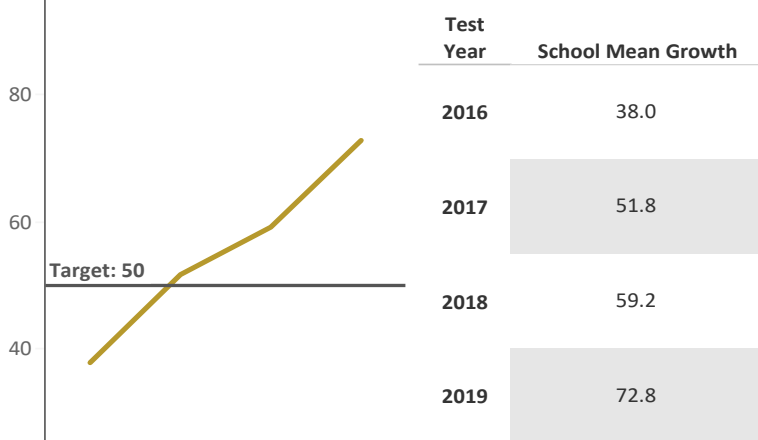
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in Mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the district.



Comparative Measure: Effect Size. Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **mathematics**.

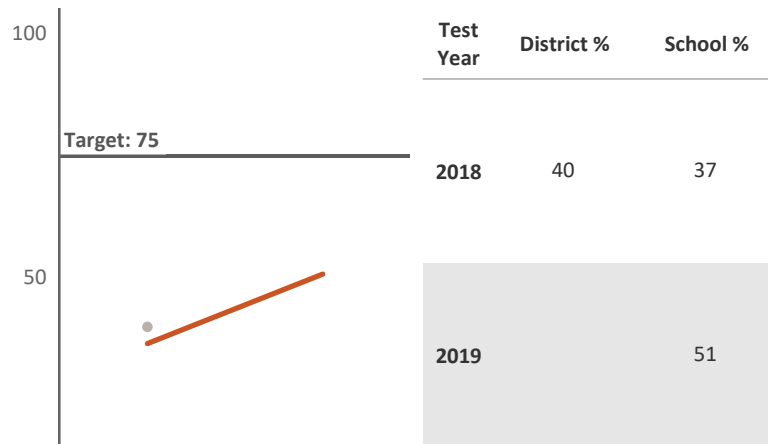


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Science: Comparative Measure. Each year, the percentage of students at the school in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in **science** will exceed that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services | 69 | 99 | 86 |
| Tested on State Exam | 65 | 97 | 81 |
| School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam | 3.1 | 17.5 | 18.5 |
| District Percent Proficient | 5.3 | 11.2 | 10.5 |
| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| ELL Enrollment | 32 | 52 | 47 |
| Tested on NYSESLAT Exam | 31 | 52 | 45 |
| School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT | 6.5 | 30.8 | 24.4 |

The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in the school's formal Accountability Plan.

The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam.

"Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding.

In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s."

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
1B**

DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Atmosphere has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The school's systems for assessment have grown and developed through its initial charter term, leading to improvements in the school's student achievement results. The leadership team is diligent with collecting, reviewing, and reacting to student data to drive instructional decisions. The leadership team recognizes a need to build its capacity to use data to drive achievement toward longer term schoolwide strategic priorities.

- Atmosphere regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school's curricular program and state standards. The school administers a schoolwide beginning of year and middle of year assessment in both ELA and mathematics, both developed from RALLY New York materials. The school administers quarterly and end of year assessments in the form of course specific exams, which teachers create and leaders review for rigor. Using Read180, teachers collect Lexile reading levels for each student. Teachers also create formative assessments to collect standards aligned achievement data between the beginning and middle of year assessments. Leaders review test items to ensure they align to the rigor of the state standards. The school relies on the previous year's state test data to help identify students struggling academically at the beginning of the year, which has some limitations given the timeliness of the data.
- Atmosphere has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing assessments. The school reserves time after each test administration for teachers to collaborate and norm scoring practices. Leaders walk teachers through the scoring rubrics, review exemplars, and then conduct a review process to double grade random student work and ensure that teachers align their scoring practices. Since teachers score papers together, if any discrepancies or questions arise, leaders and other teachers can quickly address and norm.
- Atmosphere makes assessment data accessible to teachers, leaders, and board members. The school has established robust data trackers to store previous state test data, beginning and middle of year assessment data, as well as item breakdown by standard for teachers to analyze. Leaders organize data by student subgroup and share this information with board members.

- Teachers use assessment results effectively to meet student needs. Over the charter term, Atmosphere established an achievement academy class for students to focus on learning about, reacting to, and reflecting upon their own assessment scores. The achievement team creates lessons in which students discuss what the state test scores mean, including both scale and performance scores, and then unpack previous assessments to create individualized action plans for learning. Teachers then use data to divide students into specific groups for reteaching concepts and standards. In content areas, teachers analyze assessment results to create small group learning experiences as well as reteaching lessons and spiral reviews, which has resulted in increased performance on state tests for both ELA and mathematics.
- Atmosphere leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development strategies. As part of the teacher evaluation system, teachers work with leaders to create a portfolio, which includes an analysis of student achievement results that is part of the evaluation. Leaders consistently have conversations with staff members about student results, and also include in the evaluation system categories to ensure that students are aware of student achievement results. Although leaders constantly review student data to determine specific professional development and coaching plans, leaders also have the opportunity to align this coaching and teachers' goals to specific instructional priorities.
- Atmosphere regularly communicates student achievement results with families. Each year, the school hosts three family conferences to review academic achievement and progress. Students attend each session and teachers work with families and students to develop specific goals based on the current level of achievement. The school schedules its first conference at the beginning of the year in order to review the previous school year's state test results and grades, as well as for students to set goals for the year.

DOES THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING?

In the final year of its charter term, Atmosphere's curriculum aligns to state standards and provides teachers with sufficient materials to guide their instructional planning. The school leverages its curricular materials to develop lessons aligned to state standards and content expectations. Grade level teams work closely throughout the year to adjust pacing and to ensure vertical alignment, and school leaders provide effective oversight of curricular changes.

- The school has a curricular framework with student performance expectations aligned to state standards and across grades. The school uses internally developed curricular frameworks and materials aligned with state standards for all content areas and grade levels. Teachers also augment lessons with materials from other sources such as EngageNY, History Alive, Newsela, Amplify Science, GoMath!, Khan Academy, New York State released test items, and Expeditionary Learning protocols such as the fishbowl for Socratic seminars.
- Atmosphere provides teachers with supporting tools that provide a bridge between the curricular framework and lesson plans. The director of curriculum and instruction and instructional leaders develop and update unit plans, pacing guides, and scope and sequence documents for each content area. The school makes adjustments throughout the year in response to student performance. Based on these documents, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it.
- Instructional leaders use student performance data to assess the rigor of the school's curriculum. School leaders preview all curriculum additions and review for content alignment as well as ensure each new resource meets grade level expectations. The director of curriculum and instruction reviews and norms new curricular materials to assess rigor and alignment to state standards prior to implementation.
- The school sets clear expectations for lesson planning that result in purposeful and focused lessons. Lesson plan templates guide and establish expectations for lesson components. Teachers identify success criteria, learning targets, standards, vocabulary, and station activities in each lesson plan. Lesson plans include opportunities for students to engage in the material through activities that allow them to explore new material and grapple with it intellectually, explain the content they are learning, elaborate further on the content, and complete an evaluation of what they know through assessment. Teachers submit lesson plans to instructional leaders weekly and receive both written and verbal feedback via comments on lesson plans and in teacher coaching logs, and, at times, during one on one coaching sessions.

IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL?

High quality instruction is evident throughout Atmosphere classrooms. Lessons are purposeful and students actively engage in content. The school is improving its professional development for teachers such that all lessons engage students in higher order thinking. During the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 23 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school renewal visits.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
1D**

NUMBER OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

| | | GRADE | | | Total |
|--------------|----------------|-------|---|---|-------|
| | | 6 | 7 | 8 | |
| CONTENT AREA | ELA | 3 | 3 | 2 | 8 |
| | Math | 2 | 3 | 3 | 8 |
| | Science | 1 | | 1 | 2 |
| | Social Studies | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| | Specials | | | 1 | 1 |
| | Total | 7 | 7 | 9 | 23 |

- Teachers regularly and effectively deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the standards and the school curriculum (21 out of 23 lessons observed). Lessons contain purposeful and measurable objectives that align to state standards, and lesson activities support the attainment of the stated objective. Teachers display lesson objectives in age appropriate language. They also define and list relevant vocabulary on the board for students to see and use in responses. Teachers understand their co-teaching roles and generally circulate and monitor student work. For example, the Institute observed many co-teaching teams implement small group instruction during lessons to check for student understanding and provide clear support to each student.
- Teachers frequently use techniques to check for student understanding (18 out of 23 lessons observed). Teachers use systems to cold call students or circulate around the classroom to talk to students and examine their work to identify misconceptions. During lessons, they actively collect student data through Google Classroom and use any misconception as an opportunity to adjust teaching in the moment. They also use this data to review and adjust instructional plans. Teachers use station learning to interact with small groups of students to effectively gauge student learning and use follow up questioning to further probe student understanding.
- As part of Atmosphere's ongoing improvement and development, leaders recognize a need to improve opportunities during lessons for teachers to develop students' higher order thinking and problem solving skills (13 out of 23 lessons observed). In lessons that demonstrate strong student engagement in problem solving, teachers ask higher order thinking questions and require students to justify their thinking. In lessons where few students engage in higher order thinking, although teachers' lesson plans include opportunities for students to extend their thinking through student led discussions and use of protocols, teachers do not yet consistently execute these plans.

