



# New York State Education Department

## *Renewal Site Visit Report 2017-2018*

### **New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III**

**Visit Date: November 29-30, 2017  
Date of Report: June 28, 2018**

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# SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

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

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III (HUM III)
<b>Board Chair</b>	Lior Evan
<b>District of Location</b>	NYC CSD 22
<b>Opening Date</b>	August 2013
<b>Charter Term</b>	Initial Charter Term: July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2018
<b>Proposed Renewal Term</b>	July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2023
<b>Authorized Grades/Maximum Authorized Enrollment</b>	Grades 9-12/ 600 students
<b>Management Company</b>	New Visions for Public Schools
<b>Educational Partners</b>	Lincoln Center Education
<b>Facilities</b>	3000 Avenue X, Brooklyn, NY (NYC DOE Co-located Space)
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<p><i>HUM III is part of the New Visions charter school network. New Visions charter schools provide all students, regardless of their previous academic history, the highest quality education in an atmosphere of respect, responsibility, and rigor. New Visions schools ensure that graduates have the skills and content knowledge necessary to succeed in post-secondary choices by engaging students, teachers, and administrators in learning experiences that allow risk-taking, embrace multiple attempts at learning, cultivate students' imaginative and creative abilities, and celebrate achievement. Through an intensive study of English, history and art concepts, students learn how to generate research questions, develop the skills necessary to answer those questions, create products that demonstrate understanding, and defend their knowledge publicly.</i></p> <p><i>The objective is to create a school of the highest academic standards that prepares and supports students to graduate ready for college, career, and a 21st century economy. We want our students to be challenged and will shift the dynamics from one where students receive information to one where they find solutions to problems using their imagination coupled with their mastery of content and skills. We will use a curriculum that is aligned to the New York State Learning Standards and is constantly informed by student performance data.</i></p>

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

<p><b>Key Design Elements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Framework: Capacities for Imaginative Thinking</li> <li>• System of assessment and continuous assessment of data</li> <li>• Aligned goal setting focused on student need</li> <li>• Team teaching</li> <li>• Extended day and Saturday classes</li> <li>• Additional math and reading specialists on staff</li> <li>• Challenge-based curriculum and Anchor Projects</li> <li>• Cascade of writing</li> <li>• Remediation and Acceleration</li> <li>• Adult inquiry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Revision History</b></p>	<p>October 20, 2015 – non-material revision to add a lottery preference for the children of school employees approved by NYSED</p>
<p><b>Requested Revisions</b></p>	<p><i>To decrease its maximum authorized enrollment from 600 to 470 students in the renewal charter term</i></p>

**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>	Grade 9	Grades 9 - 10	Grades 9 -11	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	125	249	397	542	600

#### 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 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	355	385	440	470	470

## METHODOLOGY

A one and one-half day renewal site visit was conducted at New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III on November 29-30, 2017. The CSO team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, and parents of enrolled students. In cooperation with school leadership, the NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted 12 classroom observations in Grades 9-12. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the principal and/or an assistant principal.

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 plan, if applicable)**
- **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**
- **School-conducted surveys of teachers, parents, and/or students, and/or NYC DOE surveys**
- **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 11/29/17 to 11/30/17 at HUM III, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

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

<b>Performance Benchmark</b>		<b>Level</b>
<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).	Approaches
	<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.	Meets
	<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.	Meets
<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.	Meets
	<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.	Meets
	<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.	Meets
	<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.	Meets
<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.	Meets
	<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.	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance:</b> The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches



## Summary of Findings

In its initial charter term, New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III (HUM III) made progress toward meeting its academic goals but did not reach the Board of Regents' standard for student performance. The school posted an 82% graduation rate for its 2013 Cohort, thereby exceeding the 80% performance target with its first graduating class. While HUM III awarded a higher percentage of Regents Diplomas compared to similar schools, it posted a lower rate for Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation. HUM III posted mixed results with regard to the performance of students in three priority populations. The graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students was strong (84%), but students with disabilities showed a lower four-year graduation rate (71%) than the school's aggregate student population. HUM III enrolled too few English language learners to report results for this subgroup of students. School leaders expressed confidence that the four-year graduation rate for the 2014 Cohort will also exceed the performance target while noting that 81% of students in the cohort were on-track to graduate in 2018 as of the date of the renewal visit. Leaders also described plans to increase the rigor of the instructional program to ensure more students demonstrate college readiness.

