



New York State Education Department

2024-2025 Renewal Site Visit Report for BOR-Authorized Charter Schools under the 2019 Charter School Performance Framework

Growing Up Green Charter School II

Renewal Site Visit Dates: November 18-19, 2024
Date of Final Draft Site Visit Report: February 10, 2025
Date of Final Site Visit Report: February 20, 2025

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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary¹

Name of Charter School	Growing Up Green Charter School II (GUG II)
Board Chair	Marc Greenberg
District of Location	New York City (NYC) Community School District (CSD) 28
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2016
Charter Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Term: September 1, 2016 – June 30, 2021 First Renewal Term: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 8 / 812 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment	K – Grade 8 / 812 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 89-25 161st Street, Jamaica, NY 11432 (Elementary School) – Private Space 84-35 152nd Street, Jamaica NY 11432 (Middle School) – Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>Growing Up Green Charter School (GUG) supports children to be conscious, contributing members of their community through a rigorous, anti-racist, anti-bias, curriculum and an engaging green culture. Graduates of GUG will be prepared to attend high-performing schools where their interdisciplinary academic foundation, knowledge of sustainability, and strong sense of self sets them apart as leaders and social justice advocates of the future.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedication to Academic Rigor Expansive Support Services Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) Intervention ELL Counseling Hands-On Learning Actionable Assessment System Green Education Deliberate School Culture Professional Environment
Requested Revisions (Revisions are not approved unless approved by the Board of Regents)	None

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

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs: Growing Up Green Charter School II (GUG II) strives to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences. The academic program brings hands-on learning and multi-sensory experiences through field trips and residencies with local artists. GUG II students explore the communities in and around NYC CSD 28 with carefully curated field trips to Alley Pond Park, Queens Botanical Garden, and the Queens Museum.

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 CSO'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 based on its educational success. However, the school 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 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024	Year 4 2024 to 2025
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 7	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Approved Enrollment	693	748	812	812

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

	Year 1 2025 to 2026	Year 2 2026 to 2027	Year 3 2027 to 2028	Year 4 2028 to 2029	Year 5 2029-2030
Grade Configuration	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8	K – Grade 8
Total Proposed Enrollment	812	812	812	812	812

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Renewal Report

The primary purpose of the renewal site visit to Board of Regents-authorized charter schools is to supplement and validate the information collected over the charter term by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Charter School Office (CSO). This information is used to inform the action taken by the Board of Regents to approve, modify, or disapprove the charter school's request for renewal. In advance of action by the Board of Regents, the CSO prepares a renewal recommendation that is based on the school's performance in three broad areas:

1. The school's **academic success** and ability to operate in an educationally sound manner;
2. The school's **organizational viability** and ability to operate in a fiscally sound manner; and
3. The school's faithfulness to the terms of its charter and **adherence to applicable laws and regulations**.

² This proposed chart was submitted by Growing Up Green Charter School II in its renewal application. It is subject to change pending the final renewal recommendation and approval by the Board of Regents. This chart should not be used to determine the final approved grade levels or enrollment of the school in the subsequent renewal term.

In addition, NYSED, on behalf of the New York State Board of Regents, is a community-based authorizer committed to principles of equity and access for all students across New York State. Community-based authorizing is based on the principle that community stakeholder voice, and response to community need, is an integral component of charter school decision making at all levels. During the renewal visit, the CSO will look for evidence of community voice across the school from governance to the educational program, as well as a commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in the school's policies and practices.

A two-day renewal site visit was conducted at GUG II on November 18-19, 2024. The NYSED CSO site visit team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, elementary and middle school leadership teams, parents, teachers, the assessment team, and instructional coaches.

The team conducted thirty classroom observations in K – Grade 8. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with building principals and instructional coaches. To draft this report, the CSO site visit team reviewed school-specific documents and data such as the school's 2024-2025 renewal application, 2023-2024 annual report, surveys, data and fiscal dashboards, CSO site visit reports and memos, complaints, and corrective action plans.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The 2019 Performance Framework, which is part of the Oversight Plan included in the Charter Agreement for the 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 2019 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
Meets	The school generally meets or exceeds the performance benchmark; few concerns are noted. May be a potential exemplar, if 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.

**New York State Education Department
2019 Charter School Performance Framework Rating³**

2019 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.	Approaches
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	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.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for SWD, 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. High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Approaches

³ Charter schools authorized or renewed beginning in the 2019-2020 school year and thereafter use the [2019 Charter School Performance Framework](#), and all other charter schools use the [2015 Charter School Performance Framework](#) until renewal. Refer to the appropriate framework for the applicable benchmark standards.

