



New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report 2019-2020

Southside Academy Charter School

**Visit Date: December 12-13, 2019
Date of Report: January 31, 2020**

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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary¹

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|--|--|
| Name of Charter School | Southside Academy Charter School |
| Board Chair | Dr. Carol Hill |
| District of location | Syracuse City School District |
| Opening Date | Fall 2002 |
| Charter Terms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Charter Term: January 16, 2002-January 16, 2007 • First Renewal: January 16, 2007-June 30, 2007 • Second Renewal: July 1, 2007-June 30, 2010 • Third Renewal: July 1, 2010-June 30, 2015 • Fourth Renewal: July 1, 2015-June 30, 2017 • Fifth Renewal: July 1, 2017-June 30, 2020 |
| Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment | K-Grade 8/690 students |
| Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment | K-Grade 8/690 students |
| Comprehensive Management Service Provider | National Heritage Academies |
| Facilities | 2200 Onondaga Creek Blvd., Syracuse, NY - Private Space |
| Mission Statement | <i>Southside Academy Charter School offers families and students a community public charter school that provides a challenging academic program, focuses on high achievement, and instills a sense of family, community and leadership within all of its students.</i> |
| Key Design Elements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic excellence • Student responsibility • Moral Focus • Parental partnerships |
| Requested Revisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase authorized enrollment from 690 to 760 students by year 5 of the renewal charter term |

Noteworthy: The school has established a strong school culture built around positive reinforcement, Moral Focus virtues and restorative practices. Teachers employ a color-coded behavior-level system. Teachers and school leaders wore student names on their lanyards indicating those who had achieved the highest levels of positive behavior. Students throughout the day proudly asked CSO visitors if they noticed student names—especially their own—on their teacher’s lanyard.

Renewal Outcomes

Pursuant to the Board of Regents Renewal Policy, the following are possible renewal outcomes:

¹ The information in this section was provided by the NYS Education Department Charter School Office.

- **Full-Term Renewal:** A school’s charter may be renewed for the maximum term of five years. For a school to be eligible for a full-term renewal, during the current charter term the school must have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or exceeding Benchmark 1, and at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school’s charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. As discussed above, the Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal, which is consistent with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short-term renewal, a school must either:
 - (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1, but at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework which will likely result in the school’s being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short-term renewal permits, **or**
 - (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1 but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

- **Non-Renewal:** A school’s charter will not be renewed if the school does not apply for renewal or the school fails to meet the criteria for either full-term or short-term renewal. In the case of non-renewal, a school’s charter will be terminated upon its expiration and the school will be required to comply with the Charter School Office’s Closing Procedures to ensure an orderly closure by the end of the school year.

Please Note: The Regents may include additional terms, conditions, and/or requirements in a school’s Full-Term or Short-Term Renewal charter to address specific situations or areas of concern. For example, a school may meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal with regard to its educational success but may be required to address organizational deficiencies that need to be corrected but do not prevent the Regents from making the required legal findings for renewal. A school may also meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal of only a portion of its educational program (e.g., for the elementary school program, but not the middle school program). Such additional terms and/or requirements may include, but are not limited to, restrictions on the number of students and grades to be served by the school, additional student performance metrics, heightened reporting requirements, or specific corrective action.

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

| | Year 1 2017 to 2018 | Year 2 2018 to 2019 | Year 3 2019 to 2020 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Grade Configuration | K-Grade 8 | K-Grade 8 | K-Grade 8 |
| Total Approved Enrollment | 690 | 690 | 690 |

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Projected Enrollment Requested by the School²

| | Year 1 2020 to 2021 | Year 2 2021 to 2022 | Year 3 2022 to 2023 | Year 4 2023 to 2024 | Year 5 2024 to 2025 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Grade Configuration | K-Grade 8 |
| Total Proposed Enrollment | 706 | 722 | 738 | 754 | 760 |

METHODOLOGY

A two-day renewal site visit was conducted at Southside Academy Charter School on December 12-13, 2019. The New York State Education Department’s Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, parents and teachers. In cooperation with school leadership, the CSO administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted 25 classroom observations in K-Grade 8. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with instructional leaders.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included the following:

- a. **Current organizational chart** showing all key staff positions, names of staff in those positions, and the school’s reporting structure;
- b. **A master school schedule** showing each class, grade or course, and teacher(s). Note what days are A, B, C days and which classrooms include ELLs/MLLs and SWDs;
- c. **A map of the school** showing a basic floor plan, including classroom numbers, teacher names, and offices;
- d. **Board materials**, strategic plan (if applicable), and a narrative describing the board’s self-evaluation process;
- e. **Narrative describing the process used to evaluate school leadership;**

² This proposed chart was submitted by the Southside Academy Charter School in its renewal application. It is subject to change pending the final renewal recommendation and approval by the Board of Regents.

- f. **Narrative describing the process school leadership uses to evaluate teachers;**
- g. **School administered Voice of the Parent Surveys**
- h. **NYSED CSO Parent Survey;**
- i. **NYSED CSO Teacher Survey;**
- j. **Narrative describing the school’s progress and efforts made toward reaching its enrollment and retention targets (including ELLs/MLLs, SWDs, EDs; if the school is not meeting its targets, describe the efforts made to do so, the evaluation of those efforts, and the results of the evaluation.);**
- k. **Admissions and Waitlist; and**
- l. **Faculty/Staff Roster.**

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The Performance Framework, which is part of the oversight plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school, outlines 10 Performance Framework benchmarks in three key areas of charter school performance:

- Educational Success
- Organizational Soundness
- Faithfulness to Charter and Law

Observational findings from the review of the renewal application, supporting data, and the site visit will be presented in alignment with the [Performance Framework](#) benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below. A brief summary of the school’s strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; and the report narrative will provide evidence-based information relative to each indicator.

| Level | Description |
|------------------------|---|
| Exceeds | The school meets the performance benchmark; potential exemplar in this area. |
| Meets | The school generally meets the performance benchmark; few concerns are noted. |
| Approaches | The school does not meet the performance benchmark; a number of concerns are noted. |
| Falls Far Below | The school falls far below the performance benchmark; significant concerns are noted. |

For the site visit conducted December 12-13, 2019 at Southside Academy Charter School, see the following Performance Framework benchmark ratings and narrative.