HUM III's instructional staff share a common understanding of high quality instruction. Teachers continually use formative assessments to adjust instructional plans and conference frequently one-on-one with students during classes. Though behavior management was noted as an area of growth for the school early in the charter term, the renewal visit team found no evidence that this remains an issue. Rather, interactions between teachers and students were consistently positive and respectful.

The school environment reflects HUM III's ELITE core values of Excellence, Leadership, Independence, Thoughtfulness, and Empowerment. Excellence and independence are foundational aspects of the school's college readiness classes. One example of the school's commitment to empowering teachers and students is its electives program, which includes teacher-designed courses such as *The Golden Era of Hip Hop* and *American History through Film*.

HUM III has conducted good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets for subgroup populations throughout the charter term. It has, however, encountered challenges with the recruitment of students in general, which has prompted the school to request a decrease in the authorized maximum enrollment for the next charter term.

## 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:

With its first graduating class in 2017, HUM III exceeded the Benchmark 1 (3.a.i) performance target with a four-year graduation rate of 82%. In contrast, the school's annual Regents outcomes for 2016-2017 have fallen short of the Board of Regents performance standard, ranging from one to 70 percentage points below the state average. HUM III's 2016-2017 Regents exam outcomes showed an overall downward trend. The four-year Regents outcome for the 2013 Cohort equaled that of the state average for math (85%) and was just two percentage points lower than the state average of 85% for English language arts (ELA). However, the school did not meet the performance target for science, (10 percentage points below the state average of 84%), Global History and Geography (12 percentage points below the state average of 78%), or U.S. History and Government (15 percentage points below the state average of 81%). During the renewal visit, school leaders confirmed information submitted with the renewal application regarding ongoing efforts to improve Regents exam performance. To address initial results, the school put in place daily reading and math intervention labs for all students. Later efforts included making revisions to curricula as well as changes in teaching assignments. School leaders also pointed to the practice of encouraging students to take Regents exams as early as possible, thereby ensuring sufficient opportunities for student improvement, as a contributor to lower first-time pass rates.

HUM III is working with the school's network to reduce the barriers that have traditionally limited access to challenging curriculum for targeted subgroup populations and to address the subsequent gap in student outcomes. While the graduation rate for economically disadvantaged (ED) students exceeded that of the school overall by two percentage points, the four-year graduation rate for students receiving special education services was 11 percentage points lower at 71% for the 2013 Cohort. School leaders expressed confidence that embedding the Equal Access for All Learners (EAAL) framework being developed at the network level will have significant positive impact on the day-to-day classroom experiences of students with disabilities (SWDs) as well as high school outcomes. The school enrolled too few English language learners (ELLs) to report targeted subgroup data for the 2013 Cohort. However, leaders reported their expectation that embedding the EAAL framework throughout the curriculum will also improve outcomes for ELLs and students struggling academically.

Although not part of the Performance Framework, the school reports promising early indicator data regarding four-year outcomes for students in its 2014 Cohort. The renewal application notes that the percentage of students in this cohort identified as on-track to graduate<sup>2</sup> exceeds that of the 2013 Cohort at the same checkpoint (81% vs 71%). The reported subgroup on-track percentages are similarly higher for the 2014 Cohort than their 2013 peers. The renewal application asserted that 84% of ED students and 64% of SWDs were on track to graduate entering their fourth year of high school.

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<sup>2</sup> "On-track to graduate" is defined as passing three or more Regents exams with a score of at least 65 by the end of the third year of high school.

## Indicator 1: All Schools

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

HUM III is *In Good Standing* according to the state's ESEA accountability criteria.

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

In its renewal application, HUM III compared its performance to that of similar schools identified by the CSO.<sup>3</sup> The school's graduation rate of 82% was substantially higher than that of similar schools used in the analysis (66%). Seventy-one percent of the diplomas HUM III awarded were Regents Diplomas, 20 percentage points higher than similar schools. However, the school awarded a lower percentage of Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation (2%) than did similar schools (9%). HUM III also awarded a higher percentage of Local Diplomas than similar schools (9% vs 5%).