Summary of Findings

- GUG II is in year nine of operation and serves students in K – Grade 8. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: seven “Meets” and three “Approaches.” A summary of those ratings is provided below.
- **Strengths:** GUG II demonstrates strong alignment with its mission through effective implementation of key design elements. Its leadership fosters a positive school culture characterized by collaboration, equity, and a focus on social-emotional learning (SEL). The coaching model provides consistent professional development and real-time feedback, equipping teachers to meet diverse student needs. The Bridge classes (12:1:1) offer tailored instruction for students requiring additional support, reflecting the school’s commitment to inclusion and differentiation. Classroom observations highlighted well-managed environments, evidence-based practices, and teacher confidence in delivering rigorous, culturally responsive instruction. Moreover, GUG II’s focus on community-building activities, such as morning meetings and advisory sessions, supports a respectful and inclusive learning climate.
- **Challenges:** GUG II faces challenges related to staffing and strategic clarity. The need for certified teachers remains a critical area for improvement to ensure compliance and enhance instructional quality. Additionally, the school’s strategic initiative, “Rooted in Inquiry, Grounded by Criticality,” lacks sufficient clarity and consistent implementation across classrooms. Interviews revealed some confusion among leadership and staff regarding this initiative, which may hinder its effectiveness in driving the intended instructional and cultural outcomes. Addressing these gaps will be vital for GUG II to maximize its impact and sustain long-term success.

Benchmark 1: Student Performances

The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.

Finding: Approaches

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as “Approaches” due to under-performance of All Students on the New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) 3-8 Assessments in English language arts (ELA) and math when compared to the district of location (DOL).

GUG II proficiency on the 2024 NYSTP 3-8 Assessments for All Students was -10 percentage points below the district of location (DOL) for ELA and -7 percentage points below the DOL for math. However, the students with disabilities (SWD) subgroup performance on ELA equaled the DOL, and English language learner (ELL) students exceeded the DOL in math by +9 percentage points. From the 2022 to the 2024 testing years, the school has shown noteworthy academic growth. Overall proficiency in ELA increased +12 percentage points and +20 percentage points in math.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional academic information.

Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and 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: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to current New York State learning standards.b. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.c. The curriculum and corresponding materials are differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts, including students with disabilities, English language learners/multi-lingual learners, economically disadvantaged students, and other subgroups.d. The curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.
2. Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school staff has a shared understanding of high-quality instruction that supports all learners and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.c. The school differentiates instruction to ensure equity and access for all students.d. The school provides staff with professional development opportunities that promote best practices and improves all students' success, including sub-groups.
3. Assessment and Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school uses a 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 for both individual students as well as subgroups.d. The school uses multiple measures to assess student progress toward State learning standards.a. The school follows the NYSED approved identification process for students with disabilities and English language learners/multi-lingual learners.

Element

Indicators

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i> | <p>b. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students including, but not limited to: students with disabilities; English language learners/multi-lingual learners; and economically disadvantaged students.</p> <p>c. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and to facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.</p> |
|---|--|

Academic Program for Elementary School/Middle School

- ES:
 - Math-Grades K-4: *San Francisco Unified School District Math Curriculum, Navigator, Zearn*
 - ELA-Grades K-2: *Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA)*; Grades 3-4: *Fishtank Curriculum; Bridge - Spire*
 - Social Studies: *Fishtank Curriculum*
 - Science: *We Teach NYC*
 - Specials: Locally developed, NYS standards-aligned curriculum
 - Social Emotional Learning: *RULER*
- MS:
 - Math-Grades 5-8: *Desmos Curriculum*; replaced by *Illustrative Math Curriculum*
 - ELA-Grades 5-8: Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Units of Study, NYSED Curricular Modules for English Language Arts, *Fishtank, Read 180*
 - Social Studies: *Passport to Social Studies* (NYCDOE curriculum)
 - Science: *Full Option Science System (FOSS), New Visions Science Curriculum*
 - Social Emotional Learning: *Developmental Designs*

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners (ELL):

- SWD:
 - Same as above
 - *Read 180*
- ELL:
 - Same as above
 - *Read 180*

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as “Meets.”

1. Element: ***Curriculum:***

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application, GUG II spent time redefining core values and hiring network-wide instructional leaders in 2020-2021, which has allowed it to establish a unified, standards-aligned, network-normed curriculum. This approach, spanning grades K-8, emphasizes evidence-based, culturally responsive, and rigorous curriculum practices to maintain high academic standards across all subjects and four school sites. During focus groups, the elementary and middle school leadership teams discussed the emphasis they have placed on creating a

network-approved, standards-aligned curriculum for their staff to use. Several of the core curricula were in use during the observed lessons.

- **Indicator b:** Since 2020, GUG II has prioritized a network-wide, normed curriculum to ensure the curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades. This approach, according to the renewal application, supported by shared assessments and student work reviews, enables consistent monitoring and data-driven instructional adjustments across both general education and integrated co-teaching (ICT) classrooms. During focus groups, instructional coaches talked about their role in facilitating this alignment. The teachers corroborated that the instructional coaches meet with them regularly in coaching cycles to help facilitate their lesson planning and to keep them on pace and in-line with the curriculum. The leadership team and assessment teams also talked about their regular meetings to ensure that they have continuity of program across both buildings. During observations, teachers had a grasp on the curriculum in most instances and demonstrated confidence in teaching it.
- **Indicator c:** GUG II uses a variety of curriculum materials explicitly designed to facilitate differentiated instruction across diverse student subgroups, including ELL, economically disadvantaged (ED), and SWD. The core curricular products incorporate embedded supports tailored to address the distinct learning needs of all students. During observations the site visit team witnessed a group of ELL students who needed additional reading support, which they received in a co-taught classroom with teachers using *Read 180*. Additionally, the NYSED team witnessed both upper and lower Bridge classes, 12:1:1, for students who require more support. At the middle school level, the school added a Math 8 class to help students still developing mathematical skills and continued Algebra I for students who benefit from challenging content.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application, GUG II has a structured, collaborative approach to curriculum review and revision, involving input from network academic leaders, school leaders, assistant school leaders, content coaches, learning specialists, and teachers. Curriculum is reviewed throughout the academic year, with feedback loops at the beginning, during, and after each unit, incorporating teacher feedback and academic data. During focus groups, the instructional coaches and teachers talked about their weekly coaching, grade team, and department meetings. They asserted that these provide ongoing opportunities for reflection and revision. Instructional coaches gather insights from classroom observations and use these to make real-time curriculum adjustments. In focus groups, coaches demonstrated sound understanding of instruction and classroom management. They let the team know that they would be following up with teachers after the NYSED visit to deliver their feedback. Additionally, the network leadership team talked about the importance of reflection and improvement. They were open to feedback and welcomed ideas.

