New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report
2019-2020

Urban Choice Charter School

Visit Date: November 19, 2019 – November 20, 2019
Date of Report: January 24, 2020

Charter School Office
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary[1]

Name of Charter School	Urban Choice Charter School
Board Chair	Nelson Blish
District of location	Rochester City School District
Opening Date	Fall 2005
Charter Terms	Initial Term: January 11, 2005-January 10, 2010 First Renewal Term: January 11, 2010-June 30, 2014 Second Renewal Term: July 1, 2014-June 30, 2017 Third Renewal Term: July 1, 2017-June 30, 2020
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	K - Grades 8/400 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment	K - Grades 8/400 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	545 Humboldt Street, Rochester, New York 14610 Private Space
Mission Statement	*To provide Rochester students with a safe, supportive and intellectually challenging environment. The central philosophy is that strong student-teacher relationships are essential to student motivation, engagement and achievement. This philosophy, in combination with authentic efforts at family involvement, and the effective teaching of a rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum will enable students to build a strong foundation for college and career readiness, exceed state achievement standards and defy the demographic challenges of poverty.*
Key Design Elements	• Supportive educational environment; • Rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum aligned to NYS Common Core; • Extended learning opportunities; • Authentic family involvement; • Data-informed instruction; • Focused Professional Development; • Authentic Family Involvement; and, • School culture
Requested Revisions	None

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

Renewal Outcomes

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

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

- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. As discussed above, the Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal, which is consistent with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short-term renewal, a school must either:

  (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1, but at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework which will likely result in the school's being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short-term renewal permits, **or**

  (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1 but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

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

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

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2017 to 2018	Year 2 2018 to 2019	Year 3 2019 to 2020
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Approved Enrollment	400	400	400

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Projected Enrollment Requested by the School[2]

	Year 1 2020 to 2021	Year 2 2021 to 2022	Year 3 2022 to 2023	Year 4 2023 to 2024	Year 5 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Proposed Enrollment	400	400	400	400	400

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[2] This proposed chart was submitted by the Urban Choice Charter School in its renewal application. It is subject to change pending a determination and vote by the Board of Regents.

METHODOLOGY

A two-day renewal site visit was conducted at Urban Choice Charter School on November 19-20, 2019. The New York State Education Department's Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the school leadership team, the members of the board of trustees, and the student success team. A third-grade teacher team meeting was also observed. In cooperation with school leadership, the CSO administered an anonymous online survey to teachers and parents in the spring of 2019.

The team conducted 26 classroom observations in K-Grade 8. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the co-principals, the academic mentor for ELA and SFA and the SFA consultant.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included, but are not limited to, the following:

a. **Current organizational chart** showing all key staff positions, names of staff in those positions, and the school's reporting structure;
b. **A master school schedule** showing each class, grade or course, and teacher(s). Note what days are A, B, C days and which classrooms include English language learners/multilingual learners (ELLs/MLLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs);
c. **A map of the school** showing a basic floor plan, including classroom numbers, teacher names, and offices;
d. **Board materials**;
e. **Narrative describing the process used to evaluate school leadership;**
f. **Narrative describing the process school leadership uses to evaluate teachers;**
g. **Optional: (1) School administered teacher, parent/student surveys (2) NYCDOE School Quality Report results (**;
h. **Narrative describing the school's progress and efforts made toward reaching its enrollment and retention targets;** (
i. **Admissions and Waitlist**;
j. **Faculty/Staff Roster**;
k. **Professional development calendar for 2018-2019, summer 2019, and PD planned for 2019-2020;**
l. **Schedule of teacher meetings;**
m. **Sample dashboard report to the board of trustees;**
n. **Completed evaluation of the head of school;**
o. **Job descriptions for the CEO, director of operations and finance, and dean of students;**
p. **Student performance dat**a for NYS assessments, iReady diagnostic and SFA quarter 1 results; and,
q. **Mid-term site visit report June 2019 and UCCS Annual Reports, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.**

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

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

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

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

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

For the site visit conducted from November 19 to 20, 2019 at Urban Choice Charter School, see the following Performance Framework benchmark ratings and narrative.

New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework Rating

Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	**Benchmark 1: Student Performance:** The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency, and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Approaches
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Approaches
Organizational Soundness	**Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:** The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Falls Far Below
	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.	Approaches
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	**Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:** The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Approaches
	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.	Falls Far Below
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

- The Urban Choice Charter School is in year 15 of operation and serves students in K - Grade 8. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: exceeding 0 benchmarks, meeting 3 benchmarks, approaching 4 benchmarks, and falling far below 3 benchmarks.

- **Areas of Strengths**:
  - Urban Choice Charter School (UCCS) provides a safe and supportive environment built on the efforts of a stable student success team (SST) which implements strategies aimed at building students' skills in reflecting on their challenges and addressing them. The school has established procedures and strategies to ensure appropriate fiscal management and has consulted appropriate advisors to maintain an awareness of and ensure compliance with its legal obligations.

- **Areas in Need of Improvement**:
  - The academic performance of UCCS students remains far below state averages and most students demonstrate increasingly lower proficiency as they progress through the grades. In accordance with ESEA, UCCS was designated a Comprehensive Support and Improvement school (CSI) by NYSED in 2018-2019 due to poor academic performance. Over the charter term, UCCS has adopted several new curricula in succession without providing adequate time and training to allow effective implementation. Coupled with the high rate of teacher turnover during this charter term as well as during prior years, the school has been unable to fulfill the commitment in its mission to provide a rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum for its students.
  - Oversight of the academic program by the board of trustees has been limited by the board's acknowledged lack of understanding of the data reported by school leaders, despite reviewing data at monthly board meetings. The board's strategic plan lists multiple responsibilities assigned to the CEO but lacks appropriate measurable benchmarks and timelines that would allow board members to make informed judgments about the school's performance. Some decisions of the board are inconsistent with the data available to them. The board seems to distance itself from academic and personnel decisions, relying on the CEO to carry out these responsibilities.
  - UCCS has been unable to recruit and retain quality teachers over the charter term. At the time of the renewal site visit, the school had vacancies in several critical academic and operational areas, and new instructional leaders hired for 2019-2020 have yet to establish consistent procedures and practices to ensure adequate support to the novice teaching staff. School leaders have initiated new programs for social-emotional learning, new tools for monitoring student progress, and new programs for behavior management which, along with new curricula in ELA and math, demand intensive training, monitoring, and support not yet in place.
  - Despite repeated notifications of the requirements of its charter and the institution of a corrective action plan (CAP) in 2018-2019, UCCS has failed to improve the enrollment of SWDs or ELLs/MLLs. The school's recruitment strategies have not yielded an increase in enrollment and it has not revised or improved its program offerings to encourage families of SWDs or ELL/MLLs to apply.

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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).

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Finding: Falls Far Below

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School:
- UCCS staffs each K-Grade 5 classroom with a teacher and a teaching assistant. Middle school (Grades 6-8) teachers are grouped into three-person grade level teams consisting of one teacher of social studies and ELA, a math teacher and a science teacher.
- In addition to the four core subjects of ELA, math, science and social studies, students participate in physical education, music, art, health and Spanish classes.
- In 2017-2018, the school adopted *Success for All* (*SFA*) as its core curriculum for ELA. For the 90-minute SFA period students are divided into groups based on their SFA baseline scores and *iReady* assessment level. Teachers of all subjects lead the *SFA* lesson suited to the group's learning needs.
- Over the course of the current charter term, UCCS made two changes in its math curriculum. In 2018, UCCS adopted *Zearn Math* as its core program, replacing the *Engage NY* modules. In 2019, UCCS adopted *Ready Math* to replace *Zearn*. These changes were instituted in response to teacher dissatisfaction, i.e., "not suitable for UCCS students," rather than any well-researched rationale.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities and English language learners:
- UCCS provides consultant teacher services for its 33 SWDs. The school employs three special educators with one current opening for an additional teacher. A part time coordinator is responsible for compliance with special education regulations and serves as a liaison with the Rochester Public Schools (RPS). Monitoring day to day delivery of services is the responsibility of the CEO.
- Although the school serves far fewer ELL/MLL students as compared to RPS (only 4% of UC students are ELLs/MLLs), the school employs one English as a New language (ENL) teacher who both pushes in to classrooms and pulls students out to work with the 14 English language/multilingual learners (ELLs/MLLs) enrolled at the school.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:
- UCCS is designated as a school in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) under the NY ESEA accountability system, as a result of the low level of student proficiency on state assessments. UCCS does not outperform schools serving students in similar grades and with similar demographics.
- Over the course of the charter term, UCCS students have not demonstrated progress toward proficiency on the state tests, with only 30% of students maintaining or moving toward proficiency in ELA and 18% in math, well below the Performance Framework's 75% minimal expectation.
- Over the past five years, UCCS students have demonstrated a gradual but steady decline in ELA proficiency, with only 18% of UCCS students proficient on the 2019 state test. A similar decline is evident in math, with 14% of UCCS students reaching proficiency in 2019. While UCCS students perform slightly above the RPS, that gap is decreasing with UCCS only 5 % above RPS in ELA and 1% above the district in math in 2019. UCCS students perform significantly below the state averages in both math and ELA proficiency. Both the school's mission and the Charter School Performance Framework refer to the state average as an important performance standard to

meet. Over the charter term, UCCS averaged 23 points below the NYS average proficiency in ELA and 28 percentage points below the state in math, with the gap increasing over time. Across the grade levels, student performance declined as students progressed from third grade to eighth grade. Forty percent of UCCS third graders were proficient in ELA in 2016-2017, dropping to 20% in 2017-2018 and reaching only 16% on the 2019 state tests. Similar patterns are shown in Attachment 1, Table 3 for other grades and groups of students. While 11% of the fifth graders in 2015-2016 were proficient in ELA, as sixth graders 7% met the proficiency standard and as seventh graders, none of those UCCS students were proficient in ELA. That group improved to 11% proficient on the 2019 tests.