HUM III's aggregate four-year Regents outcomes for its 2013 Cohort were mixed. Its ELA pass rate of 83% exceeded the 2012 Cohort pass rate of 81% for similar schools. In math, the school performed better than similar schools with an 85% pass rate compared to 82%. The school underperformed similar schools by four percentage points in both science and Global History and Geography. HUM III posted a 74% pass rate for science and 66% for Global History and Geography. The school showed a larger deficit in U.S. History with a 66% pass rate compared to 73% at similar schools. The renewal application attributes HUM III's lower pass rates, in part, to school and network leaders' decision to graduate more students with the 4+1 option.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Because 2016-2017 data was not available at the time, the comparisons use 2015-2016 data for the group of similar schools.

<sup>4</sup> The 4+1 option allows students to substitute a second Regents social studies exam with one aligned to their focused course of study (e.g., science or math) or meet the requirements of a Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Commence Credential. With this option, students must still pass Regents exams in ELA, math, and science.

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

3.a.i. Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate Annual Regents Outcomes: See Table 1.

Table 1: Annual Regents Outcomes – Aggregate

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	0%	60%	-60	0%	55%	-55	33%	34%	-1
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	13%	62%	-49	39%	72%	-33	23%	74%	-51
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	16%	80%	-64
English Language Arts (Common Core)	-	N/A	N/A	88%	87%	+1	72%	84%	-12
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	20%	64%	-44	7%	64%	-57
Geometry (>65)	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	NA
Global History and Geography (>65)	47%	67%	-20	44%	68%	-24	46%	68%	-22
Integrated Algebra (>65)	60%	62%	-2	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	65%	77%	-12	54%	78%	-24	40%	74%	-34
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	21%	76%	-55	4%	74%	-70
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	10%	72%	-62	0%	71%	-71	7%	69%	-62
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	85%	82%	+3	35%	81%	-46

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "\*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

3.a.ii. Regents Testing Outcomes – Subgroup Annual Regents Outcomes: See Tables 2-3.

Table 2: Annual Regents Outcomes – Students with Disabilities

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	13%	27%	-14	39%	41%	-2	11%	46%	-35
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
English Language Arts (Common Core)	-	N/A	N/A	88%	61%	+27	48%	57%	-9
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	20%	28%	-8	11%	31%	-20
Geometry (>65)	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	47%	34%	+13	44%	36%	+8	21%	37%	-16
Integrated Algebra (>65)	60%	39%	+21	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	65%	46%	+19	54%	48%	+6	16%	44%	-28
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	13%	50%	-37
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	10%	42%	-32	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	85%	54%	+31	18%	54%	-36

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "\*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

Table 3: Annual Regents Outcomes – Economically Disadvantaged

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	0%	48%	-48	0%	45%	-45	33%	29%	+4
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	12%	49%	-37	43%	62%	-19	24%	67%	-43
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	14%	70%	-56
English Language Arts (Common Core)	-	N/A	N/A	88%	80%	+8	72%	77%	-5
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	17%	47%	-30	6%	50%	-44
Geometry (>65)	*	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	45%	56%	-11	43%	57%	-14	46%	58%	-12
Integrated Algebra (>65)	64%	58%	+6	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	65%	68%	-3	56%	69%	-13	41%	64%	-23
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	29%	63%	-34	0%	61%	-61
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	10%	59%	-49	0%	57%	-57	8%	55%	-47
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	84%	74%	+10	37%	73%	-36

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "\*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

3.a.iii. High School Outcomes – Aggregate Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Table 4.

Table 4: High School 4-Year Cohort Outcomes for All Students: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: All Students	2013 Cohort		
	Subject	School	State
ELA	83%	85%	-2
Global History & Geography	66%	78%	-12
Math	85%	85%	0
Science	74%	84%	-10
US History & Government	66%	81%	-15

3.a.iv. High School Outcomes – Subgroup Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Tables 5-7.