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

- **Indicator a:** GUG II's vision of high-quality instruction, according to the renewal application, is defined by its 2021 network priority: *Rooted In Inquiry, Grounded In Criticality*. The network leadership team asserted that the focus guides equitable, student-centered, inquiry-based, data-driven teaching practices to achieve equitable outcomes for all students. Though there was a lack of clarity regarding what the priority encompassed, in practice, the elements of sound instruction appeared to be in place. Teachers posted lesson objectives. Observed lessons were generally well-structured and paced, the classrooms were generally peaceful, and teachers made regular use of formative assessments. In addition, most classrooms celebrated student work by showcasing it on the wall. The network leadership team indicated that it would like to shift instruction from teacher-centered to inquiry-based, and instructional coaches reinforced this shift in their focus

group as well. They discussed the need for ongoing professional development support, which they will provide in monthly instructional focuses and weekly coaching sessions.

- **Indicator b:** The CSO site visit team was able to witness a variety of instructional strategies, such as “Do Now,” small group work, partner discussions, “maître’ d,” and gallery walks to engage students throughout the instructional period. They also worked to engage students by using high-interest topics as part of their lessons. For example, in one class observed, students discussed a current lawsuit against a rapper as part of a lesson on freedom of speech.
- **Indicator c:** According to the renewal application, GUG II differentiates instruction to provide equitable access for all students, including ELL and SWD. Teachers, with the support of instructional coaches and learning specialists, plan differentiation in process, product, and, when necessary, content. The renewal site team was able to observe the Bridge classrooms and saw teachers tailoring instruction to student needs and responding in real-time to their learning difficulties. In several classrooms, the renewal site team witnessed teachers providing differentiated materials for students in their classrooms. For example, in a social studies class, there were differentiated reading and notes packets to scaffold material more for some students.
- **Indicator d:** GUG II’s professional development is strategically aligned with the network priority, fostering inquiry-based, student-centered, and culturally responsive instruction, according to the renewal application. Two examples of professional development were a series on “interactive learning structures,” which focused on hands-on activities, and “opportunities to respond,” which was focused on improving teacher-to-student talk ratios. According to teachers who spoke in the focus groups, teacher-led professional development sessions empower educators to design and facilitate training, making content relevant and applicable to real-world classroom needs. Building leaders also discussed the importance of autonomy in teachers’ learning process. The instructional coaches corroborated this autonomy and added that they support further learning in their coaching cycles, and by providing targeted training sessions and practice.

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

- **Indicator a:** The renewal application indicated that GUG II’s assessment system integrates formative, diagnostic, and summative assessments to support student growth effectively. During the site visit, the renewal team noted several examples of teachers using “Do Now” assessments at the beginning of class and exit tickets at the end of class. Additionally, teacher feedback on student work was noted in several classrooms where the teacher displayed student work. The Assessment Team explained that “Looking Forward, Looking Back” assessments mimic the State assessments and are given network-wide approximately every 6-8 weeks. These assessments, according to network leaders, are used for ongoing curricular adjustments to ensure that students are receiving standards-based instruction. The renewal application states that assessment data drives instructional adjustments, professional development, and progress monitoring, allowing GUG II to maintain high educational standards and support continuous student achievement. During focus groups, most groups referenced data and the role that it plays in the school.
- **Indicator b:** GUG II utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data to enhance instruction and student outcomes, aligning with their network priority for data-driven improvement. Observations and focus groups corroborated that quantitative data is collected through diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Quantitative data includes diagnostic assessments at the start of each unit, formative assessments such as IXL diagnostics in middle school, and math spiral review trackers in Grades 3-4. Post-assessment analysis of interim assessments, guided by school-based leaders, allows reteaching of priority content based on assessment outcomes. Likewise, observations and focus group discussion demonstrated that qualitative data is collected through classroom observations, student work analysis, and student

responses. Content coaches and assessment coordinators hold data meetings with grade-level teams to analyze progress, set reteaching goals, and integrate evidence-based strategies to address learning gaps.