**New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework Rating**

| Performance Benchmark | | Level |
|--|---|------------|
| Educational Success | Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency, and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher). | Approaches |
| | Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students’ well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement. | Approaches |
| | Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school. | Meets |
| Organizational Soundness | Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators. | Approaches |
| | Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices. | Meets |
| | Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter. | Approaches |
| | Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations. | Meets |
| Faithfulness to Charter & Law | Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter. | Meets |
| | Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. | Approaches |
| | Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter. | Meets |

Summary of Findings

- The Southside Academy Charter School is in year 17 of operation and serves students in K-Grade 8. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: exceeding 0 benchmarks, meeting 5 benchmarks, approaching 5 benchmarks, and falling far below 0 benchmarks. Additional details regarding those ratings are provided below.

- **Areas of Strengths:** The school has a robust leadership team and support staff that are in alignment around the school’s mission, having set clear goals and priorities to improve student achievement. The school has a strong culture with an increasing focus on positive reinforcement and restorative practices. It also has a comprehensive professional development program, including formal training and ongoing coaching. The school also has a tiered intervention program with a variety of programs to meet student needs. The school has a productive relationship with National Heritage Academies (NHA), a for-profit charter management organization, and appeared satisfied with its supports and resources.

- **Areas in Need of Improvement:** The school has struggled to hire and retain teachers and had a number of vacancies at the time of the renewal visit, which results in the need for constant recruitment and training. While the school has a clear focus on raising academic achievement, it does not have a clear definition and expectations for rigor. The board does not have the required number of members, does not include much expertise in K-12 education, and has not set clear goals to drive school improvement. The school does not enroll the same percentage of students with disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual learners (MLLs) as the district.

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).

Finding: Approaches

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School: Southside Academy Charter School is managed by NHA, a national charter management company. Its academic program is based on the NHA model and modified based on state standards and school needs. The school uses a variety of commercial programs, including Reading Mastery, Illustrative Math, and Bridges Math. The school uses a literacy rotation model in the lower grades that incorporates phonics, comprehension and computer-based learning. The school also has a Moral Focus component that is embedded in curriculum and taught in short blocks.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWDs) and English language learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs): The school has a robust team of instructional leaders and teachers to support SWDs and ELLs/MLLs. The school provides consultant and resource services in every grade for SWDs as well as mandated counseling and tiered academic and behavioral intervention supports. The school also uses a shelter English instruction model for ELLs/MLLs along with pull-out English language development services.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

The school is designated as Good Standing under current New York State criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Student proficiency increased over the charter term with a decline in the last year. The school consistently outperformed the district of location by a large margin. Based on 2018-2019 state test results the school has underperformed state performance overall, though notably its students with disabilities outperformed the state in both ELA and math, and ELLs/MLLs exceeded state performance in ELA. Its combined mean student growth percentile has exceeded 50.0 for the last three years, though it increased in 2016-2017 and declined in 2017-2018. It has exceeded the performance of similar schools for the last two years for which data are available.

Supplemental data provided by school leaders also highlighted promising areas of strength regarding student performance in areas outside of the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework. When comparing students who had been enrolled at the school for three or more years to students who had enrolled for less than three years, there were large gaps in both ELA and math. The school reported that last year 35% of students enrolled 3 or more years were proficient in ELA, compared to 22% of students enrolled fewer than 3 years. In math 36% of students enrolled 3 or more years were proficient, compared to 29% of students enrolled 3 or fewer years. The school noted that it has the fourth highest proficient rate in the city in ELA and the sixth highest proficiency rate in math. In comparison to the five closest schools in the district, Southside Academy reported that it outperformed all five in ELA and outperformed four and equaled the performance of one in math. In addition, in looking at growth percentiles in 2017-2018 the school reported that it exceeded the state mean in 8 out of 10 grade and subject combinations.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional academic information.

Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSL) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Finding: Approaches

| <i>Element</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Curriculum</i> | <p>a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSL.</p> <p>b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.</p> <p>c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.</p> <p>d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.</p> <p>e. The curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.</p> |
| 2. <i>Instruction</i> | <p>a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.</p> <p>b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.</p> |
| 3. <i>Assessment and Program Evaluation</i> | <p>a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments.</p> <p>b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.</p> <p>c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program and modifies the program accordingly.</p> |
| 4. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i> | <p>a. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students.</p> <p>b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

1. Element: **Curriculum:**

- **Indicator a:** The school has an evolving curriculum based on NHA and state resources and commercial programs. School leaders described working closely with NHA to modify the curriculum and reported making changes in ELA, math and Social Studies. The school uses EngageNY literacy curriculum, which is aligned to state standards, and staff teams reportedly revise scope and sequences to align instruction to state exam schedules. The curriculum is

supplemented in the lower grades with Language for Learning for pre-literacy skills, Reading Mastery for decoding, Reading Street for comprehension, and the iReady self-paced computer program. The school has also introduced the Bridges and Illustrative programs for math and My World for social studies. In the upper grades, small groups are pulled to work with the Corrective Reading program and the school is piloting the balanced literacy rotation model used in the lower grades with two 4th grade classes this year.

- **Indicator b:** The school uses a variety of commercial or other existing programs that provide guidance resources for instructional planning, e.g., scope and sequences, curriculum maps and scripts, and align to standards. Teachers are expected to create lesson plans that include HOTS (higher order thinking skills) and I Cans (daily lesson objectives). Grade teams use common lesson plans. Interventionists are also expected to create “skill plans” to guide their lessons. Lesson plans are submitted and reviewed by instructional leaders. A CSO site visit team review of lesson plans on the days of the renewal visit found organized lessons with a focus on foundational skills and knowledge; there was limited evidence of complex tasks, writing assignments, or projects.
- **Indicator c:** The school uses a variety of commercial and other existing programs that are vertically aligned by design, e.g., Reading Mastery leads into Corrective Reading program. There was some limited evidence of horizontal alignment such as common writing rubrics used across subjects.
- **Indicator d:** The school differentiates in a number of ways, including flexible heterogeneous and homogenous grouping and rotations within classes and homogenous leveled classes in upper grades. The school has a robust tiered intervention program and has selected a variety of supplemental programs and resources to meet students’ needs. For example, the school is implementing decoding instruction in the upper grades for students identified with phonics deficits.
- **Indicator e:** Instructional leaders described ongoing review and revision of the curriculum based on evaluation of student performance data and state standards and assessments, with evidence of recent changes in the school’s ELA, math and social studies programs. School staff reported working closely with the NHA curriculum and instruction team and felt they have input into curriculum decisions.