- Lessons at Atmosphere maximize learning time with explicit lesson focus and clear directions to students (20 out of 23 lessons observed). Teachers are organized with materials prepared in advance allowing them to move students quickly through lesson activities. The school has a learning culture across classrooms that supports clear routines and student engagement during lessons. Teachers successfully redirect students if they exhibit off task behavior.

DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Atmosphere has strong instructional leadership, and in anticipation of approval for the expansion of its middle school enrollment, Atmosphere is intentional about building the leadership team's capacity and fully establishing replicable practices for coaching and professional development. During this charter term the school has invested substantially in establishing a team of instructional leaders who support consistent, schoolwide instructional practices that reflect high expectations.

- The school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed. The school's academic performance goals reflect ambitious goals for ongoing improvement on state assessments. In addition to schoolwide goals, each teacher and grade level team has annual academic performance goals. Teachers recognize that leaders expect both students and teachers to constantly grow and improve. School leaders have an opportunity to identify more clearly instructional priorities and teacher goals aligned to those priorities.
- Atmosphere's instructional leadership team is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff. The principal oversees the school's academic program. The school's director of curriculum and instruction and director of student learning oversee all curriculum, assessment, and teacher development, and manage a team of four instructional leaders who support teacher development, as well as an intervention coordinator and special education instructional leader. Each of the four instructional leaders has responsibility for ELA, mathematics, social sciences, or special education and provides ongoing coaching to a set of teachers. At the time of the visit, the director of curriculum and instruction was coaching the school's mathematics manager, currently a teacher, to transition into the vacant mathematics instructional leader role to ensure mathematics teachers have necessary intended coaching supports.

- The leadership team is establishing strong practices to ensure each member has strong capacity to support the school's teaching staff. The team meets formally each week, and members work closely together to provide ad hoc support as issues arise. During leadership team meetings, the team consistently reviews data to monitor how well each grade, content area, and student is performing. The team also engages in a variety of professional growth opportunities by visiting other schools and attending external professional development sessions.
- Instructional leaders provide sustained and systemic coaching and supervision that improves teachers' instructional effectiveness. The instructional leaders meet with their assigned teachers during weekly check-ins and more frequently for newer teachers and others who need more assistance. Instructional leaders conduct observations to determine coaching needs during the first months of the school year. They use an online tracker to record classroom observations and meeting notes. Teachers, including special education and ELL staff, report that the feedback and guidance that instructional leaders provide is valuable and name specific instructional improvements that they had made in response. Teachers submit weekly lesson plans for review to their instructional leader, who provides feedback in time for teachers to make revisions if necessary.
- School leaders provide opportunities and guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels. Twice a month teachers meet schoolwide at one of the three sites in subject department meetings to discuss their instructional practices and align on consistent assessment and pedagogical techniques. Each week grade level teachers meet to discuss specific grade level issues as well as any student centered issues to ensure that teachers are aware of interventions and other supports for each student.
- School leaders implement a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers. Each year the school holds a week of professional development in the summer as well as numerous full days during the school year. School leaders also provide additional targeted support sessions to new teachers. Teachers develop their capacity to analyze student performance data, utilize tools such as Google Classroom, and implement the school's content-based instructional strategies. In addition, teachers have opportunities for subject-specific learning opportunities outside of the school.

- Each teacher's instructional leader regularly conducts teacher evaluations with clear criteria based on the Danielson framework. In addition to student achievement goals, each teacher has personal professional development goals. Examples include strengthening the ability to confer with students, better differentiating instruction, sharing information more effectively with families, and improving communication skills. Leaders conduct evaluations annually and include the past year's state test scores. Teachers then work with their instructional leaders to set new goals. During the year, instructional leaders conduct observations and teachers collect artifacts to provide evidence of their progress by mid-year and end of year.
- School leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement. They share regular feedback about concerns, provide additional support when teachers struggle, and utilize performance improvement plans when necessary. Teachers who did not show sufficient growth in meeting the school's expectations were not invited to return for the subsequent year.

DOES THE SCHOOL MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1F

Atmosphere meets the educational needs of at-risk students. Over the charter term, the school improved its academic intervention services ("AIS") to meet the needs of students struggling academically. The school is developing its programming for students with disabilities and ELLs to meet student needs, and these students have shown strong growth on state assessments in 2019.

- Atmosphere has clear procedures for identifying at-risk students. At the start of the 2019-20 school year, leaders are considering adding a universal screener for the following school year to have more immediate data regarding student achievement to determine AIS and other response to intervention ("RTI") needs. Currently for students struggling academically, the school uses the previous year's state test scores to determine AIS groupings. For the RTI process, the school has initial meetings for teachers to refer students for behavior or academic intervention needs. Once an initial meeting is complete, the RTI team, comprised of the grade level leader, intervention coordinator, dean, and social worker, reviews the referral and suggested interventions to create an intervention plan with specific benchmarks. If students do not make progress over six weeks, the team reconvenes and refers the student for evaluation with the district

Committee on Special Education (“CSE”). For ELLs, the school uses either the NYCDOE student information system or, if students are new to New York City, gives the Home Language Identification Survey and administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (“NYSITELL”), if necessary.

- Atmosphere’s AIS program has resulted in improved achievement for students during its initial charter term. After identification, the school determines specific AIS groups for mathematics and ELA, and groups meet two times per week after school to receive interventions. The intervention coordinator works with teachers to create ELA materials that focus on developing vocabulary, comprehension, and reading fluency skills. In mathematics, teachers utilize materials from the National Center for Intensive Intervention. The school has specific exit criteria for the AIS program, and teachers monitor student progress throughout the program and during quarterly assessments to determine if students are eligible to end AIS. Among students who were tested in both years, the school moved 52% of students who scored Level 1 up to Level 2 or 3 in ELA. The school moved 41% of students who scored Level 1 in mathematics up to a Level 2 or 3.
- Students with disabilities outperform district peers on state assessments, but leaders recognize a need to continuously improve to close the school’s gap between students with disabilities and general education students. To that end, Atmosphere leaders are constantly analyzing students with disabilities’ progress to improve its programming for students with Individual Education Programs (“IEPs”). The school offers a wide range of settings including special education teacher support services (“SETSS”), integrated co-teaching (“ICT”), and 12:1:1 classes. The school provides professional development opportunities to develop teachers’ co-teaching models and other differentiation strategies to help improve the school’s program. Teachers closely monitor students’ progress toward meeting IEP goals and produce quarterly progress reports.
- The school has a compliant ELL program, and leaders recognize a need to codify and improve the quality of the program. The school currently uses sheltered instruction observation protocol (“SIOP”) to meet the needs of ELLs. The two English to Speakers of Other Languages (“ESOL”) teachers provide both push in and pull out services to students. The school closely monitors ELLs’ results on midyear and quarterly assessments but does not yet have a mechanism to monitor students’ progress toward language acquisition. Leaders recognize a need to more closely monitor ELL student progress and provide general education teachers with strategies to support students struggling academically and students with disabilities. For ICT classrooms, leaders expect teachers to plan specific co-teaching strategies, and leaders follow up to ensure teachers are implementing

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

the most effective strategies to support student learning. The school also focuses on developing teachers' differentiation strategies to improve student learning and effectively scaffold learning for students. During summer professional development, leaders share IEPs with teachers and begin creating at-a-glance documents to quickly reference IEP accommodations and goals. The school also reviews procedures for RTI and begins to identify students for AIS once the previous year's state test results are released. As the school year progresses, leaders determine other professional development sessions to support at-risk students based on observations and data.