- **Indicator c:** According to the renewal application, GUG II uses qualitative and quantitative data to assess and improve its academic programs, ensuring they meet individual and subgroup needs. During site visit focus groups, the teachers and instructional coaches talked about using data to make academic adjustments. In observations, teachers delivered differentiated materials to students based on their academic needs. On several occasions, teachers responded to student responses in-class, and provided feedback (hurdle help, clarifying questions, etc.) to help students expand their learning. The assessment team noted that quantitative data collection (State exam scores, interim and unit assessments, diagnostic tools, and formative assessments) provides targeted insights into student understanding, progress, and content mastery. They asserted that these data have driven their curricular decisions since the previous site visit. They attributed their improved performance to this work.
- **Indicator d:** The renewal application indicates that GUG II employs a multi-measure approach to track student progress toward NYS Learning Standards, ensuring a comprehensive view of each student's learning needs and achievements. In focus group discussions, the network leadership team, assessment team, teachers, and instructional coaches all discussed the use of data in making academic decisions. They made frequent reference to the use of "Looking Forward, Looking Back" assessments, end-of-unit assessments, and foundational assessments to make network-wide curricular decisions. Coaches and teachers also layer the use of formative assessments to help them make decisions in classrooms.

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

- **Indicator a:** Focus group discussions confirmed that GUG II complies with the NYSED-approved identification processes for SWD and ELL to ensure accurate identification and support. During the focus group session, school leaders talked about their process for identifying students who require extra support through their multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) process. They asserted that they comply with all legal requirements for both ELL and SWD students. During observations, the site team noted multiple examples of students receiving individualized support in the form of Tier 1 instruction (ICT), Tier 2 instruction (*Read 180*), and Tier 3 (1:1 instruction). The site team also witnessed differentiation of student instructional materials and instructional approach.
- **Indicator b:** GUG II employs a tiered support model to address the diverse needs of students, including SWD, ELL and ED students. During the renewal site visit, the team observed general education classrooms serving students requiring Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) or related services, while ICT classrooms (K-8) paired general and special education teachers to support up to 40 percent of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) through co-teaching, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies, and small group instruction. Bridge (self-contained) classes in grades K-4 provided intensive, small-group instruction for students with complex needs. Instructional coaches highlighted the use of the SIOP model to enhance ELL content comprehension and English skills, supported by tailored English as a new language (ENL) teacher interventions and middle school advisories with ELL cohorts. In one middle school ICT class, in addition to the two teachers, there was also a paraprofessional, a speech and language therapist, and an occupational therapist. Despite five adults in the room, instruction and interventions were well-managed, allowing many students to get assistance simultaneously.

- **Indicator c:** GUG II employs a structured system to monitor individual student progress and ensure seamless communication between interventionists and classroom teachers. For ELL students, according to teachers, progress in reading, writing, speaking, and listening is tracked quarterly using Google Sheets, enabling data-driven adjustments across language domains. Special education leaders use specialized Google Sheets to monitor IEP goals, allowing ongoing review and refinement of strategies to meet individual needs. The elementary school and middle school leadership teams talked about how weekly meetings bring together classroom teachers, ENL teachers, and special populations leaders to coordinate support efforts. Leaders also noted that shared planning time is dedicated to professional development, data analysis, and the Looking at Student Work (LASW) protocol, addressing disparities among subgroups. During observations, the site visit team noted many examples of co-teaching models that paired ENL and classroom teachers to align language and academic objectives, ensuring targeted support for diverse learners.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement

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

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Measures of Culture, Climate, and Student Engagement	<p>a. The school has processes and procedures in place to address chronic absenteeism for all students and sub-groups such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the educational program. Given the increased autonomy to engage students, chronic absenteeism rates are expected to be equal to or less than those of the district of location. In New York City, the district of location is the community school district. Charter schools that have a mission or key design element to serve students in a particular school district will also be compared to that school district. In addition, charter schools with more than 40% of enrolled students residing in districts other than the district of location, or the school district they are mandated to serve, will also be compared to the next highest district where students reside. ⁴</p> <p>b. The school has processes and procedures in place to address out of school suspension rates for all students and sub-groups such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the educational program. Given the increased autonomy to engage students, out of school suspension rates are expected to be equal to or less than those of the district of location. In New York City, the district of location is the community school district. Charter schools that have a mission or key design element to serve students in a particular school district will also be compared to that school district. In addition, charter schools with more than 40% of enrolled students residing in districts other than the district of location, or the school district they are mandated to serve, will also be compared to the next highest district where students reside. ⁵</p> <p>c. The school has an NYSED approved process in place to measure and evaluate school climate and culture.</p>
2. Behavior Management and Safety	<p>a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy that is applicable to all students, includes a policy that addresses a school's stance toward in and out of school suspensions, and is implemented throughout the school by all school staff with fidelity.</p>

⁴ See <https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20New%20York%20State%20Safe%20Schools%20Task%20Force%20Recommendations%20Status%20Update%20.pdf>.

⁵ Student Suspension rate is determined by dividing the number of students who were suspended from school (not including in-school suspensions) for one full day or longer anytime during the school year by the Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) day enrollments for that school year. A student is counted only once, regardless of whether the student was suspended one or more times during the school year. Data Source: L2RPT Report SIRS-351: Student Attendance Summary Report - http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/level2reports/documents/SIRS_351-360-361-370AttendanceandDayCalRptGuiderev3.6.18.pdf.