Table 5: High School 4-Year Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – Students with Disabilities: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: Students with Disabilities	2013 Cohort		
	Subject	School	State
ELA	35%	54%	-19
Global History & Geography	12%	40%	-28
Math	53%	49%	+4
Science	29%	50%	-21
US History & Government	18%	48%	-30

Table 6\*: High School 4-Year Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – English Language Learners: School and NYS Level Aggregates (\*All relevant data for this subgroup is suppressed.)

Table 7: High School 4-Year Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – Economically Disadvantaged Students: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: Economically Disadvantaged	2013 Cohort		
	Subject	School	State
ELA	81%	80%	+1
Global History & Geography	69%	70%	-1
Math	87%	80%	+7
Science	76%	78%	-2
US History & Government	67%	74%	-7

3.b.i. & ii. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Cohort Graduation Rates: See Table 8.

Table 8: High School Total 4-Year Graduation Rates: School and Target Level Aggregates

Student Population	2013 Cohort		
	School	Variance	State Target
All	82%	+2	80%
Students with Disabilities	71%	-9	80%
English Language Learners	*	N/A	80%
Economically Disadvantaged	84%	+4	80%

“\*” indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for the exam to report assessment data.



## 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: Meets

<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

HUM III has been in a continual process of review and revision of its curricula throughout the charter term. The school's CMO provides teachers with foundational materials such as scope and sequence documents and unit plans that detail student performance expectations. Though New Visions for Public Schools provides additional supporting materials such as relevant texts and sample student activities, teachers modify the network-created materials in order to meet the needs of HUM III students. Instructional plans provided during the renewal visit reflected teachers' efforts to differentiate content and activities such

that all students have opportunities to master course skills and concepts. In classroom observations, the CSO site visit team also noted frequent writing assignments across curricula.

School leaders reported a continual process of review and revision of instructional materials to ensure alignment with state learning standards. Leaders noted that thrice-monthly department team meetings facilitated by APs ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of curricula. Additionally, school leaders confirmed information included in the renewal application regarding ongoing efforts to ensure that the school's curricular materials are appropriate for students with special needs. According to the renewal application, the EAAL framework "aims to reduce curricular and instructional barriers, normalize learner difference, presume competence, and be culturally responsive" in order to facilitate full access to materials and participation in classroom activities.

### Instruction

HUM III teachers appeared to hold a common understanding of high-quality instruction and used instructional practices that aligned with that understanding. Consistent with the expectations for all teachers described by school leaders, instruction observed during the renewal visit consistently followed a gradual release of responsibility model. Teachers posed higher-order thinking questions to catalyze rich peer-to-peer discussions. Some teachers were deliberate about engaging students in assignments by allowing a lot of individual decision-making. For example, the directions for a creative writing assignment required inclusion of a limited number of core elements related to previous works studied, but each student determined the major theme, style, setting, and voice for his/her story.

### Assessment and Program Evaluation

HUM III implements a balanced system of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to improve teaching and learning. To assess students' reading proficiency, the school administers the Performance Series test to all 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students three times each year. Results of these assessments are used to make student- and grade-level programming decisions. Each student's results determine placement in literacy intervention classes, and aggregate results inform instructional planning. Teachers also use the results of frequent formative assessments such as Do Nows and exit tickets to adjust instructional plans. During the renewal visit, school leaders reported a change in the school's summative assessment practices introduced in the current year. Rather than rely on network-created assessments for courses that culminate with a Regents exam, teachers will create their own.

### Supports for Diverse Learners

HUM III implements and monitors the effectiveness of multiple research-based interventions to ensure diverse learners have full access to all programming. Like other network schools, it utilizes a multi-tiered Response to Intervention (RtI) framework to address the full continuum of students' academic needs. According to the renewal application, the RtI process begins with a review of Performance Series literacy and numeracy data as well as incoming students' 8<sup>th</sup> grade state testing results. The school then assigns students to tiered literacy intervention classes. HUM III uses a variety of scripted commercial products such as Wilson Just Words and Read 180 in these intervention classes.

