



# New York State Education Department

## *Renewal Site Visit Report* *2017-2018*

**Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn**

**Visit Date: October 10-11, 2017**

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## SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

### Charter School Summary<sup>1</sup>

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn
<b>Board Chair</b>	James Ellsworth
<b>District of Location</b>	NYC CSD 13
<b>Opening Date</b>	Fall 2013
<b>Charter Terms</b>	Initial Charter Term: 8/28/2013 to 06/30/2018
<b>Proposed Renewal Term</b>	July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2023
<b>Authorized Grades/Maximum Authorized Enrollment</b>	Grades 6-10 / 640 students
<b>Management Company</b>	None
<b>Educational Partners</b>	None
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 432 Monroe Street, Brooklyn, NY 11221 (Grades 6-8) – Co-located space</li> <li>• 1150 East New York Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11212 (Grades 9-10) – Private space</li> </ul>
<b>Mission Statement</b>	Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s mission is to empower students as scholars and citizens so they may lead fulfilling academic, personal, and professional lives.
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Grade 6-12 college preparatory curriculum</li> <li>• A focus on expert teaching and advancement</li> <li>• More time for learning/attention to how time is utilized</li> <li>• Intensive and differentiated academic support</li> <li>• Enrichment courses and elective clubs</li> <li>• A positive and supportive school culture</li> <li>• Active community involvement</li> </ul>
<b>Requested Revisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand to serve students in Grade 11 in the 2018-2019 school year, and Grade 12 in the 2019-2020 school year.</i></li> <li>• <i>A change in targeted student enrollment to 112 students per class, leading to a maximum enrollment of 784 students at full capacity.</i></li> </ul>

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

## Renewal Outcomes

The following renewal outcomes are possible:

- **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

### Approved Enrollment for the Current Charter Term

	<b>Year 1 2013 to 2014</b>	<b>Year 2 2014 to 2015</b>	<b>Year 3 2015 to 2016</b>	<b>Year 4 2016 to 2017</b>	<b>Year 5 2017 to 2018</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-9	Grades 6-10
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	104	208	312	416	520 <sup>2</sup>

### Proposed Enrollment for the Renewal Charter Term

	<b>Year 1 2018 to 2019</b>	<b>Year 2 2019 to 2020</b>	<b>Year 3 2020 to 2021</b>	<b>Year 4 2021 to 2022</b>	<b>Year 5 2022 to 2023</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	640	640	640	640	640

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<sup>2</sup> Although a non-material revision request was granted to decrease the school's enrollment to 605 in 2017-2018, the school's maximum enrollment remains 640.

## METHODOLOGY

A two-day renewal site visit was conducted at Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn (“Unity Prep”) on October 10-11, 2017. The CSO team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, and parents. In cooperation with school leadership, the NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted 16 classroom observations in Grades 6-10. The observations were approximately 10 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the head of school and principals.

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

- **Renewal Application**
- **Academic data**
- **Renewal Site Visit Workbook**
- **Current organizational chart**
- **A master school schedule**
- **Map of school with room numbers and teacher names**
- **Board materials (roster, minutes, and strategic action plan)**
- **Board self-evaluation processes and documents**
- **Student/family handbook**
- **Staff handbook and personnel policies**
- **A list of major assessments**
- **Teacher and administrator evaluation processes**
- **Interventions offered at the school**
- **NYSED teacher surveys**
- **NYCDoE School Quality Survey**
- **Professional development plans and schedules**
- **Efforts towards achieving enrollment and retention targets**
- **School submitted Annual Reports**

## 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, although not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit. A brief summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; however, the report narrative will highlight those indicators not fully met by the school.