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
	<p>b. The school uses a tiered approach to behavioral interventions that support student social-emotional development.</p> <p>c. The school appears safe, and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.</p> <p>d. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). The school has a DASA Coordinator that staff can identify.</p> <p>e. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.</p>
3. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i>	<p>a. The school communicates with families in their preferred language to discuss students' strengths, progress, and needs and engages them as part of the school community.</p> <p>b. The school uses multiple methods of family engagement for all communication with all parents, in their preferred language, regardless of the disability status or language ability of their children.</p> <p>c. The school assesses family satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions.</p> <p>d. The school has a systematic and transparent process for responding to family or community concerns.</p> <p>e. The school shares NYSED school report card data with parents and the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability.</p> <p>f. The school shares its New York State exam participation rate compared to the district of location.</p>
4. <i>Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports</i>	<p>a. The school has systems, programs, and curriculum in place to support the social-emotional and mental health needs of all students.</p> <p>b. School leaders collect and use data to track the social-emotional needs of all students, including students in subgroups.</p> <p>c. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support the social and emotional health of all students.</p> <p>d. The school provides staff with professional development opportunities to support the social-emotional and mental health of students in a culturally responsive manner.</p> <p>e. The school has processes and procedures in place to address the learning and social-emotional needs of McKinney-Vento eligible students such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the educational program. The school has a McKinney-Vento Coordinator that staff can identify.</p>

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as "Meets."

1. Element: ***Measures of Culture, Climate, and Student Engagement:***

- **Indicator a:** Attendance rates dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic, with attendance dropping from 94 percent in 2019-2020 to 71 percent in 2020-2021 before recovering to 83 percent by 2022-2023, according to the *New York State School Report Card*. According to the renewal application, to address this, school leadership, operations teams, and deans enforce attendance policies outlined in the *Family Handbook*. Teachers build strong family relationships through texts, emails, and formal protocols like phone calls and meetings. During focus groups, parents noted that communication is a GUG II strength; they added that when there is a problem with their children the school responds very quickly and effectively. Special focus is given to SWD, ELL, and ED students, according to the renewal application.
- **Indicator b:** The GUG II code of conduct and discipline policy emphasizes fair treatment for all students while allowing the school to take actions that support the student body's best interests. School leaders asserted that discipline is enforced only after a thorough investigation, giving students the chance to share their perspectives. According to the renewal application, for potential long-term suspensions or expulsions, students are guaranteed a formal hearing with enhanced due process protections, ensuring fairness and transparency in disciplinary measures. Parents, in the focus group session, indicated that they feel the school goes "above and beyond" to keep their students safe at school.
- **Indicator c:** In addition to the NYCDOE Staff Survey, GUG II employs an annual staff survey to evaluate school climate and culture comprehensively. Conducted each November, the electronic survey covers topics such as school culture, leadership, and areas for improvement. While responses remain anonymous, staff can choose to identify themselves for follow-up. Initiated post-COVID-19 pandemic, this survey assesses staff needs and informs improvements across campuses. The school has implemented changes based on feedback, such as a more relaxed dress code, new printers, and additional professional development and planning days, underscoring GUG II's commitment to enhancing its environment through continuous staff input. During focus group sessions, teachers and leaders indicated that GUG II is the "best place they had ever worked," noting that they care for each other and the students.

2. Element: ***Behavior Management and Safety:***

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application, GUG II fosters a supportive school culture balancing rigorous academics with social and emotional well-being. School leaders explained that elementary faculty are trained in the Responsive Classroom approach, while middle school staff use Developmental Designs to engage Grades 5-8. Leadership, deans, and counselors receive Crisis Prevention Intervention training to address low-risk crises. Restorative discipline practices include behavior reflections, mediations, and restorative circles to maintain learning continuity. School culture coordinators and deans proactively support students and families, mediating conflicts and fostering communication. During the site visit, a fight happened in the lunchroom. All members of the middle school leadership team played an active role in mitigating the impact the altercation had on the students' school day. Additionally, during observation, the site visit team was able to sit in on an elementary morning meeting that validated student experiences outside of school and helped them settle into the school day.
- **Indicator b:** According to the renewal application, the GUG II Staff and Family Handbooks outline a tiered approach to behavioral interventions, balancing accountability and relationship-building. Tier 1 addresses minor infractions with strategies like non-verbal redirection, seat changes, and buddy classroom breaks, fostering self-regulation. Tier 2 manages disruptive behaviors through dean referrals, reflection sessions, and parent communication, with repeated issues prompting family meetings. Tiers 3 and 4 involve serious safety concerns, leading to investigations, parental

contact, and potential suspension paired with restorative circles. School leaders asserted that their behavioral work is guided by Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs principles. They emphasized logical consequences and collaborative reflection to promote positive behavior and strengthen the school community.