- Math results are similar to ELA results and patterns show that, for the most part, fewer students in each group meet the state proficiency standard as they move through the grades. Twenty-eight percent of students who were third graders in 2014-2015 were proficient in math, dropping to 15% as fourth graders in 2015-2016, slightly rising to 17% as sixth graders, dropping down to 14% as fifth graders and to 8% as sixth graders in 2019. Eighteen percent of the fourth-grade cohort in 2014-2015 scored proficient, dropping to 13% as fifth graders and down to 5% in sixth grade. In both seventh and eighth grades, none of those students reached the proficiency target on either the 2018 or 2019 state tests.

- In the first two years of the current charter term, UCCS 8th grade students took the Living Environment Regents exam, with 55% passing in 2016-2017 and 39% passing in 2017-2018. The school stopped offering the Living Environment Regents course in 2018-2019.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional academic information.

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.

Finding: Approaches

Element	*Indicators*
1. *Curriculum*	a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSLS.
	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.
	c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.
	d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.
	e. The curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.
2. *Instruction*	a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.
	b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.
3. *Assessment and Program Evaluation*	a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments.
	b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.
	c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program and modifies the program accordingly.
4. *Supports for Diverse Learners*	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.
	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.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

1. **Element:** *Curriculum*:
   - **Indicator a:**
     - During this charter term, UCCS has adopted new curricula in ELA/reading and mathematics and has begun to formalize its teacher-developed elementary science and social studies curricula. In 2017-2018, the school began implementation of the *SFA* curriculum in ELA/ reading and in writing for students in kindergarten through grade 5,

and extended *SFA* to grades 6-8 in 2018-2019. The instructional model employed by the SFA program groups students across grade spans based on reading levels identified by SFA assessments. All school staff deliver the designated lessons according to the instructions provided by *SFA*. Lessons follow a common six-day cycle.

- UCCS made two math curriculum changes this charter term in addition to the ELS/reading curriculum change. These curricular changes are part of a larger pattern of frequent instructional changes. In 2018-2019, the school adopted *Zearn Math* as the core curriculum to replace the *Engage NY* modules. Based on teacher feedback that *Zearn* was not suitable for UCCS students, the school changed to *Ready Math* starting in 2019-2020. It was not clear what criteria were used by the school to determine the inappropriate nature of one curriculum and/or the adoption of the next, except for the non-specific input from staff.
- School leaders reported that both *Ready Math* and *SFA* are aligned with the NYSLS. However, student outcomes on these curriculum assessments differ significantly from the results on state assessments. School leaders identified alignment of *SFA* results with state assessments as a concern. Several board members expressed surprise when this discrepancy was pointed out during the focus group.
- School leaders reported that elementary teachers develop their own science and social studies curricula which are embedded in the ELA and writing lessons. The school recently requested that teachers produce a curriculum scope and sequence document.
- Middle school science teachers have access to the *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Dimensions* program. According to the renewal documents, middle school teachers use the Common Core learning standards to guide their development of social studies lessons. However, there were no references to the Common Core Learning Standards in the middle school social studies lesson plans for the classes observed.

- **Indicator b:**
  - Lesson plans provided to the renewal site visit team did not have a consistent format. ELA/reading lesson plans were linked to the *SFA* program materials and for the most part aligned with the program expectations for the cycle. The sample math lesson plans used the *Ready Math* lesson plan template that includes a preprinted agenda listing teacher actions, questions to prompt teachers' thinking about how to engage students in the lesson, and a column for teacher notes. Writing, science and social students sample lesson plans used a separate UCCS template that includes the "big picture," objectives, differentiation strategies, and the list of lesson activities. The learning objectives on the samples often listed lesson agendas such as writing a paragraph or pronouncing new words rather than making explicit the desired concept or skill students would learn as a result of the lesson activity. Lessons observed by the renewal site visit team paralleled the task focus of the lesson plans, with classroom activities providing little opportunity for students to build conceptual understanding or demonstrate higher order thinking.

- **Indicator c:**
  - Both the *SFA* and *Ready Math* programs are commercially prepared to align horizontally across grade levels and to progress vertically between grades. Observations by the site visit team showed consistent content matter being covered within a grade in writing. School leaders reported they are in the process of documenting science and social studies curricula across the elementary grades to create an orderly progression of topics and build consistency within grade levels.

- **Indicator d:**
  - As observed in practice and in the school's documents, the curriculum at UCCS offers little evidence of school-initiated differentiation except for the general design of the *SFA* program. *SFA* breaks down learning standards into skills and concepts that are delivered to groups of students differentiated by their learning level as determined by *SFA* assessments. School leaders indicated that they also refer to *iReady* diagnostic assessments to group students by ability or learning needs in designating groups for *SFA*. Lesson plans for *Ready Math* reviewed by the site visit team do not identify strategies for differentiating within the classroom. The UCCS lesson plan template includes a space for teachers to list differentiation strategies, but the observed lessons included broad, general strategies such as presenting information in both visual and auditory modes, offering preferential seating or taking frequent breaks. Across the lessons observed, only three instances of students working in small groups with a teacher or teaching assistant were noted, out of alignment with the SFA instructional guidance as well as statements made during the school leaders focus group, where this was described as "best practice." Small group lessons would have allowed the students to cover the content at a slower pace. Student outcomes on both state and internal assessments show that UCCS students struggle to master grade level skills and concepts.
- **Indicator e:**
  - Over the course of the charter term, UCCS has repeatedly implemented comprehensive changes in its ELA/reading and math curricula. School leaders reported that the history of poor performance on state assessments motivated the board to accept the recommendation of the head of school to adopt *SFA* starting in 2017-2018. School leaders confirmed statements in the renewal application that the first math curriculum change in 2018-2019 to *Zearn* was in response to teacher input on the difficulty of the *Engage NY* math modules. The second math curriculum change, in 2019-2020, to *Ready Math*, was also motivated by feedback from teachers according to the focus group interview and the renewal documents. As noted above, the science and social studies curricula are not yet documented and have not been subject to a systematic review or revision.

2. **Element: *Instruction*:**
   - **Indicator a:**
     - According to school leaders, high quality instruction at UCCS should reflect the strategies embedded in the *SFA* program, including cooperative groups, clearly stated learning objectives, brisk, efficient pacing, and frequent, active monitoring of student work. Across the 26 lessons observed by the site visit team, teachers were actively monitoring whether students were completing their assigned tasks. Most teacher questions were procedural, designed to ensure students knew what the task required of them, or which step was next in solving a problem or completing a worksheet. Objectives were stated in terms of the task to be completed, not necessarily the concept or skill to be learned, and pacing varied with some teachers focused on moving through their plan before checking whether students were ready and others pausing the whole group until all were ready. Although students were seated in groups in some classes, only one instance of cooperative group work was noted in which members of the group served different roles to accomplish the task. School leaders indicated that the cooperative group strategy would be seen in classes other than *SFA*, but the renewal site visit team observed only one instance of this instructional strategy.

- **Indicator b:**
  - Student engagement varied across the classes observed by the site visit team. In the elementary classes, students were generally on task, obeying teachers' instructions and completing their work with varying levels of interest. Members of the renewal site visit team noted teaching assistants awarding points or stickers for on-task behavior but only observed one instance of an assistant providing instruction to a small group, one of the tenets of the SFA program. Students in two of the middle school classes were actively engaged in the learning activity and experienced a briskly paced lively lesson. In the other eight middle school classes, students were orderly but passive or distracted. The renewal site visit team learned that two of the middle school classes were being taught by substitute teachers, one due to a short-term absence and the other replacing a teacher who resigned in recent weeks. School leaders accompanying members of the renewal site visit team offered positive comments on teachers' adherence to the S*FA* lesson cycle but raised concerns about classroom management and inadequate student engagement. Most classes observed during the visit were whole class, with teachers providing repeated instructions on the procedures for completing the learning activity. Teachers provided few opportunities for students to demonstrate the concepts or skills from the lesson.

3. **Element:** *Assessment and Program Evaluation*:
   - **Indicator a:**
     - According to renewal documents, UCCS uses a variety of assessments which yield different measures of student academic progress. In 2019-2020, the school replaced the reading and math diagnostic inventories SRI and SMI with iReady, a computerized adaptive diagnostic assessment that adjusts the difficulty level of the test items in response to student answers. The school also administers SFA assessments at the start of the year and every six weeks to track student progress in reading/ELA. In renewal documents and interviews, school leaders claimed that iReady is predictive of student performance on the NYS assessments, but data from iReady provided by the school shows significant variation between the two assessments in identifying which students meet grade level standards. In focus group interviews, school leaders and board members acknowledged that the results from different assessments are inconsistent. The school does not employ a data analyst or data coordinator, although school leaders reported they plan to, but have not yet, due to the need to hire a replacement classroom teacher for a teacher on staff who has data analysis experience.