- Atmosphere provides many opportunities for general education, special education, and intervention teachers to coordinate lesson planning and other supports for at-risk students. During team meetings, special education, ESOL, and intervention teachers meet with grade levels to discuss student progress and needs. ICT teachers have a specific weekly planning meeting with content teachers to plan out lessons and ICT models. Leaders also review plans to provide feedback to co-teaching teams. As a result, teachers' co-teaching roles in classrooms are clear.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
 SUNY Plaza
 353 Broadway
 Albany, NY 12246

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE



IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Atmosphere is an effective and viable organization that has in place the key design elements identified in its charter. The Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools board meets regularly and ensures the school substantially complies with applicable laws and regulations, and oversees the school’s academic progress. Additional detail on the school’s organizational effectiveness is outlined below.

SUNY
 RENEWAL
 BENCHMARK
 2A

IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION AND DOES IT IMPLEMENT THE KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN ITS CHARTER?

Atmosphere is faithful to its mission and key design elements. These can be found in the School Background section at the beginning of the report and Appendix A, respectively. Atmosphere’s restorative justice program allows teachers to address behavior issues through discussion and peer mediation, which helps to ensure that the school’s overall suspension rates are low.

SUNY
 RENEWAL
 BENCHMARK
 2B

ARE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL?

To report on parent satisfaction with the school’s program, the Institute used satisfaction survey data, information gathered from a focus group of parents representing a cross section of students, and data regarding persistence in enrollment.

Parent Survey Data. The Institute compiled data from NYCDOE’s 2018-19 NYC School Survey. NYCDOE distributes the survey every year to compile data about school culture, instruction, and systems for improvement. This year, 74% of families who received the survey responded. The majority of survey responses (95%) indicate high satisfaction with the school. The response rate is high enough to be useful in framing the results as representative of the school community.

Parent Focus Group. The Institute asks all schools facing renewal to convene a representative set of parents for a focus group discussion. A representative set includes parents of students in attendance at the school for multiple years, parents of students new to the school, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. The 16 family members in attendance expressed a high level of satisfaction with effective and responsive school leadership, strong family and community involvement, and trust level among parents and school staff. Parents appreciate that leaders and teachers establish a culture that values high academic expectations and creates a safe space for student expression. Parents also appreciate that the school supports the social and emotional learning of students and continues to care about their development needs beyond graduation.

Persistence in Enrollment. An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2018-19, 91% of Atmosphere students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in Appendix A.

The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or NYSED is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

DOES THE SCHOOL'S ORGANIZATION WORK EFFECTIVELY TO DELIVER THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2C

Atmosphere's organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program. During the last two years the school has strengthened its organizational structures and more clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of its leadership staff. The school recognizes the opportunity to continue to build the capacity of the entire leadership team in anticipation of expanding its enrollment in the middle school grades. The school's discipline system effectively uses restorative justice practices to create a focused learning environment.

- Atmosphere has established an administrative structure with operational systems, policies, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. These practices, supported by a robust staffing structure, have enabled the school to function effectively across three sites. Although in three locations, the use of consistent terminology, visual presentation, and procedures creates a sense of a unified school. However, at the time of the site visit, school leaders and staff could not identify clear schoolwide priorities for the current school year.

- Atmosphere’s organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The domains and reporting relationships are transparent and staff members know whom to ask for what. In addition to the instructional directors and leaders, the school has school culture and operations teams. The director of school culture supervises two school counselors, three deans, and three social workers. The operations leader is responsible for overseeing the school’s logistics including facilities, transportation, audits, and supplies. The operations leader supervises a manager and two associates, who manage the day-to-day running of each facility, as well as the custodians and security guards. The school has made progress over the charter term in ensuring shared responsibility among the instructional, culture, and operations leaders, and the principal and board recognize the need for continued progress to maintain a strong school program if the school’s enrollment expands.
- The school has a clear and consistently applied student discipline system that is guided by restorative justice. In classes, teachers use consistent procedures, including hand signals and voice levels, to convey school expectations and to maintain a focus on learning. Teachers enter student behavior data in the School Runner system and meet as a grade level with the director of school culture and/or their grade level dean every other week to review recent data. Grade level deans teach a weekly restorative justice class to each class of students, with topics informed by recent trends in the data and student needs. When necessary, deans invite teachers to this class to participate in restorative practices, such as restorative circles. The discipline system requires documented proof for any suspension, which must be approved by the director of school culture. In the 2018-19 school year, the school decreased its out-of-school suspensions by 45%.
- Atmosphere retains quality staff. At the end of the 2018-19 school year, school leaders asked 87% of the teachers to return and all of them chose to do so. After struggling with teacher recruitment in its initial years, the school has improved the quality and consistency of its faculty. In the current school year, the majority of the school staff have at least four years of experience and teachers report great appreciation for autonomy to craft their own curriculum as well as the support the school provides. Atmosphere provides merit-based bonuses to promote teacher retention. The school has been able to retain most of its leadership staff for multiple years and develop a pipeline for leaders to promote from within as the school grows. The director of school culture and director of student learning were founding staff members, and the director of curriculum has been at the school for three years. All three subject-specific instructional leaders have been at the school for at least two years, and two of them have been internally promoted to the role.

- Atmosphere has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals. Due to facilities and space constraints in the district, the school has established three school facilities, one per grade. Each site has sufficient furniture, books, and supplies. The school's investment in technology, including Chromebooks for students, has enabled teachers to utilize Google Classroom for instruction and assessment, enabling timely checking for understanding.
- Atmosphere maintains adequate enrollment, exceeding its chartered enrollment. The school has high retention for all students including students with disabilities and ELLs. Of the total eligible students, 98% of students returned for the current year. As needed, the school backfills available spaces from its extensive waiting list.
- The school has procedures to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs, and students who are FRPL eligible and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly. The school surpassed its enrollment target for economically disadvantaged students and its students with disabilities target. Although Atmosphere does not meet its ELL enrollment targets, school leaders do monitor their progress and report the need to further target ELLs in recruitment and, if necessary, to add a lottery preference. Atmosphere's ability to retain students is very strong and the school has low year-to-year attrition for all student groups. Of the total students eligible to return, 97% of ELLs, 98% of students with disabilities, and 98% of economically disadvantaged students did so.
- Atmosphere regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs and makes changes when necessary. Over the course of its charter term, after review of assessment data, school leaders have implemented multiple programs such as the achievement program for state test preparation and more intensive special education services such as the 12:1:1 class. School leaders frequently review programmatic data and are reflective about the school's areas for improvement.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
2D**

DOES THE BOARD WORK EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE THE SCHOOL'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

The education corporation's board works effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals. As the board considers expansion of its middle school grades' enrollment and potential future expansion into the high school grades, it has the opportunity to continue improving its expertise and holding the school leader accountable for building a robust leadership team.

- The board possesses many necessary skills to govern the school. The five board members have expertise in school finance and operations, general finance, law, and real estate. The board operates through the governance, finance, and accountability committees, providing monthly reports to the full board. The board seeks to add a member with educational expertise who can ask more strategic questions about the academic program.
- The education corporation's board establishes clear priorities aligned with its desire to expand middle school enrollment and into the high school grades. This year, the board's priorities are to ensure the school continues its academic growth and to build the capacity of the leadership team. The board recognizes that as the school has increased its enrollment over its first charter term, the principal has taken on additional duties that should be transferred to the now experienced leadership team, particularly in operations, finance, and facilities. To monitor the improvement in leader capacity, the board uses staff and leader retention as a metric, and this year is establishing a new performance evaluation tool for the leadership team that includes key quantitative performance indicators aligned to the school's achievement goals.
- Multiple school staff members provide the board with a significant amount of information to provide oversight of the school's academic program and finances. The board requests presentations from the principal, director of curriculum and instruction, director of culture, and director of student learning. In its data dashboard, board members review interim assessment data, state assessment data, student attendance, and school culture data. The education corporation's external accounting firm delivers an update on the school's fiscal soundness each month. The board also regularly consults with lawyers for educational legal expertise.
- The board successfully retains key personnel. Four of the current board members have been on the board for more than half of the school's initial charter term. The board is responsible for hiring the principal, who is the founding leader of the school.

- The board holds itself and the school leader accountable through yearly performance evaluations. The board identifies a need to potentially have formal board retreats and formalize some of its governance processes in anticipation of expanding its middle school enrollment. The board’s evaluation of the school leader includes developing and executing future plans for the school, supporting the faculty, and developing the leadership team, facilities management, and fiscal management. The board frequently monitors the school’s progress toward academic goals through its monthly meetings. In its most recent evaluation cycle, the board found the principal met or exceeded all expectations.
- The board effectively communicates with the school community. The board has engaged with parents and families through regular board meetings and town halls, during which they gathered families’ input on its potential expansion and other matters. Trustees have also visited the school for informal walkthroughs, student events, and staff professional development. One board member established a program with his own children and students from a New York secondary school to tutor Atmosphere students.