- **Indicator c:** GUG II's renewal application asserts that they ensure a safe school environment through staff training, student engagement, and family involvement. School leaders indicated that all staff participate in safety workshops during August Opening Meetings and ongoing sessions, covering protocols for all settings. The first six weeks emphasize safety routines, with elementary morning meetings and middle school advisories fostering collaborative class charters. Families stay informed through events like Curriculum Night and workshops, alongside the GUG Family Handbook. Security personnel and staff provide vigilant supervision, especially during high-activity periods, supported by a response team for incident management. Parents interviewed during the focus group sessions indicated that they were very pleased with the safety protocols of the school.
- **Indicator d:** GUG II upholds New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) through a structured approach to bullying prevention and intervention. School counselors, according to the renewal application, serve as DASA Coordinators, investigate reported incidents, determine bullying qualifications, and provide victim support, including counseling and restorative circles. They also lead annual workshops for students and professional development for staff on harassment prevention. According to school leaders, investigations involve collaboration with school leaders and deans to ensure immediate intervention. Consequences for perpetrators range from reflective activities to classroom removal for severe cases. During the site visit, staff members were able to name the DASA coordinator when prompted.
- **Indicator e:** GUG II employs diverse strategies to minimize classroom disruptions and foster a positive learning environment. Teachers indicated that students take daily brain breaks to help maintain focus and self-regulation. In elementary school, the Responsive Classroom approach uses teacher language, modeling, and structured routines to support behavior management. The site visit team was able to observe one of the morning meetings during their visit. Middle school students benefit from the "Tab and Tab Out" system, offering in-class breaks or opportunities to regroup outside the classroom. Teachers, in focus groups, indicated that for students with behavior challenges, personalized intervention plans are developed by a team of deans, counselors, and administrators. Regular communication among staff ensures a unified approach, promoting a supportive atmosphere where students stay engaged in learning.

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

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application, community and family engagement are central to GUG II. Weekly newsletters, provided in English, Spanish, and Bengali, inform families about events, testing, and community resources. Parents talked about Parent Square as a "major" form of communication, indicating that they feel communication is very strong, enabling families to connect with teachers and administrators while accessing updates and report cards in their preferred languages. Teachers use Parent Square to share curriculum updates and address questions promptly, ensuring transparency.
- **Indicator b:** At GUG II, Parent Square serves as the primary tool for critical announcements, including attendance updates and operational information, supported by monthly newsletters and reminders from school leaders, according to the renewal application. To ensure inclusivity, communication is tailored to families' needs, with information consistently provided in their preferred languages, both digitally and in print. Email enables direct correspondence between staff and families, while Google Voice numbers allow teachers and administrators to

communicate via text or call. According to family highlights materials provided to the site visit team, “Coffee & Collaboration” breakfasts co-hosted by the school and Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) are held at both schools three to four times throughout the year. Each coffee focuses on different topics, such as communication, report cards, supporting student learning, social-emotional milestones, State testing and exams, and healthy habits. In addition, families are welcomed to Community Circles and whole school assembly presentations for special events throughout the year, such as Black History Month, Sustainability, Unity Day, and Kindness celebrations. In focus groups, teachers, leaders, and parents all emphasized the school’s strong communication with parents and the community.

- **Indicator c:** School leaders noted that they valued the insights gained from the New York City school surveys as well as feedback gathered through school-created family surveys. They provided the example of establishing report card conferences in response to feedback given on a survey. The family coordinator provided the site visit team with a document highlighting family engagement activities of the past three years and a folder of letters from families who strongly support the school and its renewal. GUG II also provided the site visit team with a folder of letters from politicians and community leaders who support a five-year renewal for the school.
- **Indicator d:** The school has a written complaint policy, shared each year with families, which describes the process by which a person can make a formal complaint. In addition, the renewal application asserts that GUG II prioritizes strong partnerships with families by fostering open, transparent communication. School leaders explained that classroom teachers are accessible for parental questions, while school leaders maintain supportive relationships to address additional concerns. The network leadership team, the school leader, assistant school leader, directors of operations and support services, curriculum coaches, and deans, ensure consistent communication. The network team, including the executive director and director of family engagement, support broader family needs. According to the renewal application, families can contact instructional coaches for curriculum, counseling staff for special education and interventions, and operations staff for enrollment or logistics. For guidance, the PTO connects families with the appropriate school leaders, strengthening educator-family collaboration. One member of the PTO explained that during one of her visits to the school, she learned that students were misbehaving at a local coffee shop, so she went to the coffee shop and observed the students, and then she coached the people working at the shop on how to handle the situation.
- **Indicator e:** The *New York State School Report Card* data is discussed at board meetings and posted on the school website. In addition, network and building leaders make periodic data presentations at board meetings throughout the year, as evidenced in board minutes. Moving forward, according to the renewal application, GUG II aims to broaden access to academic data, reinforcing its commitment to transparency and accountability.
- **Indicator f:** The GUG network leadership maintains consistent, monthly communication with the board of trustees, offering updates on academic progress, community initiatives, and financial summaries. Each year, school leaders present a formal report to the board, sharing State assessment scores and discussing new strategies and programs designed to improve student outcomes. This ongoing communication ensures alignment and accountability in GUG II’s mission to enhance student success. In addition, the *New York State Report Card*, posted on the website, shows how many students were tested and untested for each 3-8 State assessment, providing information regarding participation rates.