2. Element: ***Instruction:***

- **Indicator a:** The school uses leveled classes (i.e., below level, on level, or accelerated) in Grades 6-8 and mixed classes in K-Grade 5, though ELLs/MLLs and students with disabilities are grouped to some extent to facilitate services. School leaders described having a large number of new teachers who they are continuously training in the school’s pedagogical methods. They described the expectation for data-driven small group instruction to meet all students’ needs; however, interviewed school leaders and staff did not articulate a clear definition of instructional rigor. Although all lessons are supposed to incorporate HOTS and the school has myriad remediation programs in place to support below level students, there was limited evidence of instruction promoting higher order thinking outside of the accelerated classes in the upper grades. Some instructional leaders acknowledged that not all lessons are pushing higher order thinking. A CSO site visit team review of lesson plans found mixed evidence of higher order tasks. On the days of the renewal site visit classroom management was effective in most observed classes with organized and purposeful lessons. Evidence of high-quality instruction was mixed. In some observed classrooms there was effective grouping, questioning, and student discussions. For example, one teacher had students turn and talk to each other about a text and discuss why information was a fact or an opinion. Another teacher required students to cite evidence when providing their answers.

On the other hand, in a number of classes instruction lacked higher-order thinking skills' tasks and questioning, with teachers often leading students or continuously repeating their answers. Many classroom lessons were teacher centered with limited evidence of checks for understanding. While multiple adults were observed in many classrooms, co-teaching was not always maximized to monitor student learning and target support.

- **Indicator b:** Students were generally engaged in most classrooms with evidence of internalized routines in many classes. Teachers used cold calling techniques to maintain student attention and many effectively re-engaged students who were off task. However, in some classes ineffective pacing led some students to disengage. For example, in one class the teacher took an excessive amount of time to write out an answer on the board while students disengaged and then had students use more time to copy it.

3. Element: ***Assessment and Program Evaluation:***

- **Indicator a:** The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments. AimswebPlus is used as a diagnostic test and instructional leaders indicated that they elected to administer the whole benchmark assessment in reading and math to obtain more useful data. Aimsweb is also used for progress monitoring students in intervention programs. The NWEA MAP is administered twice per year to all grades. Students in K- Grade 2 take an additional NWEA exam mid-year and students in Grades 3-8 take interim assessments developed by NHA in math and ELA. The school also administers multiple mock state exams; school leaders noted that they had added science exams for 4th and 8th grade this year. Students take weekly curriculum-based assessments to evaluate standards mastery as well as daily exit tickets.
- **Indicator b:** Instructional leaders and staff described frequent use of assessment data for identifying students in need of intervention and grouping students for targeted classroom instruction, e.g., balanced literacy rotations. During the renewal visit assessment data were evident in classrooms (e.g., data walls, lesson plans) and students maintain their own data binders. Teachers reportedly disaggregate interim assessment results by standard to identify topics for re-teaching. School leaders also reported that the school has moved to having teachers grade other teachers' exams to norm expectations and reliability. School leaders acknowledged that teachers' data skills vary, noting growing familiarity with assessments and their purposes.
- **Indicator c:** A detailed data was in evidence on the principal's wall and school leaders described significant changes to curriculum and assessments based on academic data. In addition, they attributed their push for more restorative practices to the examination of student behavior data.

4. Element: ***Supports for Diverse Learners:***

- **Indicator a:** The school differentiates classroom instruction in a variety of ways. During the visit leveled classes (i.e., below level, on level, or accelerated) and groups were observed using a variety of materials aligned to the same objectives. On one classroom wall folders contained both remediation and extension activities. The school also has a tiered RTI program and employs a number of interventionists, special education and ELL/MLL teachers who provide push-in and pull-out supports, including morning and after-school programs, e.g., Kids Club. At the time of the renewal visit the ELL/MLL teacher positions were vacant. Student support services staff described a clear procedure for identifying students with disabilities, including data collection by a school-based intervention team and referrals to the city committee on special education (CSE). Student support staff also indicated that consultant and resource

services are provided in every grade for students with disabilities and co-teaching was in practice in a number of observed classes. ELLs/MLLs students participate in English as a New Language (ENL) classes and ELL teachers push into general education classrooms for math. Support staff also noted that they have curriculum resources available in Spanish.

- **Indicator b:** School leaders and support staff noted the use of AimswebPlus assessments for progress monitoring as well as tracking Individual Education Program (IEP) goals in IEP Direct and sending regular progress notes to parents. Teachers and support staff meet with instructional leaders weekly in grade-level team meetings, bi-weekly in wing (grade span) meetings, and schoolwide monthly to discuss trends and identify areas for re-teaching and intervention. School leaders also described a new protocol for the intervention team to evaluate data and “identify growth, needs and next steps.” Interventionists reportedly meet almost daily with classroom teachers to look at data and plan supplemental instruction aligned to classroom lessons. Support staff reported that special education teachers have access to general education lesson plans and annotate them with increasing specificity.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement

The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.

Finding: Meets

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>Behavior Management and Safety</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy. b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment. c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination. d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption. |
| 2. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school communicates with and engages families with the school community. b. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students’ strengths and needs. c. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions. d. The school has a systematic process for responding to family or community concerns. e. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents. |
| 3. <i>Social-Emotional Supports</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school has systems or programs in place to support the social-emotional needs of students. b. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students. c. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students’ social and emotional health. |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

1. Element: ***Behavior Management and Safety:***
 - **Indicator a:** The school has a clear approach to behavior management based on routines, a positive behavior system as well as the addition of restorative practices this year. An Achievement Behavior Support Specialist (ABSS) works with students and teachers to norm expectations and build school culture. School leaders indicated that the first two weeks of school are used to instill procedures and routines, such as starting classes with a Do Now. The school also employs class generated social contracts and team building exercises to obtain buy in, and leadership focuses on observing culture during the first six weeks of the school year. The school uses Behavior with Care, described in the renewal application as “built on

research-based programs for reinforcing positive behaviors, correcting problem behaviors, and setting clear expectations, and building teacher-student relationships and peer relationships.” In practice the school uses a color-coded clip system aligned to student behaviors and students were visibly proud of their clips being worn on lanyards by adults in the building. The school also introduced “Hawks” this year, a point system for demonstrating moral focus virtues that students can redeem for prizes. For problem behaviors the school uses mediations, lunch detentions, and restorative reflection activities. The school also has a number of culture-related schoolwide routines in place; for example, the daily pledge and creed are recited daily over the public announcement system followed by students “spreading love” to their peers. The school does have a documents discipline policy in place.