DOES THE BOARD IMPLEMENT, MAINTAIN, AND ABIDE BY APPROPRIATE POLICIES, SYSTEMS, AND PROCESSES?

The board materially and substantially implements, maintains, and abides by adequate and appropriate policies, systems, and processes to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a clear understanding of its role in holding the school leadership accountable for both academic results and fiscal soundness.

- The board receives regular updates on student achievement, finances, operations, fundraising, and hiring from the school leadership team.
- The board is informed as to the satisfaction of parents not only through the NYCDOE school survey but school-created surveys, the parent alliance, parent trainings, and focus groups/town halls with parents.
- The board’s finance committee works with school leadership not only on fiscal policies but provides for continual financial strategy to be presented to the board. As the school grew into three separate buildings in the first charter term, the board provided strong governance as evidenced by rising facility costs which did not impair the academic program, which only became stronger.
- The board reviews employee benefits to ensure competitive packages to retain quality staff.

**SUNY
 RENEWAL
 BENCHMARK
 2E**

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
 SUNY Plaza
 353 Broadway
 Albany, NY 12246

- The board keeps detailed minutes clearly indicating discussion items and voting details.
- School leadership clearly reports to the board not only successes but shortcomings regarding internal goals while addressing how shortcomings will be turned into successes in the future.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2F

HAS THE SCHOOL SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIED WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER?

The education corporation substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter.

- **Complaints.** The Institute received no formal complaints regarding the school.
- **Compliance.** The Institute issued no violation letters during the charter term.
- **Conflicts of Interest.** The Institute has spoken with the board of trustees to ensure they follow all appropriate protocols for disclosure, recusal and record keeping regarding conflicts of interest. The Institute will continue to monitor board minutes to ensure compliance in the area for the next charter term.
- **School safety.** The school should put in protocols across locations to ensure all custodial closets and circuit breaker boxes are appropriately locked when not in use by staff.
- **Nurse.** The school should ensure the refrigerator in the nurse's office is capable of being locked in case medication needs to be stored.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

FISCAL PERFORMANCE



10. The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on a review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review, Atmosphere is fiscally sound, as is the education corporation that operates the school. While the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that the education corporation has struggled financially during its initial charter term, the challenges should subside moving forward. (The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard for Atmosphere Public Charter Schools is included in Appendix D.)¹⁰

The school faced a number of financial challenges during the initial charter term that caused operating losses. One challenge that affected the finances included special education declassifications reducing revenue by almost \$300,000 in the third year of the charter term. The school felt a large financial impact when NYCDOE notified the school that it would clawback \$300,073 in payments made to the school for rental assistance. In addition, multiple instances of non-cash expenses, such as deferred rent and depreciation, caused the school to suffer operating losses during the charter term.

The clawback to the NYCDOE consists of \$182,329 over payment of rent, \$51,072 security deposit paid in 2018-19, and \$66,672 security deposit paid between November 2017 and November 2018. The school negotiated with the NYCDOE to allow the clawback of the rental assistance to be repaid over 12 months.

DOES THE SCHOOL OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN IN WHICH IT CREATES REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

Atmosphere has limited financial resources to ensure stable operations. Atmosphere employs clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures throughout the charter term.

- The budget process applies the financial expertise of key board members as well as experiences learned as an operator to a bottom-up analysis and approach to determine the required resources needed for achieving the educational goals and outcomes of the school.
- The school creates annual operating and capital budgets while also amending five year budget projections as needed. The board must approve and pass the annual operating and capital budgets, along with any five year budget amendments by June 30th prior to the next fiscal year.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
3A**

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

- The projected five year renewal budget contains conservative measures in projecting no rate increases to per pupil revenue and budgeted at 80% enrollment.
- Atmosphere budget projections include reasonable staffing costs for the growth model and reflect a strong awareness of facility costs. As a tool to assist with teacher recruitment and retention, the school provides a unique benefits compensation model that includes stipends, options for unused accruals payouts, and merit a bonus structure.

DOES THE SCHOOL MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

Atmosphere has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures, and practices and maintains appropriate internal controls.

- The Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual serves as the guide to all financial internal controls and procedures. The manual undergoes ongoing reviews and updates.
- The education corporation audit report for June 30, 2019 had no material findings or deficiencies. The external auditor did identify two advisory items including one instance found of a purchase made over the threshold that required two sign offs. The other item found was that the school did not send acknowledgment letters to individuals who donated over \$250 to the education corporation. The education corporation properly corrected both findings by revising and updating the financial policy and procedures manual to accommodate board approval electronically and providing proper written acknowledgment of the gifts.
- The most recent Atmosphere audit report for June 30, 2019 has no management letter or advisory comments.

DOES THE SCHOOL COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

Atmosphere complies with financial reporting requirements.

- The Institute and NYSED have received the required financial reports on time, complete, and follow generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
- Independent audits of annual financial statements have received unqualified opinions with no material management letter findings to report.

SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
3B

SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
3C

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

- The school generally files key reports accurately and on time including audit reports, budgets, unaudited quarterly reports of revenue, expenses, and enrollment.
- The Institute received the June 30, 2019 annual audit by the due date of November 1, 2019. The charter school closely monitors the financial status as does the Institute.

DOES THE SCHOOL MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

Atmosphere has limited financial resources to ensure stable operations. With the increase in proposed enrollment, the financial resources should stabilize moving forward.

- Since the school opened in 2015-16, the education corporation has reported operating surpluses as well as deficits which were offset against the surpluses. The school has also received contributions to help offset a percentage of the operating losses.
- The school navigated a number of financial challenges that caused operating losses, such as the loss in revenues due to declassifications and the NYCDOE's clawback of rental assistance.
- The school only shows eight days of cash as of June 30, 2019. However, the cash on hand is more than twice the amount from the previous year.
- Atmosphere had total net assets of approximately (\$43,000) as of June 30, 2019. This is largely due to the large clawback liability that is now on the school's balance sheet.
- As a requirement of charter agreements, the education corporation has established the separate dissolution reserve fund account of \$75,000.

SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
3D

FUTURE PLANS



IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

Atmosphere is an academic success and is establishing an effective and viable organization. The education corporation has limited financial resources but should improve moving forward, and the board provides effective oversight to support the school's success. The plan for a future charter term is therefore reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

Plans for the School's Structure. The education corporation has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

Plans for the Educational Program. Atmosphere plans to continue to implement the core elements of its educational program that enabled the school to make progress toward meeting its key Accountability Plan goals in its initial charter term. These elements are likely to enable the school to meet its academic goals in the next charter term. Eventually, the school looks to grow to serve students in 6th – 12th grade. The school's current plan to grow to serve additional students in 6th – 8th grade should allow the school more time to develop and strengthen its middle school program.

The school indicates it intends to develop a full 6th – 12th grade design and, at some point in the next charter term, submit it to the Institute with a request for an amendment to expand to begin serving 9th – 12th grade that will include:

- data demonstrating the school continued to meet its ELA and mathematics Accountability Plan goals into its second Accountability Period;
- a clearly articulated and sustainable plan based in research and best practice that will enable the academic program to sustain high achievement at the middle school grades that includes a set of benchmark measures that the board can use to monitor the school's progress thereto;
- a plan that describes the team, process, and timeline for building out a rigorous and comprehensive high school curriculum that will prepare students for college and career;
- to the extent that the high school will plan to include a CTE program, the plans for the program, its intended outcomes, space considerations, and a timeline for approval by the NYSED, if applicable;

- a timeline for developing partnerships with businesses and community organizations in service of the CTE program; and,
- a timeline for approving course curricula and training teachers to deliver Advanced Placement (“AP”) courses.

Should that occur, and should the Institute find the proposed expansion meets the requirements of the Act and the school’s performance merits an expansion, the Institute will bring the requested amendment to the SUNY Trustees for review and potential approval.

Plans for Board Oversight & Governance. Board members express an interest in continuing to serve the education corporation in the next charter term and seek to add additional trustees in the future.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the five year financial plan, Atmosphere presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including budgets that, with continued monitoring, are feasible and achievable.

| | CURRENT | END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM |
|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Enrollment | 342 | 600 |
| Grade Span | 6-8 | 6-8 |
| Teaching Staff | 29 | 42 |
| Days of Instruction | 190 | 190 |

Atmosphere plans to continue operating its 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in the three separate privately leased sites located in CSD 10.

During the next charter term, Atmosphere is requesting to expand enrollment for its 6th – 8th grade. The school currently has some space in each facility to support the expansion and is expanding space at the school’s 6th grade site to accommodate additional students. The school will also review other space options.

The school’s Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals.