4. Element: ***Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports:***

- **Indicator a:** GUG II addresses students’ social-emotional and mental health needs through structured programs and counseling services, according to the renewal application. In elementary

school, the Responsive Classroom approach fosters a positive environment with morning meetings and weekly SEL lessons tailored to classroom needs. Middle school students begin each day with advisory sessions to build community and assess emotional states. During the site visit, the NYSED team was able to observe these sessions and noted that they are closely monitored by coaches and leaders to ensure that they are done with fidelity. Students requiring extra support can access daily check-ins, short-term counseling, or small group sessions focused on specific goals like emotional regulation. GUG II also participates in the “No Place for Hate” program, according to the renewal application, to promote respect and inclusivity, ensuring a safe, supportive environment for all students. The site visit team did not have an opportunity to observe this. A teacher noted ways the school tries to make newcomers feel welcome, such as providing a classroom buddy.

- **Indicator b:** GUG II’s school leaders systematically collect and analyze data to address students’ social-emotional needs. Daily teacher-dean meetings enable prompt action on emerging issues. Data sources include referrals, anecdotal records, trend analyses, and functional behavioral assessments aligned with NYCDOE guidelines to create behavior intervention plans. Leaders and coaches indicated that classroom observations inform targeted interventions, supported by counselors’ check-ins and academic coordination. Leadership reviews discipline trackers, behavior referrals, and social-emotional indicators to evaluate classroom management effectiveness and implement lunch/recess office hours for additional support. A wellness check tracker monitors student and family needs, ensuring effective in-person and remote support.
- **Indicator c:** GUG II fosters SEL through morning meetings in elementary school and Advisory sessions in middle school, rooted in the Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs curricula. Leadership explained that these activities provide a safe space for discussions, enhancing students’ social-emotional skills. During observations, the site team noted that students seemed quite comfortable with the format of these sessions. The Counseling Department refines SEL lessons based on teacher feedback and observations, while support groups address areas like social skills, emotional regulation, and bullying prevention. According to the renewal application, SEL themes focus on community building, empathy, and perspective-taking. Workshops organized by counselors reinforce these skills, supporting students’ holistic social-emotional development. During the site visit, the team noted signage around the school with SEL-focused messaging.
- **Indicator d:** The GUG II Counseling Department and school leaders provide ongoing professional development to equip staff with the skills needed to support students’ mental health and social-emotional needs. Training begins during August opening meetings, according to school leadership, fostering a mindset of mental health awareness. Throughout the year, professional development sessions emphasize proactive and intentional student support, focusing on topics such as anti-racist and anti-bias education, counseling frameworks, and strategies for addressing behavioral needs. Teachers acknowledged that these sessions are offered at various points in the year.
- **Indicator e:** GUG II ensures compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act, guaranteeing students in temporary housing access to the same free public education as their peers. When asked, teachers and coaches could name the district staff member responsible for overseeing this work. According to the renewal application, GUG II removes enrollment barriers, offers door-to-door busing, and provides essential resources like Chromebooks, Wi-Fi, uniforms, and hygiene items. Counseling services address students’ social-emotional needs, while the PTO organizes GoFundMe campaigns to support displaced families. The renewal application states that the counseling staff design and implement SEL lessons to help students succeed socially and emotionally. Additionally, during the CSO site visit, teachers and network leaders talked about how ED students benefited from

resources like free or reduced-price meals, school supplies, and access to community services, alongside programs such as coat drives, uniform exchanges, and immigrant rights workshops.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as “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. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements which can be found on the NYSED website at <https://www.nysed.gov/charter-schools/charter-schools-directory>.

- Financial Composite Score
- Working Capital
- Debt to Asset
- Cash Position
- Total Margin

Financial Condition

Effective FY23, Growing Up Green Charter School II merged with Growing Up Green Charter School with Growing Up Green Charter Schools as the resulting education corporation. Growing Up Green Charter Schools appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the education corporation’s independently audited financial statements.

Overall Financial Outlook

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.50 and 3.00 is generally considered to be in good financial health. A score between 1.00 and 1.40 is considered adequate. Growing Up Green Charter Schools’ 2023-2024 composite score is 1.14.

**Composite Scores
2019-2020 to 2023-2024**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2019-2020	2.01
2020-2021	(0.01)
2021-2022	2.07
2022-2023	1.08
2023-2024	1.14

The school is subject to ASC 842 lease accounting principles effective FY23 due to entering into a long-term operating lease. ASC 842 requires the entire lease to be recorded as a liability, the right-of-use to be recorded as an asset, and an amortized functional expense to be reflected in the financial statements. The net result produces a negative impact to the composite score that disproportionally affects education corporations with very long-term leases. Otherwise, the education corporation has adequate funds to cover operating expenses.

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

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as “Meets.”