- **Indicator b:** On the days of the renewal visit the building appeared safe and orderly. The front doors were secured, and guests were required to check in. Students transitioned quietly and calmly in public spaces. The renewal application also indicates that staff and students receive safety training. Interviewed parents described the school as a tight community with children happy being there. They described it as safe and noted drills and lock downs.
- **Indicator c:** Support staff indicated that harassment and bullying are often a social media problem, and they mediate issues between families and students. The school has brought in speakers and held a focus group with middle school students, which is becoming a regular club. Interviewed school leaders noted that the school partners with a community-based organization during National Bullying Prevention Month to address bullying and harassment. The principal also reported that he is the school’s DASA coordinator and teachers receive DASA training.
- **Indicator d:** The school environment is conducive to learning. No major disruptive behaviors were observed during the renewal visit and school leaders reported that behavior incidents had declined with suspensions down 25% over the previous year. Routines were evident in most observed classrooms, and positive reinforcement was observed during a number of lessons. For example, a teacher praised students, using the phrase “I love that...” to highlight desired behaviors. The school plays soothing music throughout the building, and formalized a culture and discipline position, which is the ABSS, who pulls students to a Restore Room to reflect and calm down before returning them to class.

2. Element: ***Family Engagement and Communication:***

- **Indicator a:** The school uses a variety of means to communicate with and engage families, including weekly grade team newsletters and an “All Call” system for announcements with messages in English and Spanish. Interviewed teachers also noted that parents can come into their child’s class to observe. Parents appreciated the use of an online portal, which is accessible via an app that is easy to use. Another app allows them to track school buses. School leaders noted that their cell phone numbers are on their business cards and parents frequently call and text them.
- **Indicator b:** Teachers post grades and assessment results in an online portal for parents to review and conduct parent-teacher conferences to communicate with parents about their child’s performance. Interviewed parents noted that they get information through phone calls, e-mails and parent-teacher conferences, and felt the school keeps them informed both when their child achieves and struggles.
- **Indicator c:** The school administers Voice of the Parent surveys to gauge parent satisfaction; students earn privileges such as dress down day passes for completing the survey. The renewal application indicate that overall parent satisfaction ranged between 81% and 93%

over the last five years. The school has a suggestion box located near its parent room for parents to provide feedback to school leaders and blogs on which parents can comment. In addition, the principal hosts coffees to engage parents and hear their concerns. Board members noted that the school's PTO is active, and many members attend board meetings and share their perspectives.

- **Indicator d:** School staff described an open-door policy with regards to families. Parents said that front office staff will get a dean or another staff member to meet with them whenever they need. The principal hosts coffees to talk to parents. And the renewal application noted that board meetings are open to the public so “parents and community members can share suggestions, ask questions, and voice concerns.” School leaders reported that there have been no formal complaints over the charter term.
- **Indicator e:** The school posts academic results on walls for the public to see and discusses school performance in board meetings. Interviewed parents noted that school data were also discussed at Title I meetings with comparisons to other schools.

3. Element: ***Social-Emotional Supports:***

- **Indicator a:** The school embeds its Moral Focus virtues into the curriculum and uses a short Moral Focus block three to five times per week to discuss and write about relevant books and topics. Posters related to the virtues were evident throughout the school, HAWK cards are redeemed for prizes (e.g., dress down days) and monthly celebrations reward students who demonstrate the virtues. The school assigns teachers as mentors to individual students in need of social emotional support and establishes behavior support plans for students who do not have IEPs. The school social worker also provides counseling services to groups of students, and the achievement and behavior support specialists works with students having problems in class. Given the high needs of the school's at-risk student population, interviewed support staff expressed their desire to increase community partnerships to support social emotional and mental health.
- **Indicator b:** The school has a behavior tracking system that can send e-mails and texts to parents to alert them about issues with their child. Interviewed school leaders and staff also described ongoing analysis of non-academic data, including referrals and suspensions, by the school-based intervention team. Paraprofessionals also maintain running records and behavior sheets for some students.
- **Indicator c:** Interviewed school leaders and support staff described using non-academic data to target behavior supports and interventions, including identifying students for behavior support plans, mentoring, and counseling groups.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.

Finding: Approaches

Important Notes:

- The key financial indicators used to evaluate this benchmark will be presented within a separate fiscal dashboard instrument that will provide context for the school’s performance on each of the metrics, outline the specific targets for each metric, and also provide additional subsidiary detail on each calculation (see Attachment 2).
- Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Near-Term Indicators: | |
| 1a. | Current Ratio |
| 1b. | Unrestricted Days Cash |
| 1c. | Enrollment Variance |
| 1d. | Composite Score |
| 2. Sustainability Indicators: | |
| 2a. | Total Margin |
| 2b. | Debt to Asset Ratio |
| 2c. | Debt Service Coverage Ratio |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

See the school’s fiscal dashboard attached to the end of this report (Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary). The fiscal dashboard provides detailed information regarding the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework.

Financial Condition

Southside Academy Charter School appears to be in adequate financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in good financial health. Southside Academy Charter School’s 2018-2019 composite score is 0.58.

**Composite Scores
2014-2015 to 2018-2019**

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Composite Score</i> |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 2014-2015 | 0.41 |
| 2015-2016 | 0.30 |
| 2016-2017 | 0.38 |
| 2017-2018 | 0.63 |
| 2018-2019 | 0.58 |

Note that fees to NHA annually are nearly equal to the school's revenue, the school itself holds very little cash or tangible assets, and the only substantial real liability is more fees owed to NHA as of 6/30/19. NHA provides needed materials, supplies, and equipment as required by the school, and upon request.

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, including appropriate internal controls and procedures in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.

Finding: Meets

Renewal is based on evidence that the following indicators are generally present:

1. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
2. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget in relation to those objectives.
3. The school has allocated budget surpluses in a manner that is fiscally sound and directly attends to the social and academic needs of the students attending the school.
4. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
5. The school has complied with state and federal financial reporting requirements.
6. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
7. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:

The Charter School Office reviewed Southside Academy Charter School's 2018-2019 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

This school's board of trustees has delegated to its management company, NHA, the responsibility of conducting the operations of the school, including its finances, with minimal cash on hand, and its single largest asset is Grants and Contracts Receivable.

The Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) conducted an audit of the school with the objective to determine whether student enrollment records and billings to school districts were accurate and supported in 2018. (See report at <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/schools/2019/southside-academy-charter-70.htm>).

The auditors found that the school overbilled the Syracuse City School District and underbilled other school districts for charter school tuition for the 2017-2018 school year; lacked a good process to identify changes in residency; and did not properly maintain necessary student residency documentation. The school submitted a corrective action plan that addressed the findings.

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

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

Finding: Approaches

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Board Oversight and Governance</i> | <p>a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.</p> <p>b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school’s mission and educational philosophy.</p> <p>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations, and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.</p> <p>d. The board regularly updates school policies.</p> <p>e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself, and providers.</p> <p>f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

- Element: **Board Oversight and Governance:**
 - Indicator a:** At the time of the renewal visit, only four members comprised the school’s board of trustees, which is below the level set in statute and in the school’s by-laws (which states “shall be not fewer than five nor more than nine (9)”). Interviewed board members indicated that they are seeking additional members and reported having three possible candidates. The current board possesses expertise in finance, higher education, community relations and business. The board does not have members with K-12 education experience; however, board members said they are seeking new members with finance, business or law expertise. Board members indicated that they had three potential candidates at the time of the renewal visit.
 - Indicator b:** While interviewed board members described a focus on improving academic achievement, they did not articulate clear and measurable goals and objectives to drive academic improvement. They acknowledged not having specific growth goals but suggested they will have them for the coming year. In addition, they do not track students after they graduate, but thought they should. They did note their responsiveness to declining test scores, with an emphasis on teacher supports. When asked about the school’s strategic planning process, board members said they are thinking about growth and “have had conversations about how to put together a strategic plan.” School leaders, on the other hand, described an internal strategic planning process based on specific goals and priorities.
 - Indicator c:** Interviewed board members described monitoring a variety of data, including academic achievement, finances and staffing. However, while they indicated that they see enrollment as part of monthly financial reports, they reported not actively monitoring

enrollment in comparison to the school's enrollment and retention targets. Board members recognized the school's staffing challenges, noting a teacher shortage in the area and that they had enhanced benefits and professional development to increase teacher retention. They also described an active role in hiring, indicating that all board members review resumes and that they sometimes override the principal's choices, blurring the line between governance oversight and management. The board delegates financial and compliance responsibilities to NHA and described regular communication with NHA at and between board meetings to provide oversight.

- **Indicator d:** The board does not have members with legal expertise, but interviewed board members reported they retain a board attorney who assists with contracts and policy development. The renewal application indicates that the board relies on the school's management company and its legal counsel to ensure policies are up-to-date and in compliance.
- **Indicator e:** The renewal application and interviewed board members described an evaluation system for the board, principal and NHA. The board relies on NHA to evaluate the school principal along with information gleaned for ongoing interactions with the principal at board meetings and school functions.
- **Indicator f:** The board noted a long-standing relationship with legal counsel to ensure that board members remain aware of legal responsibilities and conflicts of interest. They also use of other external expertise to review contracts and leases. Board members said that they generally rely on NHA, the school's management company, to handle day-to-day affairs and trust its experience with operating many schools over time.

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure and clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.

Finding: Meets

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|---|--|
| 1. <i>School Leadership</i> | <p>a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning.</p> <p>b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school.</p> <p>d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</p> |
| 2. <i>Professional Climate</i> | <p>a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.</p> <p>b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers.</p> <p>c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students’ needs.</p> <p>d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice.</p> <p>e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.</p> |
| 3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i> <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider.</p> <p>b. Changes in the school’s charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</p> <p>c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

1. Element: **School Leadership:**

- **Indicator a:** The school leadership team is comprised of the principal and four deans, three of whom are responsible for specific grade spans and one who focuses on interventions and special education. Leadership has established academic goals that they described as “40, 40, 80” referencing state exam proficiency targets for ELA, math and science respectively. Interviewed teachers were familiar with these goals and priorities for achieving them, including using data to adapt instruction and increase class and individual student achievement.

- **Indicator b:** CSO team review of the school’s organizational chart and interviews with the leadership team, teachers, and board indicated that the school has clear roles and responsibilities for all staff. In addition to their grade span responsibilities, school leaders coordinated specific programs, such as after school and summer school and teacher development, coaching and mentoring. NHA, the school’s management company, also visits regularly. For example, school leaders reported the NHA curriculum and instruction team makes monthly visits to support the school. However, the school has had a number of teacher vacancies due to medical leaves and attrition, requiring some current teachers and long-term substitute teachers to cover these positions temporarily.
- **Indicator c:** In addition to participating in the leadership team, school leaders coordinate a number of committees, such as a school improvement team, attendance committee, scholar life committee, sunshine and SBIT academic and behavior committee, which review data, evaluate programs and implement improvement strategies. Interviewed teachers also reported that they are surveyed frequently for feedback and input.
- **Indicator d: Indicator e:** School leaders reported that NHA has a talent acquisition team that assists them with advertising and recruiting staff; they also noted a decrease in the number of candidates lately and described a teacher shortage, especially for ENL teachers. The school also hires a number of interventionists to run small-group instruction who are reportedly young and have a high-turnover rate.

2. Element: **Professional Climate:**

- **Indicator a:** At the time of the renewal visit one dean was on maternity leave so the school’s instructional coach was serving as the interim dean. School leaders described a number of teachers leaving or taking medical or maternity leave mid-year, including classroom teachers, a special education teacher and a physical education teacher. In addition, an ENL left in November and the position was vacant at the time of the renewal e visit. School leaders indicated that teachers were leaving for a number of reasons, including to work closer to home and to take administrative positions at another charter school. School leaders indicated that they are using teachers in residence and long-term substitutes using existing lesson plans carry on instruction. The school is also monitoring teacher certification and school leaders reported that the school is helping staff obtain credits towards certification.
- **Indicator b:** Teachers meet regularly in both grade team and wings (grade spans) to collaboratively plan. Co-teachers also meet with their Deans to plan instruction. In addition, teachers meet in the summer to review and revise playbooks and unit plans.
- **Indicator c:** The school has a professional development plan in place. Deans and an instructional coach provide ongoing support, including weekly one-on-one meetings with staff to provide feedback and coaching. School leaders and NHA provide trainings and embedded professional development. Interviewed teachers noted both professional development days and external trainings with a heavy emphasis on data meetings and said professional development was responsive to their needs.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application, the school uses a school-wide framework to “monitor instruction, create teachers’ individual growth plans, and provide focus for weekly observation and feedback meetings.” Instructional leaders described a system of ongoing observation and evaluation to identify teachers with specific needs and create coaching plans for teachers deemed in need of significant improvement. In addition, all teachers and interventionists submit weekly lesson plans and leaders are expected to review

them and provide feedback. Instructional leaders provide ongoing feedback via the one-on-one meetings and grade and wing meetings.

