



424 Leonard Street  
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[www.northsidechs.org](http://www.northsidechs.org)

New York State Board of Regents  
State Education Department Charter School Office  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany, NY 12234

June 24, 2022

To the Board of Regents:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Northside Charter High School ("NCHS"), I am writing in response to our charter renewal site visit report. We were delighted to receive authorization for another five year term and approval of our increase of our enrollment to 420 students and revisions to our key design elements, mission, and organizational chart.

We provide the following comments to related to the site visit report:

1. Benchmarks 1 and 2: We have continued to strengthen our program to enable a high degree of academic achievement for our students for course work necessary for graduations and standardized test required for post-secondary, supported through rigorous and differentiated instruction, which we believe will provide additional support for our students with disabilities, multi-language learners, and economically disadvantaged students. We are continuing to increase the use of data by academic and student services staff to inform teaching and programming efforts.
2. Benchmark 3: Throughout our history, we have always understood how a rich culture and student and caregiver engagement are essential partners to a strong educational program. We have been increasing our insights and collection of data and feedback to understand our students' social-emotional needs. Under our strategic plan, we are taking steps to continue to increase the opportunities for meaningful engagement, further develop our restorative justice practices, and gather and utilize data to inform practices and program.
3. Benchmarks 4 and 5: Since 2012 when becoming an independent charter school, the Board diligently focused on our fiduciary duties and worked with our management team and outside providers and consultants to keep strong internal controls and financial processes, maintain healthy reserves, and prudently allocate financial resources to uphold our mission. In the recent months, we have taken steps to maximize the additional income we can earn on our significant financial reserve, which we plan to use to for greater expansion in the future.
4. Benchmark 6: The Board understands that effective corporate governance is necessary for an effectively functioning organization and can be a strategic differentiator. We take a robust approach to governance and have a high level of board member engagement, which enables us to fulfill our fiduciary duties and oversight responsibilities. We will maintain this approach throughout our next charter term.
5. Benchmark 7: Although we have faced challenges with employee retention and made intentional changes to organizational structure in the past several years. One of the pillars of our strategic plan is focused on retaining and developing the right talent. We believe with our focus and related initiatives and the Board's close work with our management team, we will return to meeting all elements of this benchmark.
6. Benchmark 8: The Board has consistently monitored whether the School upholds its mission and operates in compliance with our key design elements. Management and staff regularly reiterate our mission with students and caregivers. The Board alongside management has an annual strategy session where we discuss our mission and key design elements. We believe our newly approved and revised mission and key design elements will allow us to maintain this as a strength and enable new levels of excellence.
7. Benchmark 9: We have maintained strong overall enrollment. We have taken steps such as create a lottery preference to support increases of English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities. We also are focusing student recruitment efforts to enroll higher percentages of English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities.
8. Benchmark 10: We understand the importance of legal compliance with all aspects of our organization. Although we had some challenges in the past several years, the Board worked with management to undertake a holistic review

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of all policies and procedures and retained external experts across various areas relevant to compliance. We have a board compliance calendar and report that the Board reviews with management at each month's board meeting, which are enabling us to both oversee the School's compliance and promote accountability but the management team. We expect through these collective efforts, we will return to having this be a strength of the organization.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments and look forward to a continuing partnership as we begin our next charter term.

Thank you!

Kaley Childs Karaffa  
Chair, Board of Trustees