HUM III supports students requiring special education services in integrated co-teaching (ICT) classrooms for core academic subjects. School leaders reported that each ICT pair created "forming agreements" at the start of the school year as a tool to encourage meaningful collaboration and monitor progress. Each pair's agreement includes expectations for conducting observations of other ICT classrooms for ongoing

development. As noted previously, the school is in the process of adopting the network’s EAAL framework as it continues to strengthen supports for students with disabilities. Additionally, three special education teacher residents work with mentor teachers throughout the school year to build deep understanding of students’ special needs and strengthen the school’s talent pipeline.

The school utilizes a stand-alone English as a New Language (ENL) program to support students in achieving proficiency on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Leaders reported assigning ELLs to class sections with co-teachers as an additional support.

HUM III also offers a number of enrichment opportunities including Advanced Placement (AP) and College Now courses. According to the renewal application, approximately 80% of students in the 2013 Cohort enrolled in at least one AP class prior to graduation.

All teachers receive ongoing professional development focused on meeting the needs of diverse learners throughout HUM III 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**

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

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:**

Behavior Management and Safety

During the school’s mid-term site visit in April 2016, observers witnessed multiple instances during which a student’s disruptive behavior during instruction impeded upon others’ learning. This was not the case during the renewal visit. Rather, the renewal visit team found classroom environments consistently respectful and conducive to effective teaching and learning.

HUM III’s new leadership spoke of systematic efforts to ensure that all teachers have the skills and competencies necessary to maintain classroom environments focused on academic achievement. Among those efforts was a series of differentiated training sessions during summer professional development. Leaders reported that the school provided “crash courses” focused on different aspects of effective management that teachers could select based on their area of need. Additionally, teachers strong in classroom management demonstrated a variety of proactive teacher moves effective in preventing disruptions. Leaders stated that teachers now have a repository of techniques fitting with various

pedagogical styles, which they believe has been particularly helpful for the significant proportion of teachers with three or fewer years of classroom experience.

The school has also made significant personnel investments reflecting how leaders have prioritized improving the HUM III climate. The school's deans maintain a constant presence in the hallways and cultivate positive relationships with students. At the time of the renewal visit, the ratio of staff to students was 2:5 (54 adults to 332 students), making it more likely than in larger schools that at least one adult knows every student well.

#### Family Engagement and Communication

HUM III initiates communications with the families of incoming students during the summer when it distributes its school year and assessment calendars along with a welcome letter. The school maintains frequent communication with all families using a variety of methods including a weekly newsletter and PowerSchool updates. In addition to the weekly school-wide updates, HUM III uses automated calls, flyers, and email to inform families of special events. According to the renewal application, HUM III has codified a clear protocol designed to draw more families in to the school for special events.

During the renewal visit, observers noted the consistently positive communications between all stakeholders.

#### Social-Emotional Supports

The HUM III advisory program served as the central conduit for the social-emotional supports provided to students in the school's first four years of operation. The program design enabled advisors to get to know students well as they worked closely with groups of 10-15 students over four years. School leaders reported during the renewal visit that they chose not to implement an advisory program in the current school year. Instead, each grade has a monthly town hall meeting that focuses on demonstrations of the school's ELITE core values (excellence, leadership, independence, thoughtfulness, and empowerment) as well as college and career readiness. Students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades participate in a college and career readiness class in addition to the monthly town halls. According to school leaders, this course provides opportunities for students to build social-emotional skills in the context of preparing for transitions to college.

HUM III uses data to understand the socio-emotional needs of students. For example, the school's attendance coordinator uses a heat map to monitor absences. The attendance coordinator and a guidance counselor reached out to families to share and gather additional information. School leaders reported that this process led to the revelation of a chronically absent student's school anxiety.

## 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

HUM III appears to be in sound 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. HUM III's composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.8. The table below shows the school's composite scores from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016.

**New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III's Composite Scores  
2013-2014 to 2015-2016**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2013-2014	1.6
2014-2015	2.5
2015-2016	2.8

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, HUM III had a current ratio of 3.5.

*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 HUM III operated with 68 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. HUM III's enrollment stability for 2015-2016 was at 86 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, HUM III's debt to asset ratio was 0.3.