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

For the site visit conducted from October 10-11, 2017 at Unity Prep, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

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

Performance Benchmark		Level
<b>Educational Success</b>	<b>Benchmark 1: Student Performance:</b> 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).	<b>Approaches</b>
	<b>Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning:</b> 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.	<b>Approaches</b>
	<b>Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement:</b> 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.	<b>Meets</b>
<b>Organizational Soundness</b>	<b>Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:</b> The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	<b>Meets</b>
	<b>Benchmark 5: Financial Management:</b> 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.	<b>Meet</b>
	<b>Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance:</b> 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.	<b>Meets</b>
	<b>Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity:</b> 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.	<b>Meets</b>
<b>Faithfulness to Charter &amp; Law</b>	<b>Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:</b> The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	<b>Meets</b>
	<b>Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention:</b> 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.	<b>Meets</b>
	<b>Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance:</b> The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	<b>Meets</b>



### ***Summary of Findings***

The CSO renewal site visit team found that Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s performance has improved on most benchmarks of the Performance Framework. The academic proficiency levels have increased on state assessments across ELA and math over the course of the charter term. Unity Prep outperforms the district in math and comes close to the district average in ELA, but falls below the state average across both subjects. Unity Prep has a documented curriculum in place across the school. Behavior management and instructional delivery appears fairly consistent across the school. The school has a strategic action plan in place with benchmark goals outlined for the 2017-2018 school year, which was created by the head of school and approved by the board of trustees. The school has a stable leadership structure. While 17 teachers left the school at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the leadership team is working to address this turnover and the school is reporting less teacher attrition this year. At the time of the visit, the school was not able to produce definite numbers for 2017-2018. The school is making progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets and exhibits good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain English language learners (ELLs) and educationally disadvantaged students, as the school falls slightly below the district average for the ELL subgroup. The school appears compliant with most laws, regulations, and provisions of its charter.

Please see additional summative evidence for each Benchmark of the Performance Framework below.

Note that the data tables for this report were created in SY 2020-2021. It is possible that there are slight differences from the Regents item which would not have affected the Renewal outcome.

**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**

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:**

Indicator 1: All Schools

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

Unity Prep’s ESEA accountability designation was *Focus* for the 2016-17 school year.

Indicator 2: Middle School Outcomes (See Table 1 below.)

*2.a.i. Trending Toward Proficiency – Aggregate Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:*

*2.a.ii. Trending Toward Proficiency - Subgroup Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:*

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

Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn		All Students	SWD	ELL	ED
ELA	2015-2016	40%	20%	21%	39%
	2016-2017	48%	37%	56%	48%
	2017-2018	46%	29%	20%	44%
Math	2015-2016	22%	8%	33%	22%
	2016-2017	34%	24%	18%	34%
	2017-2018	28%	14%	30%	29%

2.b.i. and ii Proficiency - Aggregate and subgroup School Level Proficiency for All Students: See Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes**

		ELA					Math				
		Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	12%	17%	-5	30%	-18	17%	16%	+1	37%	-20
	2015-2016	21%	27%	-6	37%	-16	14%	16%	-2	34%	-20
	2016-2017	31%	31%	0	40%	-9	21%	18%	+3	34%	-13
	2017-2018	35%	40%	-5	46%	-11	20%	26%	-6	40%	-20
SWD	2014-2015	2%	6%	-4	5%	-3	6%	8%	-2	9%	-3
	2015-2016	1%	9%	-8	8%	-7	5%	9%	-4	8%	-3
	2016-2017	13%	14%	-1	10%	+3	11%	9%	+2	9%	+2
	2017-2018	13%	17%	-4	14%	-1	8%	11%	-3	12%	-4
ELL	2014-2015	0%	5%	-5	6%	-6	21%	4%	+17	15%	+6
	2015-2016	7%	8%	-1	8%	-1	13%	7%	+6	14%	-1
	2016-2017	16%	5%	+11	8%	+8	11%	8%	+3	12%	-1
	2017-2018	10%	16%	-6	20%	-10	19%	13%	+6	21%	-2
ED	2014-2015	11%	13%	-2	20%	-9	15%	12%	+3	25%	-10
	2015-2016	20%	21%	-1	27%	-7	14%	13%	+1	24%	-10
	2016-2017	29%	24%	+5	30%	-1	21%	12%	+9	24%	-3
	2017-2018	34%	33%	+1	36%	-2	21%	19%	+2	30%	-9