     - In the renewal documents, the school reports that teachers use exit tickets to monitor whether students have met daily objectives. Exit tickets were mentioned in many of the lesson plans provided to the team, however no instances of teachers using exit tickets related to the day's learning objective were noted by the team.

   - **Indicator b:** UCCS provided a schedule of meetings during which SFA assessment results are examined. The team attended one of the biweekly 30-minute meetings facilitated by the ELA academic mentor and SFA consultant. Teachers discussed the results of the most recent end-of-cycle test and proposed possible explanations for the results, but their conclusions focused on test vocabulary and test taking skills rather than the strengths or gaps in students' understanding of the reading concepts covered by the test. Renewal documents state that teachers use eDoctrina to collect and analyze data and identify trends in student development, however none of the school leaders mentioned eDoctrina as a tool in common

use. School leaders reported that "data chats" to help students take ownership of their own progress are just beginning and only a few staff members have implemented these discussions. The school adopted a new diagnostic assessment, iReady, which creates a computer-based learning plan for each student. iReady data is used primarily by intervention teachers to track progress. The school adopted a new math curriculum for 2019-2020, *Ready Math*. The school hired a math mentor to assist teachers with implementation of the new program, but that person resigned after the start of the school year. The school plans to reassign an experienced teacher already on staff to that role once a replacement for the classroom position is hired. As a result of the vacancy, there is no systematic process in place to examine math data to inform teachers' instructional decisions.

- **Indicator c:** UCCS reports that changes in curriculum over the charter term have been based on teacher feedback, as reported by the school leaders, as well as state testing results showing a decline in the academic performance of UCCS students. The school relies on the SFA academic mentor and co-principals to monitor classroom practices, to be supplemented with observations by the math academic mentor once that position is filled. Teachers receive individual feedback from these school leaders using a newly developed observation checklist. Although this is the third academic year of implementation, the school has not yet established systems to collect the data across the school to determine the effectiveness of the academic program but state that they have plans to do so in the future. In the leadership focus group, members noted that iReady results and state assessment results do not correlate. They also stated that the iReady assessments do not explain where students need to improve on the state assessments. Despite the lack of predictive validity described by the school, the school continues to refer to iReady results as descriptive of student grade level and academic progress and shares that information with the board and families. Without evidence to support this assertion, the school claims that iReady and SFA results demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of its academic program, in contradiction to declining student outcomes on state tests.

4. **Element:** *Supports for Diverse Learners*:
   - **Indicator a:** UCCS documents list four special education teachers hired to serve the 33 SWDs. The school uses a consultant teacher model in which special educators work with students in the classroom and confer with teachers on lesson modifications. However, two of the special educators were serving as substitute classroom teachers at the time of the renewal site visit, one for a long-term vacancy and the other for a short-term absence. It was unclear how services were being provided to the students on the case load of these teachers. Special education service plans are overseen by the CEO, according to staff interviews, with a part time coordinator responsible for the completion of compliance paper work. The school's renewal documents list 17 ELL/MLL students but school staff reported that there are currently 14 students being served by one ENL teacher who uses a combination of push-in and pull-out methods to build language skills. In addition to special education and ENL staff, the school employs three RTI teachers, one for each grade span - K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Documentation and credentials were not provided for the three staff members to determine their qualifications and background. School leaders indicated that RTI sessions are structured around the iReady system which provides computer-based lessons that adapt in difficulty in response to student answers. In two RTI classes observed by the renewal site visit team, students were distracted and/or lethargic while at their computers and demonstrated little interest in completing the assignments with care.

- **Indicator b:** UCCS relies on the student progress features in the iReady system as well as bi-weekly SFA component meetings to facilitate communication about individual student needs among the educational staff. The renewal application explains that RTI and classroom teachers meet informally about students at a minimum monthly. The site visit team was not able to observe this on site. The renewal documents state that eDoctrina will be put into use in 2019-2020 as a data tracking tool and add that teachers will receive detailed instructions in its use. However, the professional development calendar for the five days prior to school opening provided by the school does not include any sessions related to eDoctrina, and the plans for the October 2019 professional development day list a one-hour session focused on the eDoctrina tool. eDoctrina was not mentioned in any of the focus groups conducted for the renewal site visit which aligns with the school's pattern of making but not implementing plans to implement systems and process that might lead to academic gains.

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: | Approaches |

Element	*Indicators*
1. Behavior Management and Safety	a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy. b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment. c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination. d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.
2. Family Engagement and Communication	a. The school communicates with and engages families with the school community. b. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students' strengths and needs. c. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions. d. The school has a systematic process for responding to family or community concerns. e. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.
3. Social-Emotional Supports	a. The school has systems or programs in place to support the social-emotional needs of students. b. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students. c. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

1. Element: ***Behavior Management and Safety:***
   - **Indicator a:**
     - UCCS' behavior management team is led by the dean of students and staffed with two behavior interventionists and a teacher assigned to the Alternative to Suspension (ATS) room. At the time of the renewal site visit, one of the behavior interventionists had recently been terminated, according to the school leadership team. The school was seeking to hire a replacement. The ATS room teacher was on an extended medical absence and the discipline management work was being carried out by contracted consultants from the Center for Youth (CfY) under the direction of the dean.

- The school's behavior management system consists of a five-step progression outlined in the written code of conduct policy starting with actions taken by the classroom teacher aimed at resolving misbehavior and keeping the student in class. Subsequent actions may include a visit to the Help Room where students are guided by the CfY consultants to reflect on their infraction and return to class as soon as possible. Persistent misbehavior may lead to assignment to the ATS room where students will complete their classwork under the supervision of the ATS teacher and confer with the CfY counselor to remedy the misconduct. As reported by the student support staff, out of school suspension is reserved for serious infractions and includes conferences with parents. According to the dashboard report provided to the board of trustees and shared with the renewal site visit team, in September 2019 seven students received out of school suspensions, 14 students were assigned to the ATS, and 105 discipline referrals were submitted. No further details were offered.
- **Indicator b:**
  - Staff responsible for behavior management at UCCS described consistent implementation of the school's code of conduct and regular monitoring of student behavior as the key to maintaining a safe school environment. Renewal site visit team members observed the dean and behavior interventionist engaging with specific students in classrooms and common areas, one of the check-in strategies described during the focus group interview. The counselor and social worker meet regularly with the behavior management staff to coordinate plans to identify and address student needs to ensure a safe school community.
  - Of the 91 parents completing the spring NYSED survey, 90 respondents agreed the school is safe.
- **Indicator c:**
  - The dean of students is the designated DASA coordinator at UCCS and presents workshops for staff during the August professional development sessions. The school adopted the SFA program, *Getting Along Together* (*GAT*) which includes lessons on positive interactions with classmates. According to the school's renewal application, *GAT* is used intensively in the early weeks of school and periodically throughout the year.
  - Eighty-six of the 91 parents responding to the spring NYSED survey agreed that the school has an effective process for dealing with harassment and discrimination.
- **Indicator d:**
  - For the most part across the 26 classes visited by the renewal site visit team, classrooms were orderly, and students were complying with teacher instructions. In the weeks before the renewal visit, UCCS had begun implementation of a new classroom management tool in the middle school, Kickboard. Teachers award virtual dollars for appropriate classroom behavior and students can cash in those dollars at the school store. The program was in use in only one of the 10 middle school classrooms visited by the renewal site visit team. According to the school staff, some elementary teachers use Class Dojo to reward proper behavior, and team members noted teaching assistants distributing tickets or tokens to groups of students in recognition of their adherence to expected group practices, a component of the SFA program.

2. Element: ***Family Engagement and Communication:***
   - **Indicator a:**
     - In the renewal application, the school reports that it communicates and engages with families through bi-monthly newsletters, the UCCS website, social media, email and a phone announcement system as well as family events and a PTA. While the website includes links to school newsletters, enrollment information, calendars, and sports schedules, the renewal site visit team noted incomplete and inaccurate information about the school's curriculum and academic performance status. The website tab labeled "curriculum" includes a link to the *Engage NY* site without explaining that the school transitioned in 2017 to *SFA* or that *Engage NY* is not a curriculum per se. The letter posted on the website detailing the school's state designation as a school in need of comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) focuses on comparisons with RCSD rather than the school's failure to make progress toward the state average. The parent survey listed on the website links to the spring 2019 NYSED survey which is no longer active.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - Parent teacher conferences are listed on the school calendar in November and February during which parents are required to pick up their child's report card in person, according to the renewal application. Progress reports are provided four times per year. School leaders mentioned that some elementary teachers use Class Dojo to communicate with families. Classroom observations did not confirm this. In the renewal application, UCCS lists PowerSchool as a tool for parents to access information about their child's academic progress and attendance. However, there was no mention of PowerSchool during the site visit interviews and the professional development calendar shows no training for the teachers in grades 5-8 who would be expected to use the tool, according to the school's documents.
   - **Indicator c:**
     - Although the renewal application states that UCCS administers annual family and staff surveys to gauge satisfaction, school leaders and board members reported that the school has not administered a family survey since 2018. On the school's website, the link under Parent Survey leads to the NYSED survey completed in spring 2019. In the renewal application, the school explains that it infers from the high rate of student retention that families are satisfied with the school. However, as shown on Attachment 1, according to NYSED data, UCCS retains only 86% of its students compared with 94% retention in RPS, demonstrating that the board may not be aware of comparative metrics used to evaluate the school's performance. Board members said that the role of the parent representative on the board is to bring the family perspective into their deliberations. However, the board has not identified a parent of a current student interested in serving on the board.
   - **Indicator d:**
     - The renewal application describes an individualized process for responding to family concerns, explaining the steps involved when a complaint or concern is offered. At the time of the renewal site visit, the school reported that informal responses have been sufficient to resolve concerns over the charter term. The CSO does not have a record of extensive parent complaints regarding this school.
   - **Indicator e:**
     - School leaders confirmed that parents receive individual student test results for both internal and state assessments, as described in the renewal application. School-wide results are not regularly distributed to families and the school does not provide a link to

the NYS report card on its website. In 2018, UCCS was required to send a letter to families explaining its state designation as a school in need of comprehensive support and intervention (CSI). As discussed in the midterm site visit report, the parent letter highlighted the school's performance compared to RPS and failed to focus on the school's performance gap compared with state averages, the reason for the school's designation. During the site visit interview, community and family representatives on the board of trustees expressed alarm and confusion when presented with the assessment graphic showing decreasing proficiency as students progress through the grades at UCCS, explaining that they believed students were at or nearing grade level based on the data provided to them from school leaders. Without an accurate understanding of the school's performance, the board is unable to hold leaders accountable. In the focus group during the renewal site visit, school leaders acknowledged that the iReady results provide a different assessment of student progress than the state results and iReady is not able to identify where students fall down on state tests.