- **Indicator e:** School leaders and teachers noted a system of staff surveys that provide information about the school and compare it to other schools in the NHA network. Deans also meet weekly with staff in coaching meetings.

3. Element: ***Contractual Relationship:***

- **Indicator a:** School leaders and board members described a productive relationship with NHA. The management company's teams have clear roles and interviewed staff described them as responsive to their needs. Board members also described an ongoing relationship with NHA and noted traveling to Michigan to meet with NHA staff at their headquarters. Board members felt the school benefits from NHA's economies of scale, particularly with respect to facilities, operations and finances. Board members also noted strong professional development provided by NHA, with some staff members traveling to Michigan as well.
- **Indicator b:** Interviewed board members described lease and contract negotiations with NHA about three years ago. The board employed legal counsel to review contracts and a firm to analyze the lease. Changes included increased funding for paraprofessionals and increasing cash reserves.
- **Indicator c:** The school submitted with its renewal application four areas covered in its annual evaluation of NHA, including academic performance, organizational performance, financial performance, and climate and culture. However, interviewed board members described the evaluation as an "informal process" held at their annual retreat. Board members also noted ongoing oversight of NHA via reports and questioning at monthly board meetings and feedback from school leadership and staff.

Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.

Finding: Meets

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>Mission and Key Design Elements</i> | <p>a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.</p> <p>b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

1. Element: ***Mission and Key Design Elements***
 - **Indicator a:** Interviewed board members described the school's focus on college preparation, both academically and through the Moral Focus curriculum and social emotional development. This was corroborated by parents who noted a college prep focus. School leaders described a clear focus on academic achievement and when asked about the school's mission, the leadership team pointed to the CALF acronym: community, academics, leadership, families.
 - **Indicator b:** The school has a clear focus on academic achievement, as evidenced by constant collection and review of assessment and other data, ongoing review and revision to curriculum, and professional development and coaching. The school has focused on student responsibility through its Moral Focus curriculum, an increased emphasis on student voice or agency (e.g., student discussions and data binders), and recognition activities. The school also engages parents through frequent communication, an open-door policy, and invitations to events to celebrate student achievements.

Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.

Finding: Approaches

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Targets are met</i> | a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter. |
| 2. <i>Targets are not met</i> | <p>a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets.</p> <p>b. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, efforts to academically support these students, and enrollment policy revisions, such as employing a weighted lottery or enrollment preference, to increase the proportion of enrolled students from the three priority populations.</p> <p>c. The school has implemented a systematic process for evaluating recruitment and outreach strategies and program services for each of the three categories of students, and makes strategic improvements as needed.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

1. Element: ***Targets are not met***

- **Indicator a:** At the time of the renewal visit student enrollment was reported by the school as 4% ELLs/MLLs, 12% SWDs, and 93% EDs. According to 2018-2019 data reported in the school’s renewal application, Syracuse City School District was 19% ELLs/MLLs, 20% SWDs, and 85% EDs. The school is significantly under-enrolled for ELLs/MLLs and SWDs as compared to Syracuse City School District. The school received a Notice of Deficiency from CSO in 2018-2019 and submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to increase its ELLs/MLLs. The school notes that this work is ongoing.
- **Indicator b:** Student support staff described targeted recruitment efforts to enroll at-risk students, including outreach at a Latino festival, Spanish League, and a RISE, a refugee support organization. School leaders said they hire contracted staff to assist with recruitment efforts. The school places advertisements in targeted media, is creating ambassador groups of current families, provides applications in multiple languages, and offers frequent tours of the school. The school is developing partnerships with community-based organizations that work with refugees and other at-risk populations. Support staff also indicated the school is proposing to weight its lottery in the spring 2020 to increase ELL/MLL student enrollment. Noted that the principal is bilingual, the number of bilingual staff has increased, and they have resources to translation services when needed. The school’s May 2019 CAP progress report submitted to CSO noted many of these activities as well.

- **Indicator c:** School leaders and support staff reported monitoring enrollment numbers and making specific recruitment efforts, particularly with respect to ELL/MLL students, which has resulted in a small increase in the ELL/MLL enrollment rate.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional information.

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.

Finding: Meets

| <u>Element</u> | <u>Indicators</u> |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>Legal Compliance</i> | <p>a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to: those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meetings Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements.</p> <p>b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.</p> <p>c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.</p> |

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

1. Element: ***Legal Compliance***:

- **Indicator a:** Southside Academy Charter School generally complies with applicable laws and regulations, and there was no evidence at the time of the renewal visit that the school was out of compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter. Furthermore, board members and the renewal application noted working with legal counsel as well as NHA to maintain compliance. Support staff also described working with an NYSED regional associate to define and document special education requirements.
 - However, several policy documents are inconsistent with the law and/or NYSED guidance and require significant revisions. For example, the Complaint/Grievance Policy does not include information on submitting a complaint to the Board of Regents through the Charter School Office. Additionally, the school's discipline policy-the DASA section in particular-requires updates.
 - The CSO site visit team learned during the December 2019 renewal site visit that the board of trustees now consists of four members, rather than the statutory minimum of five. The board indicated that it is currently recruiting new members.
- **Indicator b:** The school is currently under a corrective action plan to ensure adequate recruitment and retention of ELL/MLL students. A progress report by the school indicated that it has taken steps to implement the plan.
- **Indicator c:** The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for all revisions.

Attachment 1: 2019-2020 Renewal Site Visit
Southside Academy Charter School

Benchmark 1:

Indicator 1: All Schools

1.a.i. Accountability - ESEA Accountability Designation:

This school is designated as a school in Good Standing under current New York State criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

1.b.i. Similar Schools Comparison – Comparative Proficiency:

In both ELA and math, Southside Academy Charter School students did tend to outperform students in schools with similar grade spans and demographics.

Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

2.a.i. and 2.a.ii. Trending Toward Proficiency – Aggregate and Subgroup Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:
 See Table 1 below.

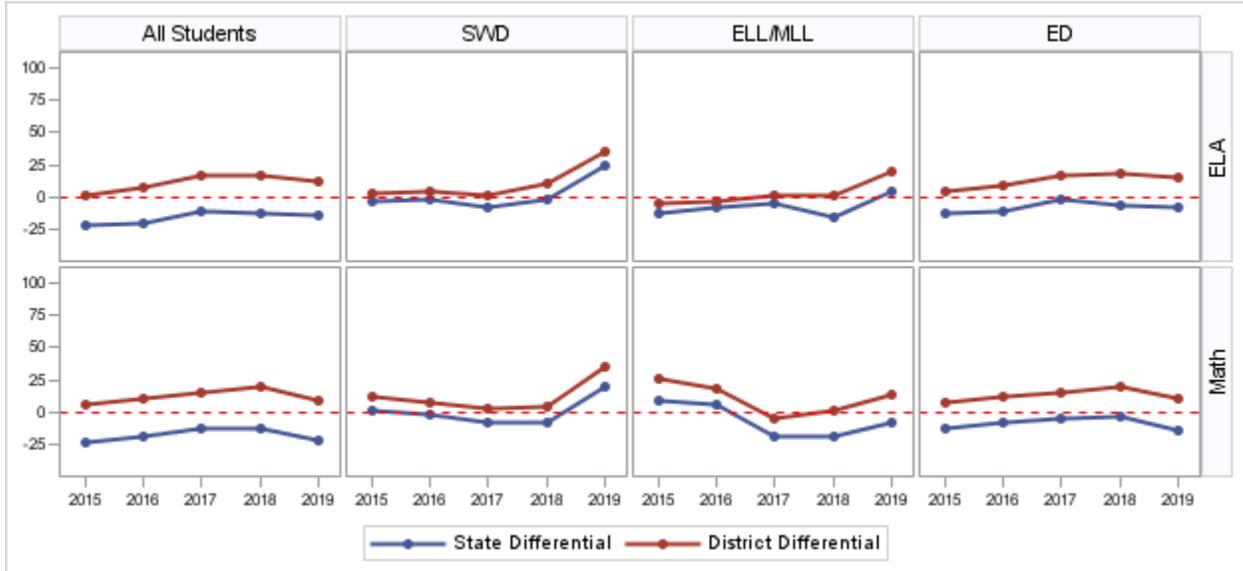
Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Trending Toward Proficiency – Minimum Expectation = 75%

| | | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 |
|------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| ELA | All Students | 38% | 49% | 45% | 41% |
| | SWD | 13% | 22% | 27% | . |
| | ELL/MLL | 60% | 60% | 24% | 40% |
| | ED | 37% | 47% | 43% | 39% |
| Math | All Students | 31% | 36% | 44% | 29% |
| | SWD | 13% | 22% | 15% | . |
| | ELL/MLL | 60% | 22% | 24% | 27% |
| | ED | 31% | 35% | 42% | 26% |

*See NOTES (2), (3), (7), and (8) below.

2.b.i. and 2.b.ii. Proficiency - Aggregate and Subgroup School Level Proficiency: See Figure 1 and Table 2 below.

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time



*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), and (6) below.

Table 2: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District, and NYS

| | | ELA | | | | | Math | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|
| | | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | NYS | Differential to NYS | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | NYS | Differential to NYS |
| All Students | 2014-2015 | 10% | 8% | +2 | 31% | -21 | 15% | 9% | +6 | 38% | -23 |
| | 2015-2016 | 18% | 11% | +7 | 38% | -20 | 21% | 10% | +11 | 39% | -18 |
| | 2016-2017 | 30% | 13% | +17 | 40% | -10 | 27% | 11% | +16 | 40% | -13 |
| | 2017-2018 | 32% | 15% | +17 | 45% | -13 | 33% | 13% | +20 | 45% | -12 |
| | 2018-2019 | 31% | 18% | +13 | 45% | -14 | 25% | 15% | +10 | 47% | -22 |
| SWD | 2014-2015 | 4% | 1% | +3 | 7% | -3 | 14% | 2% | +12 | 12% | +2 |
| | 2015-2016 | 7% | 2% | +5 | 9% | -2 | 10% | 3% | +7 | 12% | -2 |
| | 2016-2017 | 4% | 2% | +2 | 11% | -7 | 6% | 3% | +3 | 14% | -8 |
| | 2017-2018 | 14% | 3% | +11 | 16% | -2 | 9% | 4% | +5 | 17% | -8 |
| | 2018-2019 | 40% | 5% | +35 | 16% | +24 | 40% | 5% | +35 | 20% | +20 |
| ELL/MLL | 2015-2016 | 0% | 3% | -3 | 8% | -8 | 20% | 2% | +18 | 14% | +6 |
| | 2016-2017 | 8% | 6% | +2 | 12% | -4 | 0% | 5% | -5 | 19% | -19 |
| | 2017-2018 | 10% | 8% | +2 | 25% | -15 | 10% | 9% | +1 | 29% | -19 |
| | 2018-2019 | 29% | 9% | +20 | 25% | +4 | 24% | 10% | +14 | 31% | -7 |
| ED | 2014-2015 | 9% | 5% | +4 | 21% | -12 | 15% | 7% | +8 | 27% | -12 |
| | 2015-2016 | 17% | 8% | +9 | 27% | -10 | 21% | 8% | +13 | 28% | -7 |
| | 2016-2017 | 27% | 10% | +17 | 29% | -2 | 25% | 9% | +16 | 29% | -4 |
| | 2017-2018 | 30% | 12% | +18 | 36% | -6 | 31% | 11% | +20 | 34% | -3 |
| | 2018-2019 | 29% | 14% | +15 | 36% | -7 | 23% | 12% | +11 | 37% | -14 |

*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), (6), and (7) below.

2.b.iii. Aggregate Grade Level Proficiency: See Table 3 below.