*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, HUM III's total margin was 7 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 HUM III'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 school's board members possess a variety of skills and expertise relevant to school governance that equip them to meet the needs of the school. During the renewal visit, the board reported working with the CMO to identify areas of needed additional capacity prior to recruiting new members. During the previous school year, for example, education and compliance expertise were identified as necessary additions. The school's two newest board members bring those areas of expertise to bear in their ongoing oversight of HUM III.

Although the board has not created a formal strategic plan, it acts purposefully to continually improve the school's programs and operations. Board members expressed a shared commitment to understanding the unique needs of each school it governs. Board members noted that enrollment has been an area of concern. HUM III's low enrollment at the time of the renewal visit was in violation of the charter agreement.

The board regularly reviews robust data that provides a comprehensive view of the academic program, day-to-day operations, and fiscal health. It receives a monthly CMO report that includes information on enrollment and attendance, college readiness, progress toward graduation, finances, and staff vacancies among other metrics. The board also receives monthly reports from each school principal.

The board commissioned a formal performance-based evaluation of its and the CMO's effectiveness conducted by an external vendor during the 2015-2016 school year. Board members and school leaders reported specific changes that resulted from that evaluation process. Among the changes noted was the creation of a network-level special education support team, which is developing the EAAL framework previously noted.

## 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

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
<p>1. <i>School Leadership</i></p>	<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>
<p>2. <i>Professional Climate</i></p>	<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>
<p>3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p>	<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:

#### School Leadership

Though HUM III faced multiple leadership turnovers earlier in the charter term, the team in place at the time of the renewal visit demonstrated strong capacity to further student learning and support the professional development of all teachers. Leaders expressed a shared vision for continued school improvement. Changes made in the current school year reflect thoughtfulness about increasing opportunities for instructional collaboration and soliciting teacher input on programming and operations.

Leaders reported that the recent shortening of the school day for students was a direct result of teacher feedback.

In addition to the principal, two assistant principals (APs) for instruction, and one AP for student support provide instructional leadership with regular observations, assistance with lesson planning and curriculum adjustments, and targeted professional development offerings. Leaders reported ongoing efforts to norm feedback to teachers to establish and maintain a shared understanding of high quality instruction. Leaders' described roles and responsibilities were clearly defined and established distinct lines of accountability.

#### Professional Climate

HUM III strives to maintain a full staff of high quality personnel with the skills and competencies necessary to meet the needs of all students. In addition to regular opportunities for teacher collaboration and ongoing professional development offerings, the school is also working to recruit and retain high quality educators through two network-derived programs. HUM III is participating in the Hunter College-New Visions Charter Residency Program which seeks to attract and train novice teachers who are special education certified by pairing them with high quality content area teachers who act as mentors. HUM III also promotes a master teacher career ladder which recognizes the contributions of effective teachers and offers opportunities for promotion within the school organization.

#### Contractual Relationships

The school's leaders, board, and CMO monitor the efficacy of contracted service providers and partners. With its renewal application, HUM III submitted a proposed management agreement with New Visions for Public Schools. One substantive proposed change is a change in the management fee structure, which would allow the board to determine a fee of 8-10% of per pupil revenue based on an annual assessment of finances and programming. As noted above, the board engaged an external evaluator, Quantum Governance, to assess the effectiveness and value-add of the CMO. The results of this evaluation led to changes in the types and structures of network supports. Additionally, the school continues to partner with Lincoln Center Education.

## 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>	<ul 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></ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

As detailed in other benchmarks, HUM III has integrated the key design elements described in its original charter into its daily programming and has remained faithful to its mission. Although the school recently shortened its daily schedule for students, HUM III continues to provide extended learning opportunities throughout the year, including the additional individualized support of Saturday sessions. Curriculum-embedded performance tasks require students to construct their own knowledge rather than be passive learners. The school has expanded adult inquiry with increased opportunities for teacher collaboration.