3. Element: ***Social-Emotional Supports***:
   - **Indicator a:**
     - According to the SST, the primary approach to supporting the social emotional needs of students focuses on behavior management. The renewal application describes the SST using a variety of strategies to address attendance, academics, and behavior to identify potential social-emotional needs. Staff on the SST work with the individual child to limit the loss of learning time and return students to the classroom. The school employs a counselor and social worker who provide services mandated by students' IEPs as well as services to other students referred by teachers or identified by the behavior management staff.
     - Previously, the school promoted positive behavioral interventions and support (PBIS) practices as a school-wide approach to build positive social habits. During this charter term, the school began adoption of the SFA program, *GAT*, and lessened its focus on PBIS. Some teachers are using ClassDojo or Kickboard to manage student behavior, but a consistent school wide program addressing social-emotional skills was not evident. As a result of the changes in behavior management practices and programs in place across the school, and the early stages of implementation of *GAT*, the school has not established a consistent school-wide program to support all students' social and emotional well-being.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - As reported in focus group interviews, the school uses discipline referral and attendance data along with informal observations of student behavior to identify the social-emotional needs of individual students. Members of the SST meet biweekly to review attendance reports and referrals to the ATS or Help Zone. The SST reviews the impact of its behavior management strategies for individual students in order to determine if students should be referred for special education evaluation, counseling or other supports.
   - **Indicator c:**
     - The *GAT* program is in the early stages of implementation and its impact on students has not yet been evaluated. In the absence of an established school-wide program to support students' social emotional health, school leaders use behavior and attendance reports to assess student needs. According to the SST, the school relies on paper documents and does not have an information system that allows useful access and analysis of behavior intervention data. A member of the SST recently attended training to become a

facilitator for a school-wide information system (SWIS) that may be put into place. UCCS does not have a data manager on staff to provide training and support for storing, retrieving and analyzing student information to inform program decisions.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition
The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.

Finding: Meets

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

Financial Condition

Urban Choice Charter School appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school's independently audited financial statements.

Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in good financial health. Urban Choice Charter School's 2018-2019 composite score is 2.79.

Composite Scores
2014-2015 to 2018-2019

Year	*Composite Score*
2014-2015	1.99
2015-2016	2.38
2016-2017	2.69
2017-2018	2.59
2018-2019	2.79

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 absences of a going concern disclosure.

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

In 2019, the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) (https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/audits/schools/2019/urban-choice-charter-2019-192.htm) conducted an audit of the school with the objective of determining whether school officials ensured credit card purchases were adequately supported and for appropriate purposes. The key findings were that credit card users did not always follow the school's internal control policies and that 40 percent of credit card purchases (10 transactions totaling $265) were not adequately supported. The auditors recommended that school administrators ensure that all credit card users follow the school's internal control policies, including the preapproval of all purchases by using a purchase request form, and ensure that all credit card claims are adequately supported before payment.

The school's corrective action plan included retraining staff to ensure internal control policies are followed, having the bookkeeper and CEO meet regularly to examine supporting documentation for credit card purchases and making revisions to the electronic purchase request form to ensure proper security. The corrective action plan was submitted to OSC in a timely fashion and adequately addressed OSC's findings.

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance
The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness, and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.

Finding: Falls Far Below

Element	Indicators
1. Board Oversight and Governance	a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.
	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.
	c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations, and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.
	d. The board regularly updates school policies.
	e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself, and providers.
	f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

1. Element: *Board Oversight and Governance*

- **Indicator a:**
  - In the focus group interview, board members reported that the governance committee maintains a list of expertise of the current members and areas needed for future board candidates. School documents note that across the charter term, four members left the board and four were added. According to documents provided for the renewal, two of the eight current members are designated as parents, even though their children have graduated from UCCS. The board explained they have been unable to identify a current parent to join the board as required by the by-laws. However, no description was provided to show specific efforts made to do so. Board members also described their challenge of identifying members who reflect the diversity of the student body, one of the board's continuing but unmet goals. One board member listed in the renewal documents and 2018-2019 annual report is now an employee of the school, serving as director of operations and finance. Board minutes do not include a reference to his resignation or replacement.

- **Indicator b:**
  - The UCCS board prepared a strategic plan with three core values and six priority areas. The board's plan defines expectations for school leaders in the academic and teacher support areas and lists governance and financial management as the priority areas where the board is responsible. However, the plan declares that the board "trusts" and "encourages" school leadership to make appropriate purchases and does not define the steps the board must take. Board actions in the priority areas of teacher retention and re-chartering are vague, stating that the board will "look closely" at teacher retention and "action will be taken" to ensure

readiness for re-chartering. None of the priority areas in the strategic plan include measurable outcomes, timelines or intermediate benchmarks to allow the board to monitor progress.

- The October 2019 board minutes report that plans to create measures for the strategic priorities were discussed. A recent monthly board dashboard includes a rating of the status of each of the plan priority areas indicating "in progress," "on track," "at risk," or "completed." Concrete evidence for each rating is lacking. For example, evidence for the safe and supportive environment priority rated as "on track" lists parent and staff surveys which have not been administered since 2018. Similarly, the dashboard declares staff retention to be "on track" despite a 43% teacher turnover rate. One academic priority states that school leaders will be held accountable for 100% proficiency on the state assessments, however the status report presents a different target, year over year growth.

- **Indicator c:**
  - Over the current charter term, the board has enacted repeated key organizational and academic changes. In 2017, the school received a three-year charter renewal and at that time the board hired a new CEO. While board members in the focus group acknowledged that change takes time to show results, nevertheless in 2017-2018 they approved the recommendation of the CEO to change the ELA curriculum. The new ELA program, *SFA*, required training not only in the content of the curriculum but also in the instructional methods required for the program's implementation. In 2018-2019, the board approved the leader's recommendation to change the math curriculum to *Zearn*. At the start of 2019-2020, the board approved a change in leadership structure along with another change in the math curriculum based on teacher feedback, the second change in three years. Also, in 2019-2020, the board approved the purchase of a new diagnostic assessment tool, iReady, moving away from the SRI and SMA assessments that provided longitudinal tracking of students over the course of the school's history. The board financed extensive training for staff as each of these changes was carried out, but the expertise developed by the training was lost to the school as high percentages of teachers left each year of the charter term. The board's decision to approve multiple program changes over the course of the short charter term contradicts the understanding expressed by board members in the focus group that changes take time to become established and to produce the desired results.

- **Indicator d:**
  - Board minutes reflect the board's review and revision of school policies. In October 2019, the board approved revisions to the enrollment and admissions policy and the code of conduct, at the prompting of the CSO.

- **Indicator e:**
  - In the renewal application, the board reports that it completes a self-evaluation survey at its annual retreat. However, minutes of the April 2019 retreat describe activities focused on the strategic plan and not on a board evaluation. The criteria and standards on which the board assesses its effectiveness were not provided for review. As detailed above, the board's strategic plan lacks measurable targets, timelines and benchmarks making it inadequate as a measure of board performance.
  - UCCS uses the Marzano framework as the performance evaluation tool for the CEO. The completed evaluation provided to the renewal team lists several measures in each of the five Marzano domains. While the renewal application states that the measures are aligned to the school mission, the school's academic attainment expectations are far below the state average standard in the mission and less rigorous than the Marzano standards. The board assigned the highest rating to the CEO for student achievement despite continuing low

outcomes on state tests. In the focus group, board members noted that the 2019 state results were not available at the time of the evaluation, although the 2018 results were available and reflect ongoing low achievement. The 2019-2020 CEO goals approved by the board do not include improvement of student achievement on the state assessments, but instead hold the school leader accountable for gains on internal and diagnostic measures.
- The board evaluates its provider of after school and counseling services, the CfY, during yearly contract renewal negotiations according to the renewal document.
- **Indicator f:**
  - In the renewal application, the board reports that it contracts with legal services to ensure compliance with all legal obligations in its policies. The renewal application also declares that the board adheres to conflict of interest requirements, freedom of information laws, and proper financial practices. No documentation for this statement was provided.