Table 3: Aggregate Grade Level Proficiency

| | | ELA | | | | | Math | | | | |
|---------|-----------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------|
| | | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | NYS | Differential to NYS | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | NYS | Differential to NYS |
| Grade 3 | 2014-2015 | 12% | 8% | +4 | 31% | -19 | 30% | 13% | +17 | 42% | -12 |
| | 2015-2016 | 21% | 11% | +10 | 42% | -21 | 27% | 16% | +11 | 44% | -17 |
| | 2016-2017 | 30% | 15% | +15 | 43% | -13 | 34% | 18% | +16 | 48% | -14 |
| | 2017-2018 | 23% | 20% | +3 | 51% | -28 | 25% | 24% | +1 | 54% | -29 |
| | 2018-2019 | 36% | 23% | +13 | 52% | -16 | 38% | 22% | +16 | 55% | -17 |
| Grade 4 | 2014-2015 | 14% | 9% | +5 | 33% | -19 | 21% | 14% | +7 | 43% | -22 |
| | 2015-2016 | 23% | 13% | +10 | 41% | -18 | 27% | 14% | +13 | 45% | -18 |
| | 2016-2017 | 32% | 13% | +19 | 41% | -9 | 45% | 13% | +32 | 43% | +2 |
| | 2017-2018 | 31% | 16% | +15 | 47% | -16 | 30% | 14% | +16 | 48% | -18 |
| | 2018-2019 | 29% | 21% | +8 | 48% | -19 | 28% | 18% | +10 | 50% | -22 |
| Grade 5 | 2014-2015 | 14% | 7% | +7 | 30% | -16 | 24% | 10% | +14 | 43% | -19 |
| | 2015-2016 | 24% | 9% | +15 | 33% | -9 | 35% | 12% | +23 | 40% | -5 |
| | 2016-2017 | 36% | 11% | +25 | 35% | +1 | 43% | 13% | +30 | 43% | 0 |
| | 2017-2018 | 30% | 12% | +18 | 37% | -7 | 43% | 15% | +28 | 44% | -1 |
| | 2018-2019 | 19% | 14% | +5 | 38% | -19 | 17% | 14% | +3 | 46% | -29 |
| Grade 6 | 2014-2015 | 6% | 8% | -2 | 31% | -25 | 4% | 9% | -5 | 39% | -35 |
| | 2015-2016 | 12% | 9% | +3 | 34% | -22 | 23% | 8% | +15 | 40% | -17 |
| | 2016-2017 | 18% | 10% | +8 | 32% | -14 | 14% | 11% | +3 | 40% | -26 |
| | 2017-2018 | 38% | 17% | +21 | 49% | -11 | 44% | 11% | +33 | 44% | 0 |
| | 2018-2019 | 29% | 17% | +12 | 47% | -18 | 23% | 15% | +8 | 47% | -24 |
| Grade 7 | 2014-2015 | 6% | 7% | -1 | 29% | -23 | 6% | 6% | 0 | 35% | -29 |
| | 2015-2016 | 10% | 11% | -1 | 35% | -25 | 7% | 7% | 0 | 36% | -29 |
| | 2016-2017 | 31% | 11% | +20 | 42% | -11 | 11% | 5% | +6 | 38% | -27 |
| | 2017-2018 | 29% | 12% | +17 | 40% | -11 | 22% | 11% | +11 | 41% | -19 |
| | 2018-2019 | 39% | 13% | +26 | 40% | -1 | 20% | 11% | +9 | 43% | -23 |
| Grade 8 | 2014-2015 | 7% | 9% | -2 | 35% | -28 | 3% | 1% | +2 | 22% | -19 |
| | 2015-2016 | 15% | 12% | +3 | 41% | -26 | 6% | 0% | +6 | 24% | -18 |
| | 2016-2017 | 33% | 18% | +15 | 45% | -12 | 11% | 1% | +10 | 22% | -11 |
| | 2017-2018 | 41% | 15% | +26 | 48% | -7 | 31% | 2% | +29 | 30% | +1 |
| | 2018-2019 | 38% | 19% | +19 | 48% | -10 | 27% | 4% | +23 | 33% | -6 |

*See NOTES (1), (6), and (7) below.

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

(Not applicable to this charter school.)

Benchmark 9:

Table 4: Student Demographics

| | SWD | | | ELL/MLL | | | ED | | |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | Southside Academy CS | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District |
| 2015-2016 | 9% | 22% | -13 | 1% | 18% | -17 | 93% | 80% | +13 |
| 2016-2017 | 13% | 22% | -9 | 2% | 20% | -18 | 93% | 83% | +10 |
| 2017-2018 | 12% | 22% | -10 | 5% | 21% | -16 | 96% | 89% | +7 |
| 2018-2019 | 2% | 23% | -21 | 5% | 21% | -16 | 84% | 88% | -4 |

*See NOTES (2) and (6) below.

Table 5: Retention – Aggregate and Subgroups

| | All Students | | | SWD | | | ELL/MLL | | | ED | | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| | Southside Academy Charter School | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | Southside Academy Charter School | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | Southside Academy Charter School | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District | Southside Academy Charter School | Syracuse CSD | Differential to District |
| 2016-2017 | 80% | 87% | -7 | 78% | 88% | -10 | 60% | 88% | -28 | 80% | 88% | -8 |
| 2017-2018 | 83% | 89% | -6 | 79% | 90% | -11 | 94% | 89% | +5 | 83% | 90% | -7 |
| 2018-2019 | 85% | 90% | -5 | 80% | 92% | -12 | 86% | 90% | -4 | 85% | 90% | -5 |

*See NOTES (2) and (6) below.

***NOTES:**

(1) Data in the table above represents tested students who scored proficiently (level 3 or above) on the NYS ELA and/or math assessment.

(2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.

(3) Pursuant to NYSED business rules, the data was suppressed for subgroups containing <5 students and the subgroup category may not be included for the metric.

(4) Data in the table above represents students who passed the Annual Regents or equivalent (score of 65 or better).

(5) The 4- and 5-year graduation rates reported are as of August. The 6-year graduation rates are as of June.

(6) Data in the table above represents a comparison between those grades served in the charter school to only those same grades in the district.

(7) A "." in any table indicates that the data was suppressed, no student sat for the exam, or the exam was not given.

(8) Data in the table above represents tested students who either maintained a proficient score from one year to the next or students whose proficiency level increased from one year to the next (a proficient score is level 3 or 4).

(9) Data in the table above represents students within their respective subgroups who have passed three out of the five Annual Regents and Regents Common Core Examinations (score of 65 or better) or equivalents.

(10) Data in the table above represents the percentage of students from the original 9th grade cohort who persisted within the same school to a 4-year graduation (includes August graduates).