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

**Table 3: Grade Level Proficiency**

		ELA					Math				
		Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
Grade 6	2014-2015	14%	18%	-4	31%	-17	20%	16%	+4	39%	-19
	2015-2016	22%	24%	-2	34%	-12	11%	23%	-12	40%	-29
	2016-2017	26%	27%	-1	32%	-6	23%	26%	-3	40%	-17
	2017-2018	36%	39%	-3	49%	-13	26%	27%	-1	44%	-18
Grade 7	2014-2015	10%	17%	-7	29%	-19	14%	16%	-2	35%	-21
	2015-2016	11%	27%	-16	35%	-24	19%	16%	+3	36%	-17
	2016-2017	29%	32%	-3	42%	-13	21%	17%	+4	38%	-17
	2017-2018	27%	41%	-14	40%	-13	19%	32%	-13	41%	-22
Grade 8	2015-2016	30%	30%	0	41%	-11	12%	9%	+3	24%	-12
	2016-2017	35%	34%	+1	45%	-10	18%	6%	+12	22%	-4
	2017-2018	40%	39%	+1	48%	-8	17%	15%	+2	30%	-13

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

3.a.i. Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate Annual Regents Outcomes: See Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Annual Regents Outcomes**

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Charter Total Tested	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYS	Differential to State	Charter Total Tested	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYS	Differential to State	Charter Total Tested	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYS	Differential to State	Charter Total Tested	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYS	Differential to State
Algebra I (Common Core)	2016-2017	91	73%	70%	+3	28	61%	46%	+15	.	.	.	.	78	72%	63%	+9
	2017-2018	122	51%	64%	-13	36	31%	39%	-8	9	44%	46%	-2	92	49%	56%	-7
Algebra II (Common Core)	2017-2018	15	67%	82%	-15	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	11	73%	72%	+1
English Language Arts (Common Core)	2017-2018	29	69%	79%	-10	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	18	72%	70%	+2
Geometry (Common Core)	2016-2017	7	14%	63%	-49	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	17%	50%	-33
	2017-2018	75	23%	67%	-44	22	0%	38%	-38	.	.	.	.	53	26%	54%	-28
Global History Transition	2017-2018	90	59%	73%	-14	25	40%	45%	-5	.	.	.	.	66	58%	62%	-4
Living Environment	2016-2017	90	67%	72%	-5	28	46%	45%	+1	.	.	.	.	79	67%	62%	+5
	2017-2018	122	52%	70%	-18	41	34%	44%	-10	8	38%	43%	-5	92	50%	60%	-10
Physical Setting/Chemistry	2017-2018	17	47%	72%	-25	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12	50%	59%	-9
Physical Setting/Earth Science	2017-2018	65	28%	68%	-40	22	18%	44%	-26	.	.	.	.	46	30%	58%	-28

This is the first year that Unity Prep Charter School has 9th graders. No cohort data is available at this time.

## 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

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSL.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.</li> <li>d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.</li> </ul>
2. <i>Instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.</li> <li>b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.</li> </ul>
3. <i>Assessment and Program Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments.</li> <li>b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.</li> <li>c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.</li> </ul>
4. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

#### Curriculum

Unity Prep has a documented curriculum aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSL). For reading, the school uses *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)*, and level literacy intervention. For writing, TNAACS uses *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) Units of Study for Writing*. Teachers have developed an in-house curriculum for math, drawing from EngageNY lessons, which is broken into two types of lessons—math skills and math workshop. For science and social studies, the school creates its own interdisciplinary units of study in all grades.

Curricula at Unity Prep are reviewed and evaluated by principals at the start of each planning year, in partnership with departmental chairpersons. To ensure horizontal and vertical alignment, assessments and scope-of-sequences outline skills and content within and across grade levels. During Unity’s summer staff development institute, teachers—under the supervision of the principals and departmental chairpersons of the middle school and high school—use scope-and-sequences to create curriculum maps and thematic units of study.

Teachers create, revise, and receive feedback on lesson plans on a weekly basis. As part of this process, teachers draft lesson plans for the upcoming week in collaboration with grade-level content teams, and then submit the plans to their designated instructional coach on an agreed-upon weekly schedule. Coaches then review, provide written feedback, and return the drafts to teachers, and teachers make final revisions during shared preparation periods before delivering each lesson.