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity
The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure and clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.

Finding: Approaches

Element	Indicators
1. School Leadership	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. 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. c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school. d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.
2. Professional Climate	a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication. b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers. c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students' needs. 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. e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.
3. Contractual Relationships □N/A	a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider. b. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures. c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

1. **Element: *School Leadership***
   - **Indicator a:**
     - UCCS has a recently reconfigured leadership team that, although the school is in their 15th year of operation and in the middle of a school year, is in the process of establishing practices and procedures to ensure implementation of the school's ELA and math curricula. School leaders are also in the process of documenting curriculum scope and sequence for social studies and science across the elementary grades. The focus of the new leaders has been on creating a common understanding of effective instruction based on the principles of the SFA

program. The leadership team offered differing versions of the school's mission but a common understanding of the need to improve student outcomes was evident. Staff commitment to the school's mission could not be accurately assessed because the responses on the spring 2019 NYSED teacher survey represent a different set of respondents from the current staff as a result of the school's 43% teacher turnover rate.

- **Indicator b:**
  - The school provided job descriptions listing qualifications and duties for the CEO, the dean of students, and the director of operations and finance. A formal job description for the co-principal role was not available to provide details on this newly reconfigured position. In the focus group, the two co-principals explained that they share responsibilities for the management and oversight of curriculum and instruction across the school. While their responsibilities are summarized briefly in the renewal application, Job descriptions listing the qualifications and detailed duties for the academic mentors for ELA/SFA and math were not available for review. The recent change in the composition of the academic leadership team coupled with staff turnover makes it unclear if teachers and teaching assistants are familiar with each of the leaders' roles and responsibilities.
  - The behavior management staff, led by the dean of students, has been consistent across the charter term and, in the focus group, members of the SST were clear on their complementary responsibilities. According to members of the SST, the CEO oversees delivery of day to day services for students with disabilities while documentation of compliance with the students' IEPs is monitored by a part time special education coordinator who also facilitates interactions with RPS.
- **Indicator c:**
  - According to school leaders, UCCS modified its teacher schedule for 2019-2020 to incorporate a daily opportunity for teachers to meet before instruction begins. The school schedules SFA meetings for the four component grade band groups every other week during the 8:00 am-8:30 time slot. School leaders reported that content area teachers at the middle school meet biweekly and whole school staff meetings are held each Friday. The co-principals reported they distribute daily email bulletins so that everyone can see the action plans that are in place.
- **Indicator d**:
  - UCCS has experienced high levels of teacher turnover including frequent resignations. In the 2018-2019 annual report, UCCS states that it has dismissed some teachers who were not meeting expectations, and in the focus group school leaders reported the recent dismissal of an interventionist. No explanation was provided. At the time of the renewal site visit, five vacancies were posted on the school's website; however, at the time of the writing of this report, seven positions were listed as vacant. In the focus group, school leaders reported that the part-time special education coordinator position was filled when the retiring part-time coordinator agreed to continue. The academic mentor for math resigned recently and school leaders explained they plan to move a classroom teacher into the mentor role. At the time of the site visit, two teachers were expected to start within the coming weeks to fill positions vacated by recent resignations or changed roles. The renewal site visit team learned that two teaching positions were being filled by special educators, one for a short-term absence and the other filling the sixth-grade social studies vacancy.
  - The school reported that it had filled the role of director of operations and finance with a two-term member of the board of trustees. The position continues to be listed as vacant on the website. The school has not had a position of data analyst/data coordinator, but school leaders reported they were planning to move a classroom teacher into that role once the

replacement teacher was hired. No job description listing the responsibilities and qualifications for the data coordinator role were available for review.

2. **Element:** *Professional Climate*
   - **Indicator a:**
     - UCCS has struggled to retain teachers and other staff throughout its charter term. As mentioned previously, the school has several vacancies and is in the process of reassigning existing staff to leadership roles, bringing in new teachers to fill the vacated classroom roles. At this time, according to board members, special education staff are filling in for missing classroom teachers. It was not clear how their special education responsibilities were being fulfilled. In its renewal documents, the school reports 43% of teachers on staff in 2018-2019 did not return for 2019-2020. In the focus group, the board mentioned that increased compensation and longevity incentives are being offered to help retain staff. Board members reported they will provide additional incentives in 2019-2020 for unused sick time.
     - In the focus group, board members indicated that they do not know the exact reasons why teachers leave, deferring to the school leader to determine if staff should be dismissed or retained. As a result, the board does not know if the incentives provided over the past year have had an impact. Board minutes do not mention new appointments, new roles in the organization chart, or resignations.
     - In the October 2019 minutes, the finance committee reported to the board that personnel costs were below budget due to the open positions but that professional fees were over budget due to the cost of hiring consultants to fill vacancies.
     - The board indicated that it contracts for human resources and financial management services to support UCCS staff.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - According to school leaders, the change in teacher schedule allows teachers to meet during the 8:00-8:30 time slot. Regularly scheduled meetings for SFA, grade level teams, and whole staff meetings are planned. In addition, grade level teachers have a common lunch period and a planning period when students are attending art, music, Spanish or physical education. Teachers who work with multiple grade levels, such as RTI interventionists and special educators, confer with teachers when they can either during the school day or before or after school.
   - **Indicator c:**
     - The school's claim in its renewal application and interviews that its staff is highly qualified could not be confirmed. UCCS mostly employs teachers who are in the early stages of their careers. School leaders acknowledge that teachers need coaching, mentoring and guidance to impact student success but turnover and reassignment of teachers reduces the impact of the school's professional development support. The agenda provided by the school lists two days of professional development focused on SFA implementation and six hours of training on the new math curriculum and the iReady assessment. Teachers participated in a 75-minute update on *Ready Math* in October. The co-principals and academic mentor for ELA/SFA observe instruction and provide feedback to build teachers' skills and expertise. An external coach works with five novice teachers. Curriculum implementation support is provided to new hires by the academic mentor and co-principals. The position of academic mentor for mathematics is vacant.
     - The staff roster submitted with the renewal application was incomplete and the employee list provided as a supplement was insufficient to confirm qualifications. Based on the information

provided, there are discrepancies between certification areas and teaching assignments. For instance, neither of the two science teachers for grades 7 and 8 are certified though they do hold bachelor's degrees, and the grade 6 science teacher is certified as a teaching assistant and is working toward an associate's degree. The sixth-grade math teacher designated to take the role of math academic mentor is certified in social studies.

- **Indicator d:**
  - Under the new leadership configuration, the co-principals are responsible for monitoring and supporting instructional quality across the school, according to the school leaders interviewed for the renewal site visit. The co-principals shared a new observation tool they will use during their informal classroom observations to provide feedback to teachers across five dimensions -clarity and accuracy, learning environment, classroom management, intellectual development, and successful learning. The co-principals accompanied the renewal site visit team on their classroom visits and were asked to offer their insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in each class. Team members noted inconsistencies between the two co-principals, raising concern that teachers may be getting conflicting or contradictory feedback. In addition to feedback from the two principals, the academic mentor for SFA and the SFA external coach visit classes and provide feedback to teachers on their implementation of the instructional model. As noted previously, some teachers also receive coaching from a consultant hired by the school. The school does not have procedures in place to ensure consistent and actionable feedback from all the observers operating in the school to help teachers improve their instructional practice.

- **Indicator e:**
  - In the renewal application, the school reports that the board surveyed teachers in the spring and leaders surveyed staff in February. However, on the survey document submitted as part of the renewal application, the school states that is does not have satisfaction survey information to present in support of their renewal request. In the renewal application, the school notes that the board uses teacher retention rates as a measure of satisfaction, but turnover last year was at 43% according to the school's documents, suggesting a less than adequate level of teacher satisfaction. As discussed previously, the board expects the school leader to collect information about why teachers resign and to share that with the board. The board does not conduct exit interviews to gather its own staff satisfaction information.

3. **Element:** *Contractual Relationships*
   - **Indicator a:**
     - Not Applicable.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - Not Applicable
   - **Indicator c:**
     - Not Applicable

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: Approaches

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

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

1. **Element:** *Mission and Key Design Elements*
   - **Indicator a:**
     - When school leaders were asked to state a word or phrase that captures the school's mission, they mentioned "urgency," "potential," "family and relationships," and "challenges." Members of the student success team mentioned "passion," "success and overall well-being," "creating windows of opportunity" and "a bridge to success." On the spring 2019 NYSED survey, teachers also noted the safe learning environment, and building relationships so students can achieve. While strong teacher-student relationships are cited as central to the school's mission, UCCS has been challenged to retain teachers, a concern expressed by parents on the NYSED survey and discussed under Benchmark 7, limiting the school's ability to fulfill its commitment to establishing strong student-teacher relationships.
     - Most stakeholders were not aware of the academic performance gaps between UCCS and the state standards, as reflected in the board's comments on the charts presented during the renewal site visit focus group. The renewal application narrative highlights the school's performance compared to RPS and minimizes attention to the state achievement standard that was the commitment of the school when its charter was granted.
   - **Indicator b:**
     The school's key design elements include a supportive educational environment, a rigorous, rich, common core-aligned and engaging curriculum, high-quality extended learning opportunities, authentic family involvement, data-informed instruction, focused professional development, and school culture.
     A supportive educational environment suggests supports suitable for students with disabilities, English language learners and others at risk of educational failure. The school deploys two of its four special educators as substitutes in classrooms with vacancies, thus lessening the impact these specialists can have on the neediest children.
     In contradiction to the key design element of a rigorous, rich, common core-aligned, engaging curriculum, most UCCS students are falling farther behind state achievement standards each year of the charter term and showing decline as they progress through the grades.
     Although the school touts its longer school day than that required as evidence of high quality extended learning opportunities, results are lacking in terms of student success. Summer school was offered in 2018, but not in 2019. ELA and math instruction times were extended

to 90-minute blocks, and a five-week Saturday school was conducted in the spring for test prep. No discernable effect on student performance resulted.