Atmosphere

Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-12

SO^A
SCHOOL
OVERVIEW

PAGE Ax 1

PS^B
PERFORMANCE
SUMMARIES

PAGE Ax 6

DC^C
DISTRICT
COMMENTS

PAGE Ax 8

FD^D
FISCAL DASHBOARD

PAGE Ax 9

APPENDIX A: School Overview

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CHAIR

Dr. Michael J. Lagas Ed.D.

TREASURER

Mervin A. Burton CFA

SECRETARY

Jesse J. Greene, Esq.

TRUSTEES

Alan Dillon, Esq.

James Spitzer, Esq.

SCHOOL LEADERS

PRINCIPAL

Colin Greene, Principal (2015-16 - Present)

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

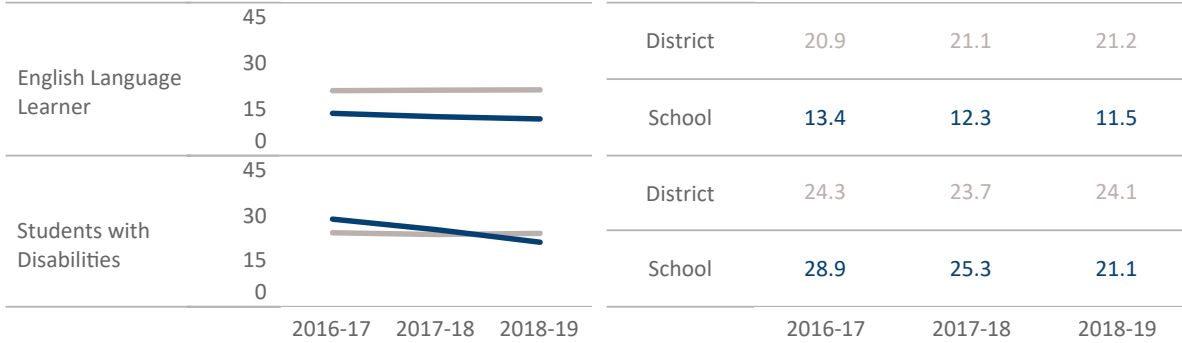
| SCHOOL YEAR | CHARTERED ENROLLMENT | ACTUAL ENROLLMENT | ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT | PROPOSED GRADES | ACTUAL GRADES |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------|---------------|
| 2015-16 | 120 | 136 | 113% | 6 | 6 |
| 2016-17 | 234 | 251 | 107% | 6-7 | 6-7 |
| 2017-18 | 342 | 403 | 118% | 6-8 | 6-8 |
| 2018-19 | 342 | 406 | 118% | 6-8 | 6-8 |
| 2019-20 | 342 | Not Yet Available | Not Yet Available | 6-8 | 6-8 |

APPENDIX A: School Overview

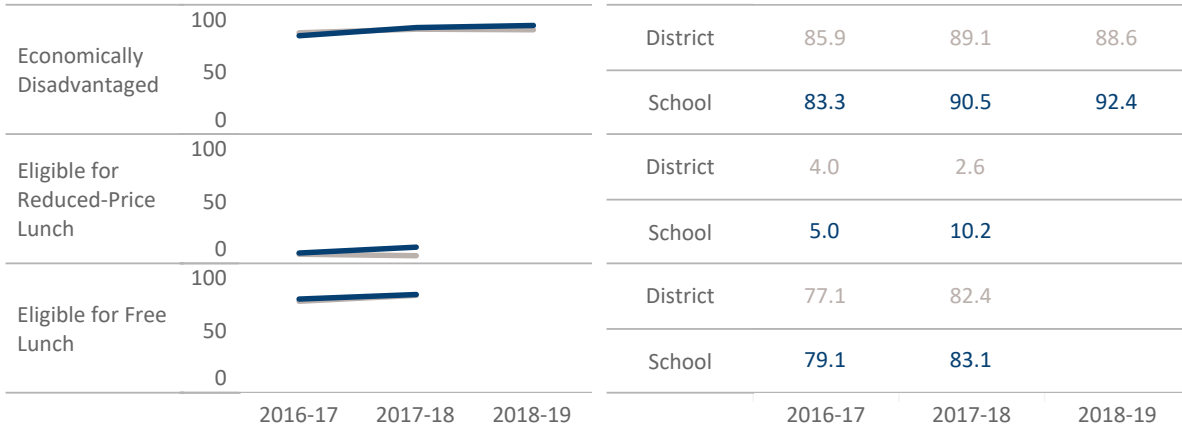
Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School

Bronx CSD 10

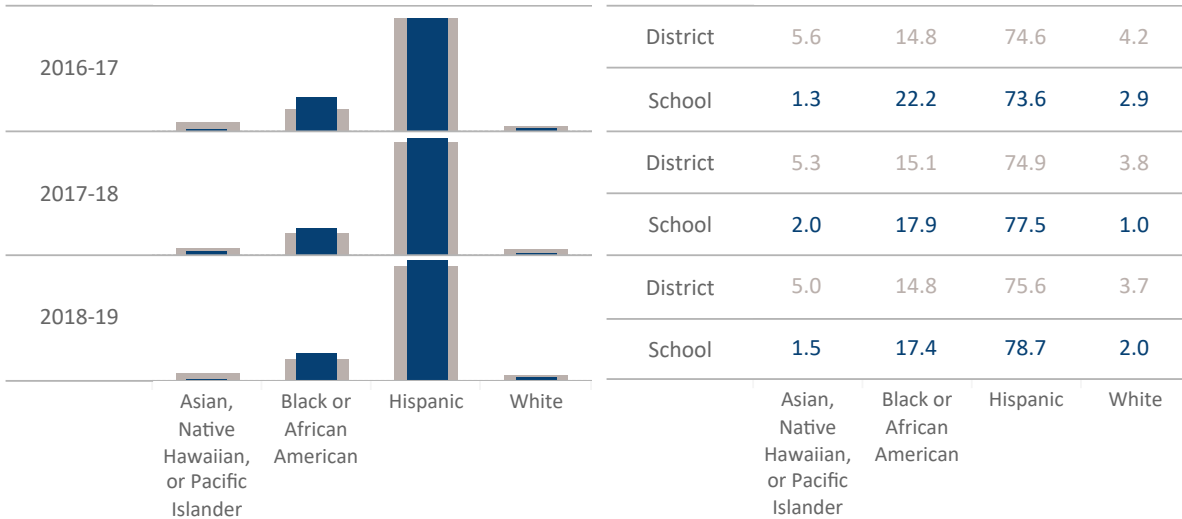
Student Demographics: Special Populations



Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity

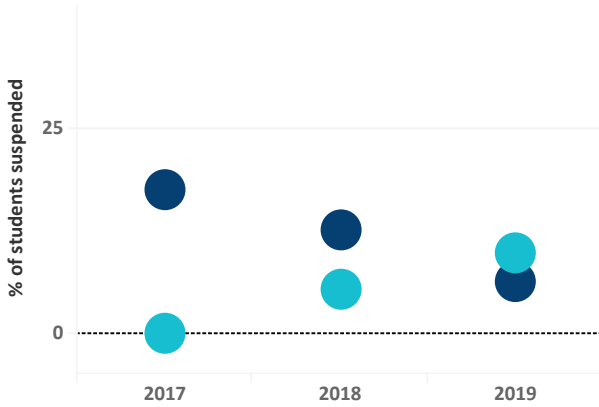


Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the New York State Education Department

APPENDIX A: School Overview

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School

Bronx CSD 10



| | School ISS Rate | School OSS Rate |
|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2017 | 0.0 | 17.6 |
| 2018 | 5.4 | 12.5 |
| 2019 | 9.8 | 6.3 |

CSD data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE"): the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

Persistence in Enrollment: The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return



Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the school each year

| | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--|------|------|------|
| | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2018-19

| | | | District Target | School |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--|-----------------|--------|
| Enrollment | economically disadvantaged | | 90.5 | 92.9 |
| | English language learners | | 20.8 | 13.2 |
| | students with disabilities | | 21.1 | 20.5 |
| Retention | economically disadvantaged | | 87.0 | 92.6 |
| | English language learners | | 87.8 | 89.5 |
| | students with disabilities | | 87.2 | 90.9 |

Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the school and validated by the Institute.