### 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>

#### Student Demographics – New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities III Compared to District of Location

	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	New Visions CHS HUM III	NYC CSD 22	Variance	New Visions CHS HUM III	NYC CSD 22	Variance
Students with Disabilities	17%	13%	+4	20%	13%	+7
English Language Learners	3%	10%	-7	3%	9%	-6
Economically Disadvantaged	78%	64%	+14	66%	71%	-5

*Student Retention - 2015-16 (% of Students who remained enrolled in the school)*

	2015-2016		
	New Visions CHS HUM III	NYC CSD 22	Variance
All Students	77%	80%	-3
Students with Disabilities	67%	78%	-11
English Language Learners	100%	72%	+28
Economically Disadvantaged	77%	79%	-2

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:**

Throughout the charter term, HUM III has enrolled a larger percentage of students with disabilities than the local district average. Its proportion of economically disadvantaged students was also higher than the district’s in each of the school’s first three years of operation. In the renewal application, the school attributed the variance between its percentage of economically disadvantaged students and the district’s (66% and 71%, respectively) to a drop in submitted applications for the federal Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program rather than an actual change in student demographics. HUM III has had a lower enrollment rate than the district average for ELLs throughout the charter term and has taken steps to close this gap.

HUM III initiated good faith efforts toward meeting its enrollment and retention targets at the outset of the charter term and continues to employ a variety of methods to attract and retain students from targeted populations. These ongoing recruitment efforts include participating in borough and citywide high school fairs hosted by the NYC DOE; hosting open houses and conducting campus tours for middle school students and guidance counselors; presenting school program information at community events; producing recruitment materials in multiple languages; partnering with social services agencies; and, placing ads in community newspapers such as Caribbean Life and Bay News. Additionally, HUM III worked with the CMO to create the *Serving Our Students: English Language Learners, Students with Individualized Education Plans or Section 504 Plans* brochure, which details the school’s programs and resources for ELLs and students with special needs.

The school has also initiated a relationship with Internationals Network for Public Schools, which operates schools specifically designed to meet the needs of ELLs throughout New York City as well as in other states. One of these schools, International High School at Lafayette, operates in HUM III’s neighboring district. School leaders expressed their belief that this proximity makes the International High School attractive to ELLs who might otherwise choose HUM III. Additionally, board members suggested that some ELL students who would otherwise choose HUM III enroll in one of its co-located schools, Origins High School for Newcomers, due to that school’s specific focus on newly arrived students for whom English is not the native language.

HUM III reported strong retention rates for students in the three priority populations. The school successfully retained 92% of economically disadvantaged students and 95% of students with disabilities

following the first year of operations. Retention rates for both groups of students were lower after its fourth year at 81% and 77%, respectively. The school retained 100% of ELLs in three of its first four years, according to the renewal application.

For the past two years, the school has had low enrollment numbers. At the time of the renewal visit, HUM III reported its enrollment as 332 students, which is 55% of its maximum authorized enrollment of 600 students. The school, along with its CMO, had been operating under the assumption that the maximum authorized enrollment was 566 students, which was the original number requested in the school's charter application. However, the Board of Regents authorized the maximum enrollment of 600 in the school's initial charter in 2012. The school has cited transportation issues and a loss of key personnel at critical recruitment times as factors contributing to low enrollment. Recognizing the need to rectify the discrepancy between actual and maximum authorized enrollment, at the start of the 2017-2018 school year, HUM III hired a new Director of School Operations who has experience in overseeing student recruitment efforts based on previous work with a charter network. The school is also actively seeking a new Student Recruitment and Enrollment Coordinator and working with the New Visions Charter Management Network and the board of trustees in developing new strategies to attract more students and to ameliorate transportation issues. In addition, the school is requesting a revision to decrease its maximum authorized enrollment to 470 students, which it will build in gradually over the next charter term.

## Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

### Finding: Approaches

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>Legal Compliance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li><li>b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.</li><li>c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.</li></ol>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

During its initial charter term, HUM III appears to have operated in general compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter agreement. However, the school did not meet the minimum required enrollment approved in its charter.

At the time of the renewal visit, the school had a vacancy for a special education teacher and was not providing an ICT setting for ELA as mandated by some students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). School leaders reported that a new teacher was scheduled to start with the new semester and affirmed that HUM III would make up the lost IEP-required supports. Also at the time of the renewal visit, HUM III employed multiple uncertified teachers who did not meet any approved exemption categories. Leaders affirmed that they are monitoring the issue and are aware of which teachers have expired certifications or are awaiting reciprocity determinations.