### Instruction

During the 2017 renewal site visit, school personnel articulated a common description of high-quality instruction. The head of school stated that high-quality instruction includes students actively engaged, with the subject matter aligned to where they are in their learning to move forward within a given subject. Observed instructional practices aligned to this understanding across most classrooms. While on site, NYSED staff found student engagement across most classrooms, most of which was observed through students focusing on the teacher’s instruction and following along by writing in notebooks or annotating text. While time was maximized across most classrooms, in the bulk of observed classrooms, most time was spent on the “do now” or introduction to new material, and in a few cases, student were working independently. Classrooms appeared safe, with most students aware of rules, procedures, and expectations.

### Assessment and Program Evaluation

Unity Prep utilizes formative and summative assessments. For all grade levels, assessments include *Fountas & Pinnell* three times per year, the *MAP* assessment as a pilot in ELA and math in the 2017-2018 school year, unit assessments across all subjects, interim assessments in math, ELA, history, and Spanish, mock exams for Regents or state exams, and roundtable discussions. Additionally, exit tickets and checks for understanding are used to formatively gauge student understanding. For high school, PSATs are also administered.

Data from formative and summative assessments is used to inform instruction, and is also used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the academic program—allowing school leadership and teachers to make adjustments, when necessary. After each interim assessment is administered, the school holds a data day, where results are analyzed and action plans are developed. Unity utilizes a Response to Intervention (RTI) model, where every two weeks, the leadership team holds a meeting to discuss how the school is progressing across key indicators of school success, such as academics, behavior, and attendance/support services. Between these biweekly meetings, sub-teams get together to discuss trends in each of the three focus areas. The teams then come back together to discuss and report on progress.

### Supports for Diverse Learners

Support for students with disabilities (SWDs) at Unity Prep occurs through integrated co-teaching (ICT) classrooms. Two ICT classrooms are offered per grade. The director of support services is responsible for overseeing all special education instruction and provide teachers and service providers with ICPs, as well as at-a-glance summaries outlining details about each SWD. Social workers also provide counseling if

mandated on an IEP, and Unity Prep contracts with outside service providers for speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and other mandated services. Unity Prep also utilizes the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, which offers three tiers of support for students, depending on their individual needs.

For ELLs, Unity Prep utilizes structured English immersion in the form of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). The ELL specialist also provides targeted and differentiated supplemental instruction based on each student's English proficiency, ranging from beginner ELLs to those designated as former ELLs. Students who require more intensive interventions receive individualized and small-group pull-out services during enrichment classes.

Differentiation of instruction occurs primarily through the utilization of classroom tools, such as graphic organizers, leveled texts, or specific visual learning aids for ELL students. Small group instruction was observed in a few classrooms.



**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**

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
<p>1. <i>Behavior Management and Safety</i></p>	<p>a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy.</p> <p>b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.</p> <p>c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination.</p> <p>d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.</p>
<p>2. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i></p>	<p>a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students’ strengths and needs.</p> <p>b. 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.</p> <p>c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns.</p> <p>d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.</p>
<p>3. <i>Social-Emotional Supports</i></p>	<p>a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students.</p> <p>b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students’ social and emotional health.</p>

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:**

Behavior Management and Safety

Unity Prep’s approach to behavior management is centered on six core values: Awareness, Kindness, Integrity, Initiative, Courage, and Inquiry. Unity Prep implements Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) schoolwide, which is designed to provide proactive strategies for supporting appropriate student behaviors across the school. The schoolwide behavior expectations “be safe, be responsible, and be respectful” are reinforced through posters in hallways and classrooms. Shout-outs are awarded to students who do exemplary work or contribute to school community, and rewards such as celebrations and special events are provided to students who demonstrate the core values. Behavioral expectations are outlined in the Student and Family Handbook.

Unity Prep avoids punitive discipline measures, and teachers receive training during the summer on *Love & Logic*, which focuses on implementing logical consequences. For those students who require additional behavioral support, small-group support is offered. Restorative conversations are utilized as an alternative to suspension, and as a result, the school's suspension rate was 3% in the 2016-2017 school year. Student behavior is tracked through *Jupiter*, which allows teachers and school leaders to identify students who may need additional support.