Authentic family engagement would be greatly enhanced if there were a (current) parent representative on the board, rather than two whose terms have expired.

Data-informed instruction is haphazard at best, with no data coordinator on staff, just a plan for hiring which is dependent upon a classroom teacher being replaced. No requirements for this position were provided.

As detailed above, focused professional development was not sufficiently implemented to meet the needs caused by significant annual turnover in staff, as well as the multitude of curricular, behavior management, and social-emotional program changes that occurred with great regularity.

School culture was expressed most often in terms of safety, which was easily documented.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">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.</td></tr>
</table>

Finding: Falls Far Below

Element	*Indicators*
1. Targets are met	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. Targets are not met	a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets. 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. 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.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

1. **Element:** *Targets are met*
   - **Indicator a:**

2. **Element:** *Targets are not met*
   - **Indicator a:**
     - Despite repeated notifications across its 15 years of operation, UCCS has failed to make progress toward enrolling SWDs and ELLs/MLLs comparable to the percentages enrolled in RPS. Over the past five years, the school has fallen farther behind the RPS enrollment of all three sub-group populations, including economically disadvantaged students. In 2019, NYSED required the school to prepare a corrective action plan (CAP) due to persistent under-enrollment of the target populations.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - In the CAP, UCCS lists outreach strategies intended to attract and retain SWDs and ELLs/MLLs that are similar to strategies detailed in previous renewal applications and annual reports. While the school added a weighted lottery to its enrollment policy, the number of SWDs has not increased. The school explained that most new students enter at kindergarten and noted that students at that age are not yet identified as SWDs, making the weighed lottery an ineffective strategy for that population. However, according to documents provided to the renewal site visit team, 40 students in Grades 4 through 8 are new to UCCS in 2019-2020. The

school did not indicate how those students were selected and whether the school weighted admission for open seats at the upper grades. The school reports a substantial waiting list for available seats at all grade levels, and claims that it admits students at any time, but according to board minutes and the October board dashboard report the school remains under its chartered enrollment of 400 by fewer than ten students

- The UCCS CAP does not list any strategies for changing program services in order to attract and retain students who are SWDs or ELLs/MLLs. The school's website provides few images and little information about the school's supports for SWDs or ELLs/MLLs that might encourage families to consider enrolling, beyond a paragraph assuring that services for students with individual education plans will be provided by certified staff or by RPS. There is no mention of services and supports for those learning English.

- **Indicator c:**
  - UCCS has not established a systematic process for evaluating the effectiveness of its own recruitment and retention strategies, although school leaders reported that UCCS participates in the common application process for Rochester charter schools which yields a report showing where families completing the application learned about charter schools. In the enrollment CAP, UCCS proposes to document its outreach efforts and demonstrate an increase over previous activity as evidence of its efforts. That data was not available at the time of the renewal site visit**.**

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional information.

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance
The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.

Finding: Meets

Element	*Indicators*
1. Legal Compliance	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.
	b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.
	c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

1. **Element:** *Legal Compliance*
   - **Indicator a:**
     - UCCS is substantially in compliance with applicable state and federal laws. The school contracts with specialized providers for legal, financial and human resource services to ensure the fulfillment of relevant requirements. The school's director of operations and finance is responsible for monitoring staff charged with the safety and maintenance of the facilities. The board's finance committee, headed by a certified public accountant, monitors financial management to ensure agreement with generally accepted principles. Lapses in fulfillment of the commitments in the school's charter are noted in previous sections of this report, particularly academic achievement and the enrollment of special populations.
   - **Indicator b:**
     - In early 2019, NYSED CSO notified UCCS of persistent deficiencies in academic performance and enrollment and required the school to prepare a corrective action plan (CAP) for each deficiency. The school completed the required plans; however, they required further detail regarding timelines, outcomes, and benchmarks. The school is in the process of implementing the remediation strategies it defined.
   - **Indicator c:**
     - During this charter term, UCCS sought and received approval from CSO for changes to the language in its mission statement and for revision of its enrollment and admission policy to allow for weighting for SWDs and ELLs/MLLs. Board minutes include acknowledgement of the need for CSO approval of certain board actions, including the addition of new board members, revisions to internal policies, board by-laws, and the execution of a purchase and sale agreement for a new facility, detailed in the November 5, 2019 board minutes.

Attachment 1: 2019-2020 Renewal Site Visit

Urban Choice Charter School

Benchmark 1:

Indicator 1: All Schools

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

This school is designated as a school in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement under current New York State criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

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

In ELA and math, Urban Choice Charter School students did not tend to outperform students in schools with similar grade spans and demographics.

Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

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

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

		2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
ELA	All Students	39%	29%	30%	30%
	SWD	14%	19%	11%	29%
	ELL/MLL	.	.	.	0%
	ED	39%	30%	30%	30%
Math	All Students	14%	23%	22%	18%
	SWD	14%	12%	9%	18%
	ELL/MLL	.	.	.	0%
	ED	13%	22%	21%	15%

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

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

Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time
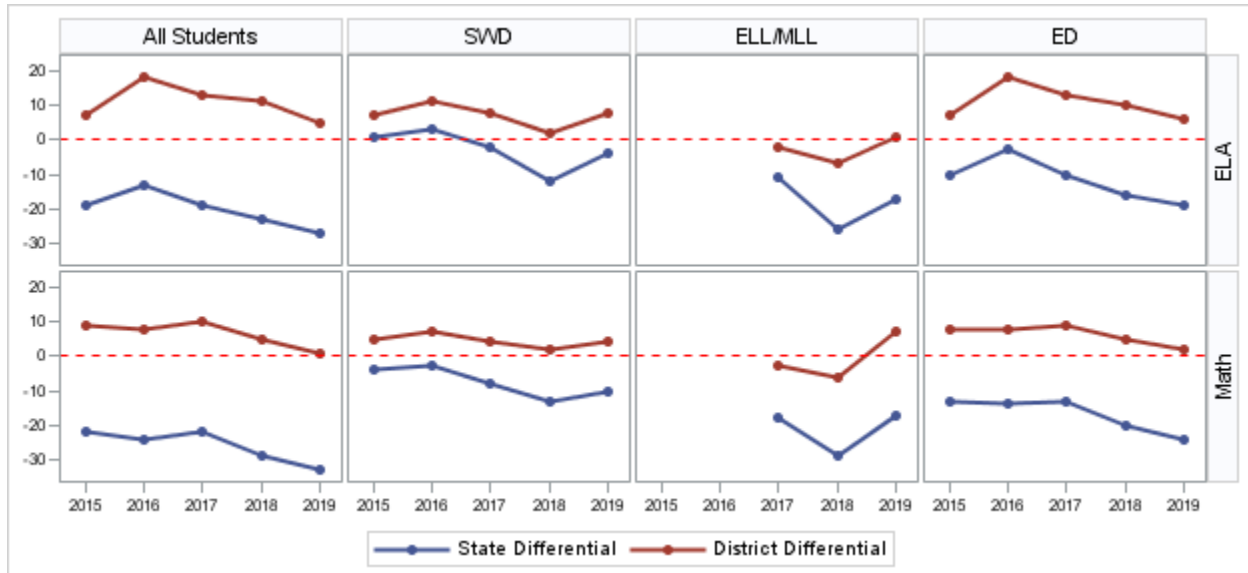
See NOTES (1), (2), (3), and (6) below.

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

		ELA					Math				
		Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	12%	5%	+7	31%	-19	16%	7%	+9	38%	-22
	2015-2016	25%	7%	+18	38%	-13	15%	7%	+8	39%	-24
	2016-2017	21%	8%	+13	40%	-19	18%	8%	+10	40%	-22
	2017-2018	22%	11%	+11	45%	-23	16%	11%	+5	45%	-29
	2018-2019	18%	13%	+5	45%	-27	14%	13%	+1	47%	-33
SWD	2014-2015	8%	1%	+7	7%	+1	8%	3%	+5	12%	-4
	2015-2016	12%	1%	+11	9%	+3	9%	2%	+7	12%	-3
	2016-2017	9%	1%	+8	11%	-2	6%	2%	+4	14%	-8
	2017-2018	4%	2%	+2	16%	-12	4%	2%	+2	17%	-13
	2018-2019	11%	3%	+8	15%	-4	8%	4%	+4	18%	-10
ELL/MLL	2016-2017	0%	2%	-2	11%	-11	0%	3%	-3	18%	-18
	2017-2018	0%	7%	-7	26%	-26	0%	6%	-6	29%	-29
	2018-2019	8%	7%	+1	25%	-17	15%	8%	+7	32%	-17
ED	2014-2015	11%	4%	+7	21%	-10	14%	6%	+8	27%	-13
	2015-2016	24%	6%	+18	27%	-3	14%	6%	+8	28%	-14
	2016-2017	19%	6%	+13	29%	-10	16%	7%	+9	29%	-13
	2017-2018	20%	10%	+10	36%	-16	14%	9%	+5	34%	-20
	2018-2019	17%	11%	+6	36%	-19	13%	11%	+2	37%	-24

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

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

Table 3: Aggregate Grade Level Proficiency

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

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

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

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

Table 4: Annual Regents Outcomes

		All Students				**ED**			
		Charter Total Tested	Urban Choice Charter School	NYS	Differential to State	Charter Total Tested	Urban Choice Charter School	NYS	Differential to State
Living Environment	2016-2017	38	55%	87%	**-32**	37	57%	79%	**-22**
	2017-2018	36	39%	86%	**-47**	35	40%	77%	**-37**

*See NOTES (2), (3), (4), and (7) below.