APPENDIX A: School Overview

PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|
| RESPONSE RATE 74% | OVERALL SATISFACTION 95% | TRUST 95% | EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP 96% | STRONG FAMILY COMMUNITY TIES 94% |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|---|--|

TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

| SCHOOL YEAR | VISIT TYPE | DATE |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 2015-16 | First Year Visit | June 9, 2016 |
| 2016-17 | Evaluation Visit | April 25, 2017 |
| 2019-20 | Initial Renewal Visit | September 18-19, 2019 |

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL VISIT

| DATE(S) OF VISIT | EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS | TITLE |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| September 18-19, 2019 | Kerri Martin Rizzolo | Senior Analyst |
| | Denise Gaffor | School Evaluation Analyst |
| | Andrew Kile | Director of School Evaluation |
| | Hillary Johnson | External Consultant |
| | Jeff Wasbes | Executive Deputy Director for Accountability |
| | Susie Miller Carello | Executive Director |

APPENDIX A: School Overview

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS:

| ELEMENT | EVIDENT? |
|--|----------|
| School culture; | + |
| Rigorous and diverse course offerings; | + |
| Standards aligned curriculum; | + |
| Extended day and year; | + |
| 21 st Century learning; | + |
| Key partners and supporters; | + |
| Student centered and differentiated instruction; | + |
| Distributed leadership; | + |
| Special education program; and, | + |
| ELL program. | - |

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

AtmosphereAcademyPublicCharterSchool

| | | 2016-17 Grades Served 6-7 | | | | 2017-18 Grades Served 6-8 | | | | 2018-19 Grades Served 6-8 | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------------------------|-----------|--------|------------|------------------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------|------|--------|-----------|----------------|-----|
| Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET |
| 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State exam. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | (0) | (0) | | 3 | (0) | (0) | | 3 | (0) | (0) | | 3 | (0) | (0) | |
| 4 | (0) | (0) | | 4 | (0) | (0) | | 4 | (0) | (0) | | 4 | (0) | (0) | |
| 5 | (0) | (0) | | 5 | (0) | (0) | | 5 | (0) | (0) | | 5 | (0) | (0) | |
| 6 | 16.1 (124) | (0) | | 6 | 35.7 (154) | 0.0 (6) | | 6 | 41.5(135) | 33.3(3) | | 6 | 41.5(135) | 33.3(3) | |
| 7 | 28.3 (127) | 28.8 (104) | | 7 | 30.1 (136) | 28.1 (89) | | 7 | 41.0(144) | 44.8(116) | | 7 | 41.0(144) | 44.8(116) | |
| 8 | (0) | (0) | | 8 | 50.0 (120) | 50.0 (98) | | 8 | 49.2(122) | 50.0(108) | | 8 | 49.2(122) | 50.0(108) | |
| All | 22.3 (251) | 28.8 (104) | NO | All | 38.0 (410) | 38.3 (193) | NO | All | 43.6(401) | 47.1(227) | NO | All | 43.6(401) | 47.1(227) | NO |
| 2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the state Measure of Interim Progress set forth in the State's ESSA accountability system. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grades | PI | MIP | | Grades | PI | MIP | | Grades | PI | MIP | | Grades | PI | MIP | |
| 6-7 | 90 | 111 | NO | 6-8 | 118 | 101 | YES | 6-8 | 130 | 105 | YES | 6-8 | 130 | 105 | YES |
| 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grades | School | District | | Grades | School | District | | Grades | School | District | | Grades | School | District | |
| 7 | 28.8 | 30.1 | NO | 7-8 | 38.3 | 34.0 | YES | 7-8 | 47.1 | 33.7 | YES | 7-8 | 47.1 | 33.7 | YES |
| 4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted performance on the state exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above based on a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students statewide. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES | Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES | Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES | |
| 3 | | | | | 3 | | | | | 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | 4 | | | | | 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | 5 | | | | | 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | 83.1 | 16.1 | 20.9 | -0.32 | 6 | 93.1 | 35.7 | 33.3 | 0.15 | 6 | 91.3 | 598 | 590.6 | 0.85 | |
| 7 | 84.0 | 28.3 | 29.0 | -0.04 | 7 | 91.0 | 30.1 | 26.2 | 0.25 | 7 | 93.4 | 601 | 593.1 | 0.93 | |
| 8 | | | | | 8 | 87.2 | 50.0 | 37.1 | 0.67 | 8 | 92.1 | 601 | 594.3 | 0.76 | |
| All | 83.5 | 22.3 | 25.0 | -0.18 | All | 90.7 | 38.0 | 32.1 | 0.34 | All | 92.3 | 600.0 | 592.6 | 0.85 | |
| 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the target of 50. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | |
| 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | |
| 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | |
| 6 | 45.7 | | | 6 | 49.5 | | | 6 | 56.1 | | | 6 | 56.1 | | |
| 7 | 56.3 | | | 7 | 56.7 | | | 7 | 63.2 | | | 7 | 63.2 | | |
| 8 | 0.0 | | | 8 | 63.6 | | | 8 | 62.3 | | | 8 | 62.3 | | |
| All | 51.2 | 50 | YES | All | 56.2 | 50 | YES | All | 60.7 | 50 | YES | All | 60.7 | 50 | YES |

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: MATHEMATICS

AtmosphereAcademyPublicCharterSchool

| | | 2016-17 Grades Served 6-7 | | | | 2017-18 Grades Served 6-8 | | | | 2018-19 Grades Served 6-8 | | | | | | |
|---|-----|------------------------------|------------|----------------|-----------|------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------|------------------------------|------------|----------------|-------|--------|-----------|------|
| | | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | Grades | All % (N) | 2+ Years % (N) | MET | | | |
| 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam. | | 3 | (0) | (0) | | 3 | (0) | (0) | | 3 | (0) | (0) | | | | |
| | | 4 | (0) | (0) | | 4 | (0) | (0) | | 4 | (0) | (0) | | | | |
| | | 5 | (0) | (0) | | 5 | (0) | (0) | | 5 | (0) | (0) | | | | |
| | | 6 | 14.5 (124) | (0) | | 6 | 24.2 (153) | 0.0 (6) | | 6 | 58.5 (135) | 33.3 (3) | | | | |
| | | 7 | 20.6 (126) | 20.4 (103) | | 7 | 27.0 (137) | 25.8 (89) | | 7 | 39.6 (144) | 38.8 (116) | | | | |
| | | 8 | (0) | (0) | | 8 | 22.2 (117) | 21.9 (96) | | 8 | 45.9 (122) | 48.1 (108) | | | | |
| | | All | 17.6 (250) | 20.4 (103) | NO | All | 24.6 (407) | 23.0 (191) | NO | All | 47.9 (401) | 43.2 (227) | NO | | | |
| | | Grades | PI | MIP | | Grades | PI | MIP | | Grades | PI | MIP | | | | |
| 2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Measure of Interim Progress set forth in the State's ESSA accountability system. | | 6-7 | 70 | 109 | NO | 6-8 | 91 | 103 | NO | 6-8 | 134 | 107 | YES | | | |
| | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | | | |
| 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district. | | Grades | School | District | | Grades | School | District | | Grades | School | District | | | | |
| | | 7 | 20.4 | 20.3 | YES | 7-8 | 23.0 | 23.4 | NO | 7-8 | 43.2 | 26.7 | YES | | | |
| | | Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES | Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES | Grade | % ED | Actual | Predicted | ES |
| | | 3 | | | | | 3 | | | | | 3 | | | | |
| | | 4 | | | | | 4 | | | | | 4 | | | | |
| | | 5 | | | | | 5 | | | | | 5 | | | | |
| | | 6 | 83.1 | 14.5 | 25.0 | -0.53 | 6 | 93.1 | 24.2 | 25.9 | -0.1 | 6 | 91.3 | 606 | 592.9 | 1.39 |
| | | 7 | 84.0 | 20.6 | 21.5 | -0.04 | 7 | 91.0 | 27.0 | 23.6 | 0.18 | 7 | 93.4 | 602 | 592.9 | 0.93 |
| | 8 | | | | | 8 | 87.2 | 22.2 | 21.5 | 0.03 | 8 | 92.1 | 606 | 594.2 | 0.96 | |
| | All | 83.5 | 17.6 | 23.2 | -0.29 | All | 90.7 | 24.6 | 23.9 | 0.03 | All | 92.3 | 604.6 | 593.3 | 1.09 | |
| 4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted performance on the state exam by an effect size of 0.3 or above based on a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students statewide. | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | | | |
| | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| | | 6 | 44.2 | | | 6 | 58.8 | | | 6 | 77.5 | | | | | |
| | | 7 | 58.9 | | | 7 | 60.8 | | | 7 | 71.7 | | | | | |
| | | 8 | 0.0 | | | 8 | 58.0 | | | 8 | 69.3 | | | | | |
| | | All | 51.8 | 50 | YES | All | 59.2 | 50 | YES | All | 72.8 | 50 | YES | | | |
| | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | | | |
| 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the target of 50. | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | Grades | School | State | | | | |
| | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | 4 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | 5 | 0.0 | | | | | |
| | | 6 | 44.2 | | | 6 | 58.8 | | | 6 | 77.5 | | | | | |
| | | 7 | 58.9 | | | 7 | 60.8 | | | 7 | 71.7 | | | | | |
| | | 8 | 0.0 | | | 8 | 58.0 | | | 8 | 69.3 | | | | | |
| | | All | 51.8 | 50 | YES | All | 59.2 | 50 | YES | All | 72.8 | 50 | YES | | | |
| | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | Comparison: Bronx CSD 10 | | | | | | |

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The New York City Department of Education held its required hearing on Atmosphere’s renewal application on October 17, 2019 at a centralized location. Forty people were present and 17 spoke in support of the renewal application. No one spoke in opposition. Staff spoke of how proud they are of their results, the focus on experiential learning and orientation toward career and college preparation. One parent of a student now in high school spoke of how the school prepared his student for his current AP classes teaching him responsibility for academics. Another parent of a graduated student spoke of how the school inspired her to join the PTA and become a more active parent but she has been disappointed with her son’s new high school and wish he could have continued at Atmosphere. Another parent spoke highly of the “star” program where students earn the right to choose their clothes. The parent also liked that her daughter was able to take regents level courses in middle school and pass. Another parent spoke of how the school instilled a work ethic and provided exposure to careers and opportunities for her daughter. A student wrote in to express how the school increased his own academic achievement.

APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

SCHOOL INFORMATION

BALANCE SHEET

Opened 2015-16

Assets

Current Assets

| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
|--|---------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 1 | - | 57,773 | 44,444 | 85,081 | 218,065 |
| Grants and Contracts Receivable | - | 395,861 | 153,154 | 170,018 | 102,606 |
| Accounts Receivable | - | - | - | - | - |
| Prepaid Expenses | - | 20,271 | 22,325 | 50,309 | 25,592 |
| Contributions and Other Receivables | - | 13,245 | 2,168 | 860 | 54,673 |
| Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1 | - | 487,150 | 222,091 | 306,268 | 400,936 |
| Property, Building and Equipment, net | - | 325,365 | 375,031 | 621,493 | 852,605 |
| Other Assets | - | 90,060 | 190,705 | 214,501 | 264,949 |
| Total Assets - GRAPH 1 | - | 902,575 | 787,827 | 1,142,262 | 1,518,490 |

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

| | | | | | |
|--|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses | - | 248,015 | 241,205 | 485,988 | 549,924 |
| Accrued Payroll and Benefits | - | - | 163,838 | - | - |
| Deferred Revenue | - | 21,126 | 12,945 | - | - |
| Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt | - | 165,000 | - | - | 30,000 |
| Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable | - | 211,750 | 145,000 | 585,000 | - |
| Other | - | - | - | - | 300,027 |
| Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1 | - | 645,891 | 562,988 | 1,070,988 | 879,951 |
| Deferred Rent/Lease Liability | - | - | - | - | 172,157 |
| All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities | - | 51,077 | - | - | 510,000 |
| Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1 | - | 696,968 | 562,988 | 1,070,988 | 1,562,108 |

Net Assets

| | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Unrestricted | - | 205,607 | 224,839 | 71,274 | (43,618) |
| Temporarily restricted | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Net Assets | - | 205,607 | 224,839 | 71,274 | (43,618) |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | - | 902,575 | 787,827 | 1,142,262 | 1,518,490 |

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Resident Student Enrollment | - | 1,880,875 | 3,519,487 | 5,853,291 | 6,274,548 |
| Students with Disabilities | - | 504,604 | 897,780 | 813,926 | 996,952 |
| Grants and Contracts | | | | | |
| State and local | - | 339,536 | 122,378 | 169,517 | 209,621 |
| Federal - Title and IDEA | - | 117,732 | 172,352 | 389,224 | 394,266 |
| Federal - Other | - | 791,846 | - | - | 25,776 |
| Other | - | 351,551 | 36,828 | - | - |
| NYC DoE Rental Assistance | - | - | 703,744 | 1,217,747 | - |
| Food Service/Child Nutrition Program | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Operating Revenue | - | 3,986,144 | 5,452,569 | 8,443,705 | 7,901,163 |

Expenses

| | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Regular Education | - | 1,607,379 | 2,665,260 | 5,156,622 | 6,072,263 |
| SPED | - | 922,306 | 1,590,311 | 2,187,219 | 2,189,106 |
| Other | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Program Services | - | 2,529,685 | 4,255,571 | 7,343,841 | 8,261,369 |
| Management and General | - | 1,303,865 | 1,286,621 | 1,332,305 | 1,476,915 |
| Fundraising | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4 | - | 3,833,550 | 5,542,192 | 8,676,146 | 9,738,284 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations | - | 152,594 | (89,623) | (232,441) | (1,837,121) |

Support and Other Revenue

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Contributions | - | 53,013 | 86,193 | 38,441 | 101,766 |
| Fundraising | - | - | 3,335 | 28,386 | 37,031 |
| Miscellaneous Income | - | - | 19,327 | 12,049 | 18,851 |
| Net assets released from restriction | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Support and Other Revenue | - | 53,013 | 108,855 | 78,876 | 157,648 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Unrestricted Revenue | - | 4,039,157 | 5,561,424 | 8,522,581 | 9,623,392 |
| Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3 | - | 4,039,157 | 5,561,424 | 8,522,581 | 9,623,392 |

Change in Net Assets

| | | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2 | - | 205,607 | 19,232 | (153,565) | (1,679,473) |
| Prior Year Adjustment(s) | - | - | 205,607 | 224,839 | 71,274 |
| Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2 | - | 205,607 | 224,839 | 71,274 | (1,608,199) |

APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
|--|----------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Personnel Service | | | | | |
| Administrative Staff Personnel | - | 697,057 | 1,162,271 | 1,457,928 | 1,607,873 |
| Instructional Personnel | - | 874,864 | 1,570,673 | 2,679,045 | 3,125,039 |
| Non-Instructional Personnel | - | - | - | - | - |
| Personnel Services (Combined) | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Salaries and Staff | - | 1,571,921 | 2,732,944 | 4,136,973 | 4,732,912 |
| Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes | - | 403,562 | 568,509 | 1,167,692 | 988,668 |
| Retirement | - | 48,564 | 81,974 | 118,198 | 156,735 |
| Management Company Fees | - | - | - | - | - |
| Building and Land Rent / Lease | - | 402,629 | 636,724 | 1,099,310 | 1,725,330 |
| Staff Development | - | 88,018 | 19,717 | 4,181 | 8,819 |
| Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services | - | 407,712 | 491,827 | 295,825 | 309,687 |
| Marketing / Recruitment | - | 42,735 | 12,323 | 2,720 | 30,556 |
| Student Supplies, Materials & Services | - | 349,144 | 416,528 | 969,577 | 773,096 |
| Depreciation | - | 81,304 | 133,903 | 196,022 | 221,132 |
| Other | - | 437,960 | 447,743 | 685,648 | 791,349 |
| Total Expenses | - | 3,833,550 | 5,542,192 | 8,676,146 | 9,738,284 |

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Original Chartered Enrollment | - | 120 | 234 | 342 | 342 |
| Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions) | - | 120 | 234 | 342 | 342 |
| Actual Enrollment - GRAPH 4 | - | 136 | 251 | 403 | 406 |
| Chartered Grades | - | 6 | 6-7 | 6-8 | 6-8 |
| Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions) | - | - | - | - | - |

Primary School District: NYC CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

| Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts) | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Increase over prior year | 0.0% | 100.0% | 1.1% | 3.4% | 5.1% |

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Operating | - | 29,410 | 21,731 | 20,956 | 19,461 |
| Other Revenue and Support | - | 391 | 434 | 196 | 388 |
| TOTAL - GRAPH 3 | - | 29,801 | 22,165 | 21,152 | 19,849 |

Expenses

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Program Services | - | 18,664 | 16,961 | 18,226 | 20,348 |
| Management and General, Fundraising | - | 9,620 | 5,128 | 3,307 | 3,638 |
| TOTAL - GRAPH 3 | - | 28,284 | 22,089 | 21,533 | 23,986 |
| % of Program Services | 0.0% | 66.0% | 76.8% | 84.6% | 84.8% |
| % of Management and Other | 0.0% | 34.0% | 23.2% | 15.4% | 15.2% |
| % of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5 | 0.0% | 5.4% | 0.3% | -1.8% | -17.2% |

Student to Faculty Ratio

| | | | | | |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | - | 7.5 | 6.4 | 8.6 | 8.3 |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Faculty to Admin Ratio

| | | | | | |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | - | 2.3 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.5 |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

| Score | 0.0 | 1.4 | 0.9 | 0.3 | (0.0) |
|---|-----|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0 | N/A | Fiscally Adequate | Fiscally Needs Monitoring | Fiscally Needs Monitoring | Fiscally Needs Monitoring |

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

| | | | | | |
|--|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Net Working Capital | 0 | (158,741) | (340,897) | (764,720) | (479,015) |
| As % of Unrestricted Revenue | 0.0% | -3.9% | -6.1% | -9.0% | -5.0% |
| Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4) | N/A | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH |
| Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4) | N/A | Poor | Poor | Poor | Poor |