The school appears to maintain a safe environment, free of harassment and discrimination. While on site, classrooms appeared safe and well-managed, and most classrooms were free from disruption. The school has a DASA coordinator in place. The NYSED 2017 teacher survey indicated that 45% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the school is generally free of bullying, discrimination, and harassment, and teacher comments indicated that various approaches are used to address these issues, including restorative circles, ally week, anti-bullying week, *Love & Logic*, and formal protocols for teachers.

#### Family Engagement and Communication

Unity Prep uses multiple forms of family engagement and communication. Communication and engagement practices include the following:

- All personnel listed in the school's organizational chart may be reached by phone by calling the school, or they may be reached by email any time on weekdays between 7:30 am and 7 pm by phone;
- A communication folder sent home with students each night;
- Weekly Scholarship & Citizen (S&C) Reports, which include class grades and details on Core Value(s) earned in the prior week. Should students incur disciplinary infractions, a report including consequences is also included;
- Monthly School Calendars;
- Announcements regarding upcoming tests and projects;
- Family & Community Partnership Association (FCPA) updates;
- Family/Advisor Conferences between a student's parent/guardian(s) and their advisor, held twice per year;
- Family & Community Partnership Association, which provides parents opportunities to volunteer at the school and participate in other events;
- Principal Coffee Hours, which are held monthly with parents as an opportunity to discuss and learn from parents;
- In-person meetings with teachers, or observations of their children's classes;
- Roundtable presentations at the close of the school year;
- Providing academic and behavioral information to parents through *Jupiter* (the school's student portal); and
- The school's website.

Family concerns are systematically addressed through a five-step process, which involves first meeting with the staff member involved, leading to filing a complaint with Unity Prep board as the final step in the process.

The 2017 NYCDoe School Quality Survey revealed high levels of parent satisfaction. Ninety-seven percent of parents agreed or strongly agreed that school leaders encourage feedback, and 94% agree or strongly agreed that school leaders are strongly committed to shared decision making. Additionally, interviewed parents expressed satisfaction with family engagement and communication.

Academic data is shared with parents throughout the school year in various forms. Students' grades are shared with parents weekly, either through *Jupiter* or through "Scholarship & Citizenship Reports," which are distributed as hard copies. NYS assessment results are shared at curriculum night, and individual scores are provided to parents via mail and during parent-teacher conferences.

#### Social-Emotional Supports

Unity Prep has four full-time counselors on staff to support students' social-emotional needs. School leaders collect and use data to track the social-emotional needs of students using the system of PBIS, core value shout-outs, Weekly Scholarship & Citizen (S&C) Reports, Advisory and YES!. Small-group advisory is also offered to students who benefit from additional support.

Teachers track data around students' social-emotional health and behavior through *Jupiter*, and this data is used to identify students in need of support. A Google form is also used to refer students for counseling services. Counselors monitor the needs of identified students and meet with these students regularly to support their needs. Unity Prep also tracks attendance trends, and counselors devise interventions for students who have attendance rates below 90%.

## Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

### Finding: Meets

#### 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.
- Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements.

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

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

##### Financial Condition

Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

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

##### Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department’s Office of Audit Services. 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 strong financial health. Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.4. The table below shows the school’s composite scores from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016.

**Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s Composite Scores  
2013-2014 to 2015-2016**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	2.4
2014-2015	2.5
2013-2014	2.2

*Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services*

**Near-Term Indicators**

Near-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of the school. The Charter School Office uses three measures:

The *current ratio* is a financial ratio that measures whether or not a charter school has enough resources to pay its debts over the next 12 months. The ratio is mainly used to give an idea of the school's ability to pay back its short-term liabilities (debt and payables) with its short-term assets (cash, inventory, receivables). The higher the current ratio, the more capable the school is of paying its obligations, with a ratio under 1.0 indicating concern. For 2015-2016, Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn had a current ratio of 3.8.