Benchmark 9:

Table 5: Student Demographics

	SWD			**ELL/MLL**			**ED**		
	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2015-2016	14%	21%	**-7**	2%	15%	**-13**	79%	92%	**-13**
2016-2017	14%	22%	**-8**	5%	16%	**-11**	92%	91%	**+1**
2017-2018	12%	22%	**-10**	5%	17%	**-12**	91%	92%	**-1**
2018-2019	12%	23%	**-11**	4%	17%	**-13**	90%	91%	**-1**

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

Table 6: Retention – Aggregate and Subgroups

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Urban Choice Charter School	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice Charter School	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice Charter School	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Urban Choice Charter School	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2016-2017	82%	86%	-4	84%	87%	-3	100%	85%	+15	82%	86%	-4
2017-2018	86%	86%	0	87%	89%	-2	94%	87%	+7	87%	87%	0
2018-2019	90%	86%	+4	88%	88%	0	83%	84%	-1	91%	86%	+5

See NOTES (2) and (6) below.

NOTES:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary

URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Grades Served	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Maximum Chartered Grades Served	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Chartered Enrollment	400	400	400	400	400
Maximum Chartered Enrollment	400	400	400	400	400
Actual Enrollment	404	398	397	400	396

AUDITED FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Current Assets					
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,567,293	559,769	786,281	919,532	1,264,633
Grants and Contracts Receivable	123,350	63,704	299,906	47,146	181,949
Prepaid Expenses	2,966	1,963	4,014	56,164	-
Other Current Assets	45,826	430,127	472,855	758,299	771,248
Total Current Assets	1,739,435	1,055,563	1,563,056	1,781,141	2,217,830
Non-Current Assets					
Property, Building and Equipment, net	739,989	679,302	618,227	442,207	269,836
Restricted Cash	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Security Deposits	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
Other Non-Current Assets	-	-	-	-	-
Total Non - Current Assets	849,989	789,302	728,227	552,207	379,836
Total Assets	2,589,424	1,844,865	2,291,283	2,333,348	2,597,666
LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	126,333	50,547	73,464	58,715	66,774
Accrued Payroll and Payroll Taxes	207,417	207,107	245,987	242,523	322,435
Due to Related Parties	-	-	-	-	-
Refundable Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Other Current Liabilities	897,711	13,234	20,812	-	-
Total Current Liabilities	1,231,461	270,888	340,263	301,238	389,209
Long-Term Liabilities					
Deferred Rent	-	-	-	-	-
Other Long-Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Long-Term Liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities	1,231,461	270,888	340,263	301,238	389,209
NET ASSETS					
Unrestricted	1,357,963	1,573,977	1,876,020	2,032,110	2,208,457
Restricted	-	-	75,000	-	-
Total Net Assets	1,357,963	1,573,977	1,951,020	2,032,110	2,208,457
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,589,424	1,844,865	2,291,283	2,333,348	2,597,666

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

OPERATING REVENUE

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
State and Local Per Pupil Revenue - Reg. Ed	4,944,199	4,941,225	4,986,482	5,405,679	5,552,131
State and Local Per Pupil Revenue - SPED	143,908	225,062	227,682	-	-
State and Local Per Pupil Facilities Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Federal Grants	279,293	241,489	258,453	617,909	746,696
State and City Grants	-	155,038	407,952	-	-
Other Operating Income	10,706	403,015	404,778	4,808	3,110
Total Operating Revenue	5,378,106	5,965,829	6,285,347	6,028,396	6,301,937
EXPENSES					
Program Services					
Regular Education	3,618,594	3,838,945	3,984,688	4,013,277	3,945,824
Special Education	-	-	-	192,539	279,250
Other Expenses	963,253	859,657	869,208	864,112	918,213
Total Program Services	4,581,847	4,698,602	4,853,896	5,069,928	5,143,287
Supporting Services					
Management and General	1,161,205	S	1,127,054	953,169	1,013,966
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support Services	1,161,205	-	1,127,054	953,169	1,013,966
Total Expenses	5,743,052	4,698,602	5,980,950	6,023,097	6,157,253
Surplus/Deficit from Operations	(364,946)	1,267,227	304,397	5,299	144,684
SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE					
Interest and Other Income	14,786	25,862	-	-	-
Contributions and Grants	443,792	8,210	8,037	24,673	-
Fundraising Support	-	-	-	11,605	11,666
Other Support and Revenue	-	-	64,609	39,513	19,997
Total Support and Other Revenue	458,578	34,072	72,646	75,791	31,663
Change in Net Assets	93,632	1,301,299	377,043	81,090	176,347
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	1,264,331	1,357,963	1,573,977	1,951,020	2,032,110
Net Assets - End of Year	1,357,963	2,659,262	1,951,020	2,032,110	2,208,457

FISCAL ANALYSIS
RATIOS, BENCHMARKS and FINDINGS

REVENUE & EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Revenue - Per Pupil					
Operating	13,312	14,990	15,832	15,071	15,914
Support and Other Revenue	1,135	86	183	189	80
Total Revenue	14,447	15,075	16,015	15,260	15,994
Expenses - Per Pupil					
Program Services	11,341	11,806	12,226	12,675	12,988
Mangement and General, Fundraising	2,874	-	2,839	2,383	2,561
Total Expenses	14,215	11,806	15,065	15,058	15,549
% of Program Services	79.8%	100.0%	81.2%	84.2%	83.5%
% of Management and Other	20.2%	0.0%	18.8%	15.8%	16.5%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses	1.6%	27.7%	6.3%	1.3%	2.9%

FINANCIAL COMPOSITE SCORE

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Composite Score	1.99	2.38	2.69	2.59	2.79
BENCHMARK and FINDING: Strong; 1.5 - 3.0 / Adequate; 1.0 - 1.4 / Needs Monitoring; -1.0 - 0.9	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong

WORKING CAPITAL

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Net Working Capital	507,974	784,675	1,222,793	1,479,903	1,828,621
Working Capital (Current) Ratio	1.4	3.9	4.6	5.9	5.7
BENCHMARK and FINDING: Ratio should be equal to or greater than 1.2	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard

DEBT TO ASSET

|	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Debt to Asset Ratio	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
BENCHMARK and FINDING: Ratio should be equal to or less than 1.0	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard

CASH POSITION

|	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Days of Cash	99.6	43.5	48.0	55.7	75.0
BENCHMARK and FINDING: Ratio should be equal to or greater than 60 days	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard

TOTAL MARGIN

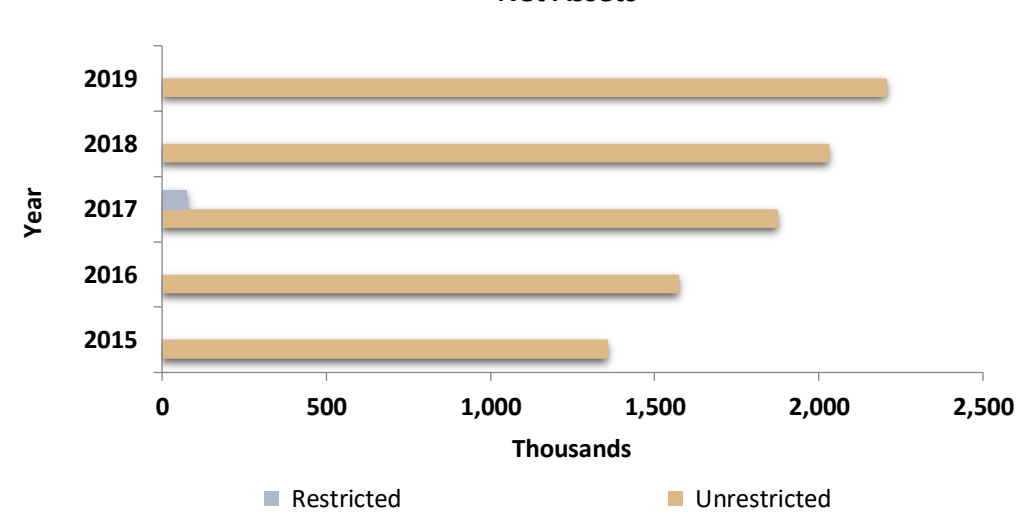|	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Total Margin Ratio	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
BENCHMARK and FINDING: Ratio should be equal to or greater than 0.0	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard

Chartered vs. Actual Enrollment
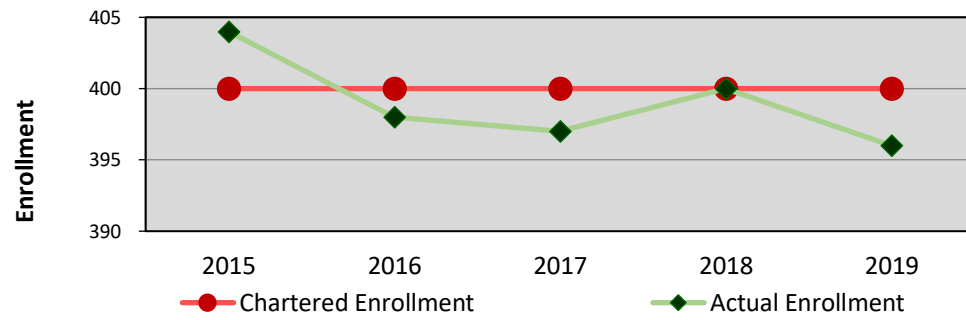
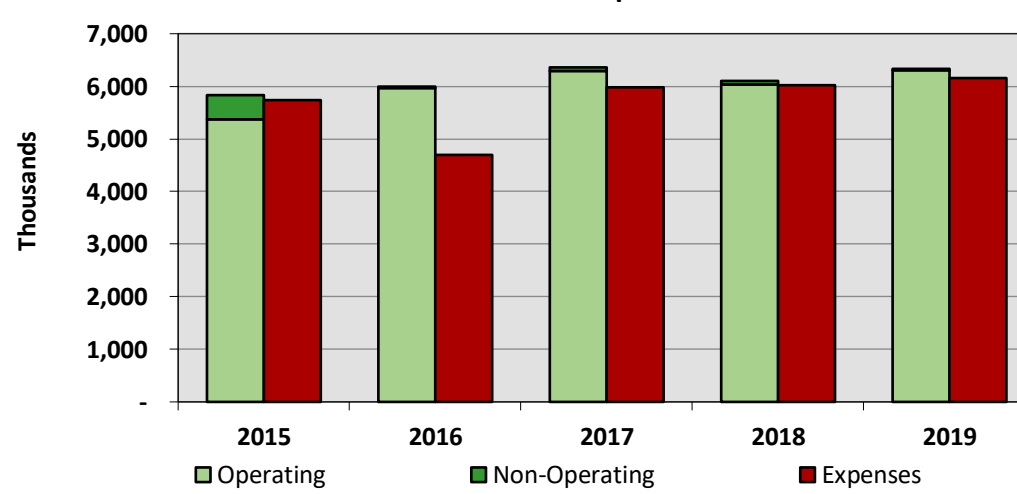Cash, Assets and Liabilities
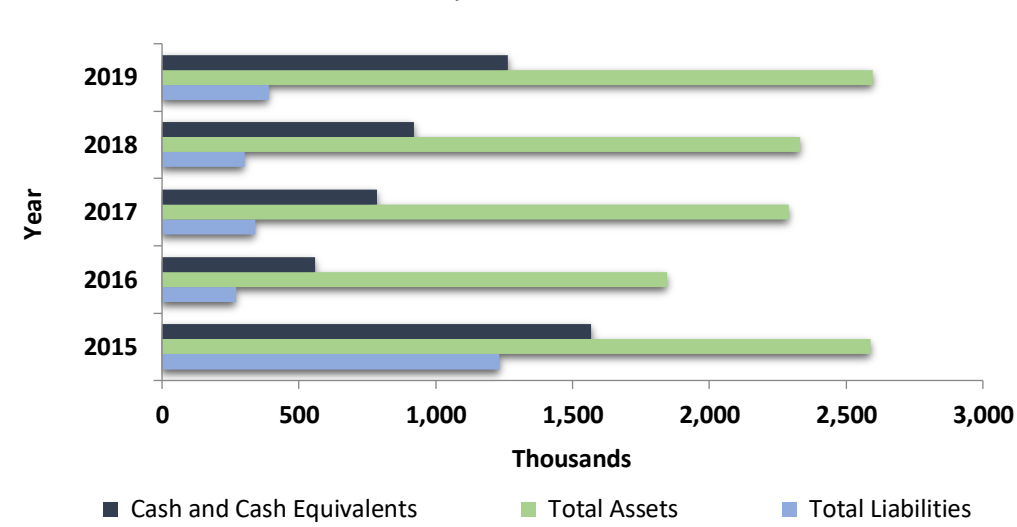
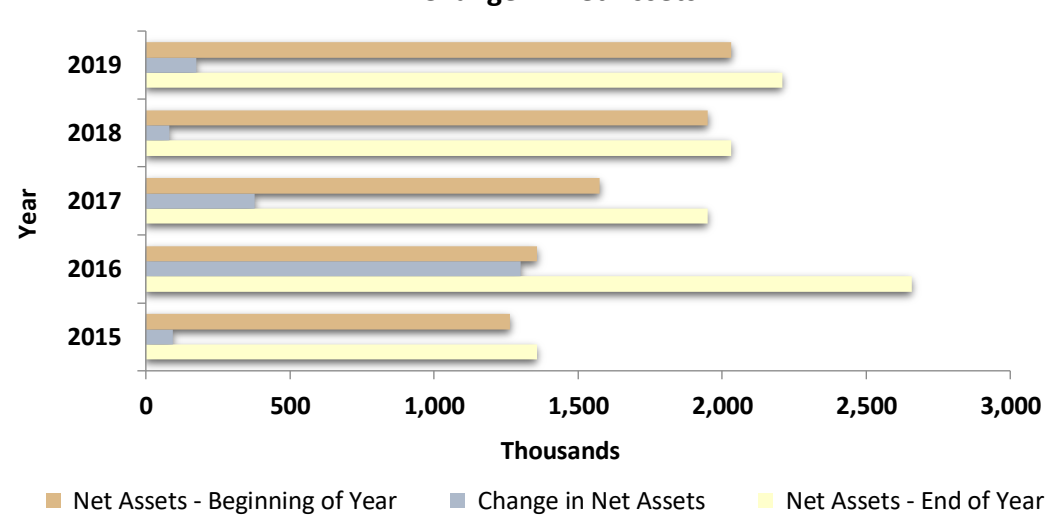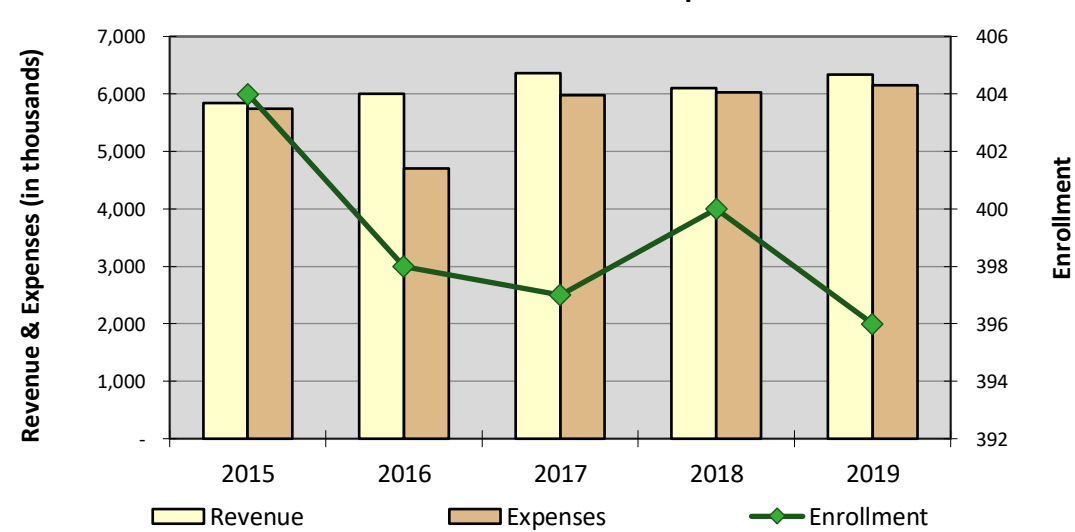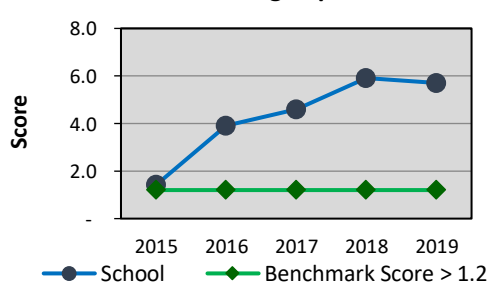Net Assets

Revenue & Expenses
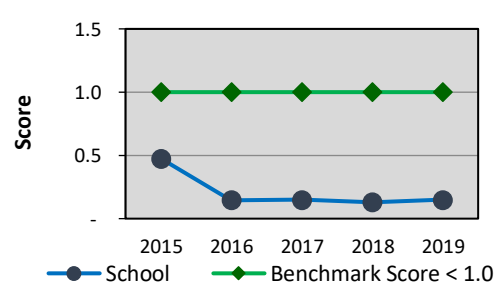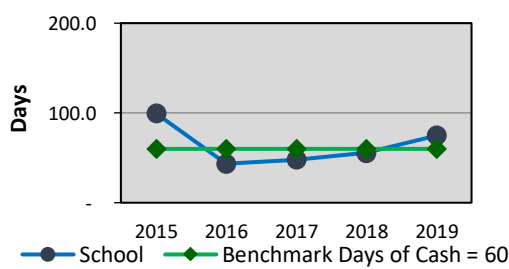

Change in Net Assets

Enrollment vs. Revenue & Expenses

Working Capital

Debt to Asset

Days of Cash

Total Margin