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Score | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0) | N/A | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH |
| Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0) | N/A | Poor | Poor | Poor | Poor |

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

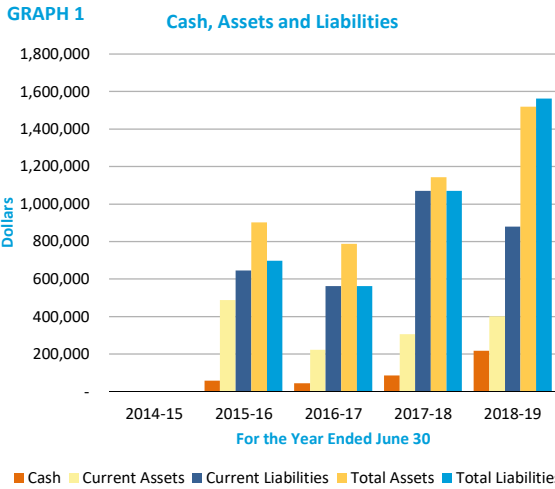
| | | | | | |
|--|-----|--------|--------|--------|------|
| Score | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 1.0 |
| Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0) | N/A | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | MEDIUM | HIGH |
| Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0) | N/A | Good | Good | Good | Poor |

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

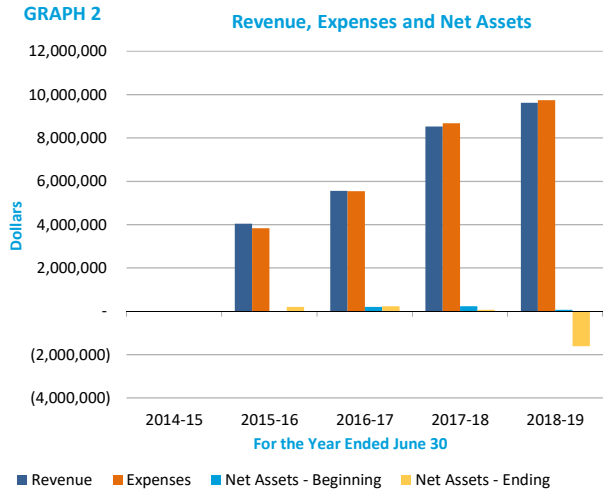
| | | | | | |
|--|-----|------|------|------|------|
| Score | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.3 |
| Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.) | N/A | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH | HIGH |
| Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.) | N/A | Poor | Poor | Poor | Poor |

APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

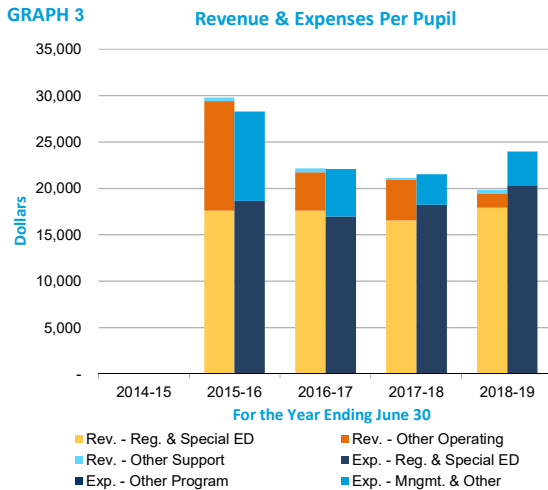
ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS



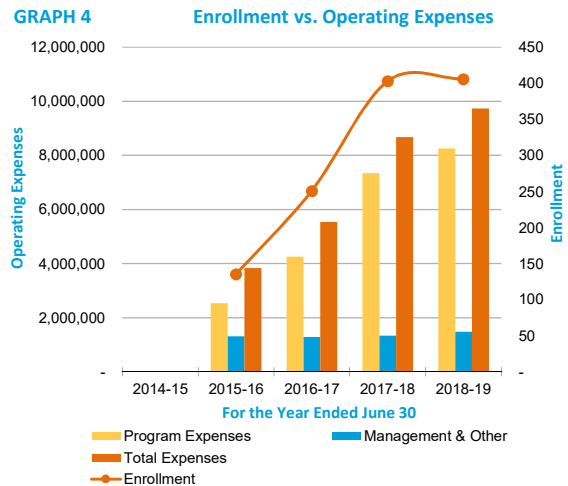
This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 through 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year, building a more fiscally viable school.



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.

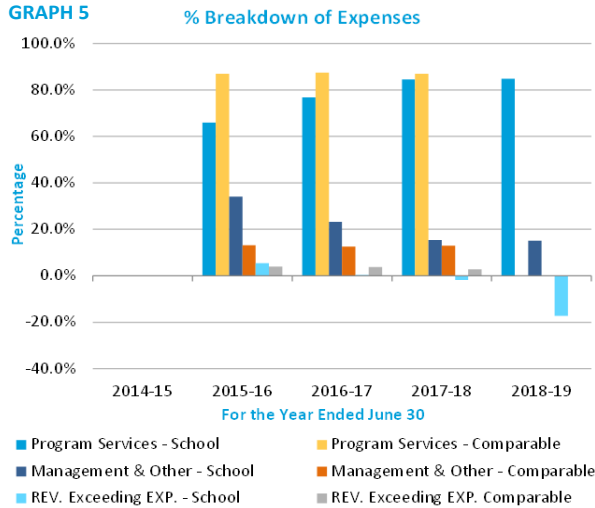


This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

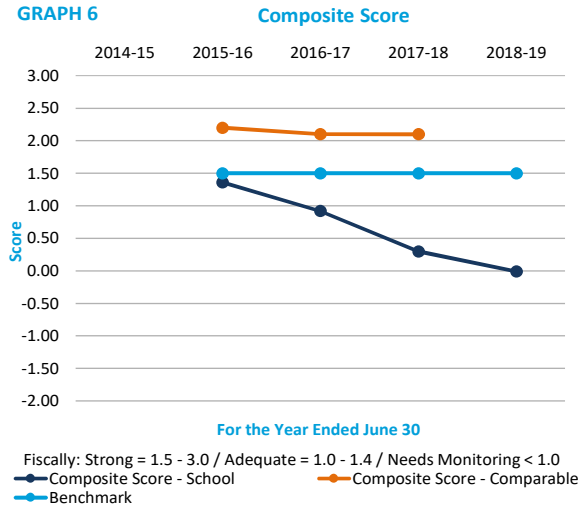
APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

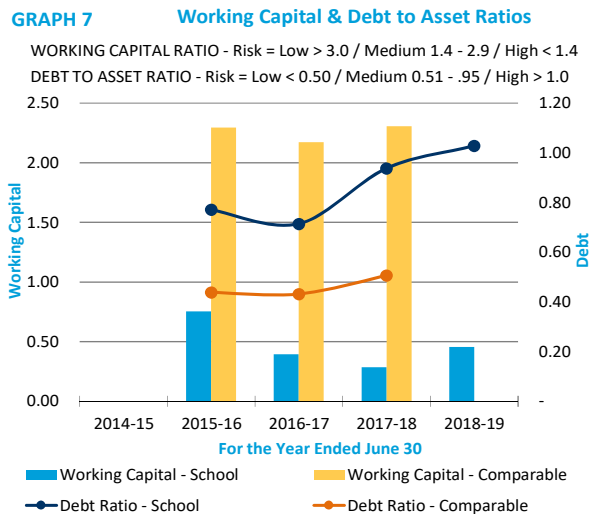
Comparable School, Region or Network: All SUNY Authorized Charter Schools (Including Closed Schools)



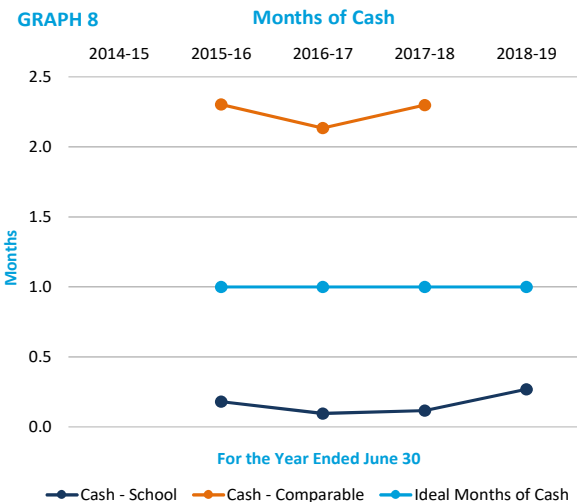
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.



This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.



This chart illustrates working capital and debt to asset ratios. The working capital ratio indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. The debt to asset ratio indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