*Unrestricted cash* measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Charter schools typically strive to maintain at least 90 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2015-2016, Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn operated with 59 days of unrestricted cash.

*Enrollment stability* measures whether or not a charter school is meeting its enrollment projections, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Actual enrollment that is over 85 percent is considered reasonable. Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s enrollment stability for 2015-2016 was at 85 percent.

**Long-Term Indicators**

A charter school’s *debt to asset ratio* measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. It is calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets. A ratio of 0.9 or less meets a standard of low risk. For 2015-2016, Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s debt to asset ratio was 0.2.

*Total margin* measures the deficit or surplus a charter school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Total margin is calculated as net income divided by total revenue. A total margin that is positive indicates low risk. For 2015-2016, Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn’s total margin was 5 percent.

### **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.*

#### **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 Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn's 2015-2016 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.

## 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: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Board Oversight and Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.</li><li>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.</li><li>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.</li><li>d. The board regularly updates school policies.</li><li>e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers.</li><li>f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.</li></ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

The board is comprised of 11 members, and seven of those members have been on the board for the duration of the charter term. One member left the board this charter term, and five new members were added. Board member backgrounds include education, finance, law, real estate, and technology.

School leadership created an action plan, focused on achieving academic performance goals, as required by NYSED as part of its corrective action plan. Over the course of the 2016-2017 school year, the board monitored the school’s progress in achieving its goals and benchmarks. Progress was assessed and discussed formally at all monthly meetings both at the committee level and full-board level. The corrective action plan was lifted at the close of the 2016-2017 school year, due to sufficient progress on goals.

In the 2017-2018 school year, the board and head of school continue to engage in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school’s mission and educational philosophy. The head of school created a detailed strategic action plan, which outlines specific goals for this school year—focused on 19 goals, including student academic proficiency, literacy, progress toward high school graduation and postsecondary preparation, special education compliance, culture and discipline, among others. The student learning committee—in collaboration with the head of school—create monthly update dashboards on each of these goals, which are then shared with the full board at each monthly board meeting.

School leadership and the board have also been devising a long-term strategic plan that extends beyond the date on which the school will reach full capacity as a Grade 6-12 school. Part of this plan

included non-material revisions to the school's charter, including its target enrollment, its schoolwide goals and benchmarks, and its graduation requirements. The board actively monitors the development and implementations of this long-term strategic plan.

The board oversees charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals through its committee structure. Academics are monitored through the board's student learning committee, comprised of four school leaders, and the board receives monthly updates on the school's academic performance. The audit and finance committee meet monthly with the head of school and director of operations to report on where the school stands in regard to its budget and fiscal goals and to periodically review the budget for the subsequent year. This committee also meets annually with the school's external auditors.

The board evaluates itself through a formal self-evaluation each year, where each member assesses the board's relative strengths and weaknesses. The board has been recently trained in topics including financing, SED's Charter School Performance Framework, special education law in New York state, charter renewal, and fundraising and development.

The head of school's performance is evaluated annually using a 360-review process, which includes anonymous feedback from faculty and the board, attainment of individual goals, and the performance of the school in achieving academic and non-academic goals. Each year, following the creation of the school's overall goals, the head of school develops individual goals, which are then approved by the board and tracked throughout the school year.

The board periodically updates school policies by reviewing them for compliance with applicable law, best practices and overall sufficiency. Revisions are shared with legal counsel for review and input, and where appropriate the board considers and approves changes. Legal compliance is maintained through seeking legal counsel whenever concerns arise. At the time of the May 2017 check-in visit, the school was working with the NYSED SEQA Office to ensure timely transmission of IEP files for students at the school. At the 2017 renewal site visit, this situation had been remedied.



**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.*

**Finding: Meets**

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>School Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school.</li> <li>d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</li> </ul>
2. <i>Professional Climate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.</li> <li>b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers.</li> <li>c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students’ needs.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.</li> </ul>
3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i> <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider.</li> <li>b. Changes in the school’s charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</li> <li>c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.</li> </ul>

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:**

School Leadership

The school has a defined leadership team with clear roles and responsibilities. The educational leadership team is comprised of the head of school, chief of staff, principals, director of support services, social works and counselors, the ELL coordinator, and the director of operations.

Unity Prep’s leadership has adopted annual goals focused directly on student learning that are aligned to the school’s mission and vision. These goals allow the school to gauge success and make informed decisions throughout the school year.

Unity Prep’s staff communication systems include disseminating the student and family handbook, sharing the curricular calendar, holding regular grade-level and department meetings with staff members, and an annual institute with staff. The leadership team also frequently observes classrooms to offer formal and informal feedback.

Teachers at Unity Prep are primarily recruited through listings in newspapers and online career sites, contacting alumni and career service offices of graduate programs, contacting professional associations, and attending hiring and teacher recruitment fairs. For recruitment purposes only, Unity Prep also partners with graduate schools of education, including Teachers College and RELAY, as well as with Teach For America’s alumni network.

The school’s hiring process includes resume screening, review of lesson plans, interviews, and a demo lesson. Unity Prep employees are expected to follow rules of conduct that protect the interests and safety of all employees and the organization. All Unity Prep employees are employed “at-will,” and may be terminated with or without cause or notice and are not guaranteed employment for any length of time. The school reserves the right to change the organizational structure of the school and eliminate jobs or job classifications when necessary

All staff positions were filled at the time of the site visit. Over the course of the charter term, 28 teachers left the school, and 17, or 38%, of those teachers left in the 2016-2017 school year. Of the 17 teachers who left the school, four were removed. Teacher retention has fluctuated, and the school leadership team and board acknowledge this challenge and are researching initiatives to improve retention over time. The school’s explanation for this significant turnover includes burnout, a long day, and life circumstances, such as moving.

While Unity Prep has experienced significant turnover in the last year, leadership is working to retain effective teachers through decreasing administrative responsibilities and other responsibilities outside of the classroom, increasing planning time and creating a schedule that feels sustainable for teachers, providing strong professional development so that teachers feel successful, and continuing to provide career ladder opportunities. Unity Prep also encourages experienced, proven teachers to serve as department heads, grade leaders, members of the hiring committee, coaches, or curriculum developers.

#### Professional Climate

Teacher collaboration at Unity Prep includes weekly planning meetings with teacher teams and coaches, weekly department meetings, weekly grade-level meetings, monthly meetings with reading interventionists and teachers, and data analysis meetings which happen quarterly. Opportunities to observe other teachers and collaborate on lesson plans are also built into teachers’ schedules. Ninety-six percent of teachers surveyed by NYSED agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “Faculty members frequently collaborate on matters of curriculum and instruction.”

The effectiveness of professional development initiatives is monitored using student performance and teacher data. Through feedback surveys, observations, self-assessment instruments and analysis of teacher evaluation records, instructional leaders analyze how the professional development programs

have improved teacher and student practices. Unity Prep uses qualitative and quantitative assessment data to determine if a given professional development program is effective in promoting student learning. When student assessment results improve notably after focused professional development sessions, the program is considered effective. Ineffective aspects of the professional development system are improved upon or eliminated.

Instructional quality is monitored through the annual teacher performance review (APR) teacher evaluation process, which evaluates teachers across seven instructional domains using the Marshall rubric. Supervisors make unannounced classroom visits, hold frequent coaching conversations to debrief visits, examine assessment data, observe teachers in team meetings, and review student data as part of the evaluation process. New teachers complete a self-assessment, and then are formally evaluated in the winter, spring, and in June, while returning teachers complete a self-assessment and are formally evaluated in the winter and in June. After compiling and analyzing teacher data across the seven domains, evaluators provide ratings. These ratings are then used to determine whether a teachers' employment agreement is renewed.

Teacher feedback is solicited in the following ways:

- Feedback formally offered annually to the school's operation team regarding quality of its services in its promotion of student learning;
- Teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback to instructional coaches;
- Using a "parking lot" after staff meetings, where staff can post questions or concerns;
- Exit surveys;
- Formal discussions during the annual performance review cycle;
- Feedback through end-of-year reflective team exercises in which highlights, challenges, and potential solutions to challenges are identified, shared, and discussed;
- Feedback by interviewing focus groups of teachers at the mid-year point to gauge the "teacher experience" at Unity Prep;
- A mid-year teacher survey;
- Feedback in response to professional development offerings;
- Feedback through quality improvement team sessions, which are initiated by any faculty regarding an area of the school in which there is an interest in rethinking practices and policies that bring about improvements; and
- Feedback provided by the NYCDoE's School Quality Survey.

#### Contractual Relationships

The school operates independently of any management organization since it opened in 2013.

## 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

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>Mission and Key Design Elements</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.</li><li>b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.</li></ol>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

Unity Prep stakeholders appear have a clear sense of the school's mission, which is to empower students as scholars and citizens so they may lead fulfilling academic, personal, and professional lives. The NYSED teacher survey revealed that 80% of teachers feel that the school has a clear sense of a mission that is shared by all stakeholders.

The school has implemented the majority of key design elements in the approved charter. The following key design elements were observed in practice and/or discussed while on site:

- A Grade 6-12 college preparatory curriculum;
- A focus on expert teaching and advancement;
- More time for learning/attention to how time is utilized;
- Intensive and differentiated academic support;
- Enrichment courses and elective clubs;
- A positive and supportive school culture; and
- Active community involvement.

### 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: Meets

<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>

**Table 5: Student Demographics – Unity Prep Charter School Compared to District of Location**

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District
2014-2015	24%	23%	+1	6%	7%	-1	79%	76%	+3
2015-2016	25%	26%	-1	5%	8%	-3	79%	74%	+5
2016-2017	22%	19%	+3	5%	6%	-1	83%	71%	+12
2017-2018	25%	16%	+9	7%	8%	-1	80%	73%	+7

**Table 6: Retention – Aggregate and Subgroups**

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District	Unity Preparatory CS of Brooklyn	NYC CSD 13	Differential to District
2015-2016	89%	90%	-1	89%	88%	+1	93%	90%	+3	89%	90%	-1
2016-2017	79%	65%	+14	81%	65%	+16	69%	68%	+1	82%	67%	+15
2017-2018	78%	80%	-2	78%	73%	+5	79%	75%	+4	80%	81%	-1

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:**

Unity Prep’s approved enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year is 640 students, and the school currently serves 471 students, which is at 74% of its contracted enrollment, not the required 85% threshold.

Unity Prep met or exceeded the enrollment plan set for in its charter in the 2017-2018 school year, when it comes to special student categories. The school enrolls a higher proportion of economically disadvantaged (ED) students and SWDs, and the same proportion of ELLs.

The school has made good faith efforts to recruit, serve, and retain at-risk students throughout the course of the charter term. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the ED, ELL, and SWD populations include the following:

- Open house events, held monthly;
- Attending DOE school fairs;
- Outreach to all elementary schools in CSDs 13 and 16;
- Outreach to community organizations and summer programs;
- Media advertisements;
- Participation in the NYC common application;
- In-person canvassing; and
- Posting information on Unity Prep’s website.

## Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

### Finding: Meets

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
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:

The school has complied with most state and federal laws the provisions of its charter. Board membership includes attorneys who are aware of applicable legal and compliance obligations.

Unity Prep received a formal, anonymous complaint in the fall of 2015, alleging that Unity Prep was not in compliance in serving some of its students with special needs. The complaint was brought to the attention of school leadership and the board, and discussed with representatives of NYSED. The school has worked with NYSED's Special Education Quality Assurance Office (SEQA), in collaboration with the Committee on Special Education (CSE), to take corrective steps to ensure compliance with legal requirements in serving SWDs. This issue has been remedied.

Unity Prep ensures safety through security guards at both campuses. The school's director of operations ensures handicap accessibility and attends to other issues related to health and safety.

In December 2016, the school submitted a request to the NYSED CSO to make three revisions to its charter. All three were determined as non-material and were approved by the NYSED CSO on January 20, 2017. The three revisions include:

- A change in the school's targeted enrollment (altering yearly enrollment, not maximum);
- Updates to the school's annual goals; and
- Updates to the school's graduation requirements.