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

1. The school has financial professionals assigned to manage school finances.
2. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
3. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget, including detailed assumptions within the budget, in relation to those objectives.
4. 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.
5. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
6. The school has complied with State and federal financial reporting requirements.
7. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
8. The school has procedures in place to ensure that programmatic and independent fiscal audits occur at least once annually, with such audits being comparable in scope to those required of other public schools. Audits will be undertaken by auditing firms with experience working with New York State charter schools and are peer reviewed.
9. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:

NYSED CSO reviewed Growing Up Green Charter Schools’ 2023-2024 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

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

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Board Oversight and Governance</i>	<p>a. The board utilizes an annual written performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself, and providers.</p> <p>b. The board recruits and selects board members with a diverse set of skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school and represent the community in which the school serves.</p> <p>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school's management, comprehensive service provider(s), if applicable, fiscal operations, and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals through written evaluation processes.</p> <p>d. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission and charter.</p> <p>e. The board regularly updates school policies when needed and receives NYSED approval prior to applicable policy implementation.</p> <p>f. The board engages in ongoing professional development.</p> <p>g. The board demonstrates full awareness of its governance role, its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders, and requirements of the school's charter.</p> <p>h. The board is familiar with NYSED Charter School Performance Framework standards and has a plan to ensure that the school meets these standards.</p>

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has improved from "Approaches" to "Meets" due to the board of trustees demonstrating improved understanding of its role in increasing achievement across benchmark indicators.

1. Element: **Board Oversight and Governance:**

- **Indicator a:** The board of trustees of Growing Up Green Network oversees both GUG I and GUG II. It conducts an annual performance-based evaluation using written rubrics. This process ensures accountability and alignment with organizational goals. The evaluation includes two key

components, according to board members: the executive director evaluation, assessing leadership effectiveness and achievement of strategic objectives, and the board of trustees self-evaluation, reflecting on governance practices and overall board performance. These evaluations support continuous improvement, ensuring that both the executive director and the board meet the network's mission and standards of excellence.

- **Indicator b:** The current board has several areas of expertise, including education, finance, law, and social services, among others. According to the board chair, when a board opening arises, a consultant assists in identifying and contacting potential candidates, coordinating with the executive director and trustees to communicate with top prospects. The consultant ensures candidates receive all relevant information, such as job descriptions and school details. Candidates may visit the school, meet with the executive director, and attend a board meeting to understand the school's operations. Board members expressed an interest in finding some trustees with fundraising experience.
- **Indicator c:** The board of trustees provides active oversight for the GUG network. It focuses on management, fiscal responsibility, and progress toward academic and other goals. Through a comprehensive evaluation process, the board has guided school leadership over the past eight years, making strategic decisions on mission, budgeting, facilities, and policies. According to board members, key responsibilities of the board include hiring, supervising, and evaluating the executive director, with decisions on succession being a primary duty. The board also approves budgets and monitors financial integrity by reviewing major contracts, including those for facilities, and significant policies like the employee handbook and student discipline guidelines. The GUG board, according to the renewal application, meets monthly to review school progress, with updates provided by the executive director, school leaders, and a non-voting parent representative, who offers a community perspective. The Finance Committee regularly reviews financial statements, budgets, and audit reports, assessing the impact on shared resources. The board noted that they are working on scheduling a more consistent meeting time for committee work.
- **Indicator d:** The GUG network is dedicated to enhancing the skills and capacity of its board members, both individually and as a collective body. This development is supported by Cohen Schneider Law, P.C., a legal firm specializing in charter school governance across New York State, which has served GUG for nearly 15 years. Cohen Schneider Law, according to the board chair, provides comprehensive governance support and professional development for the board, conducting training sessions that reinforce effective governance practices and equipping board members with the skills necessary as the board's role evolves alongside GUG's growth.
- **Indicator e:** In collaboration with network leadership and professional advisors, including legal counsel and auditors, the board remains informed about necessary policy changes, whether legally mandated or operationally required. Proposed amendments are reviewed and voted on by the board, then submitted to NYSED for approval as needed. This process ensures that GUG policies remain compliant and responsive to evolving needs.
- **Indicator f:** Cohen Schneider Law, P.C. provides professional development sessions for the GUG Board of Trustees, focusing on effective governance practices. These sessions are tailored to strengthen board members' skills and capacity, supporting the board's evolving role. During the focus group, the board members were enthusiastic about the professional development that they receive.
- **Indicator g:** The GUG Board of Trustees maintains a comprehensive understanding of its governance role, legal responsibilities, and charter requirements, collaborating closely with the executive director on key matters such as legal, financial, policy, personnel, and community

relations. Before each meeting, the board chair and executive director prepare a detailed agenda to ensure all relevant issues are thoroughly addressed. The board asserted that they routinely review school benchmarks and charter goals using “Board Materials” on a dedicated data dashboard. Monthly office hours with the managing director of curriculum and instruction provide interactive updates, allowing board members to stay informed about charter benchmarks and requirements.

- **Indicator h:** As discussed during the focus group, several more trustees should plan to attend meetings between the authorizer and the school. However, the three members of the GUG Board of Trustees who participated in the focus group appeared familiar with NYSED’s Charter School Performance Framework, understanding its role in the evaluation and renewal of the school’s charter. The board indicated that it gets regular updates from GUG II leadership on monthly financial reports from the finance director, academic growth snapshots from the managing director of curriculum, instruction, and leadership development (supported by the academic dashboard), compliance advice from Cohen Schneider Law, P.C. and Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, and an annual audit report from PKF O’Connor Davies. They do not have a systematic process for ensuring the school meets each benchmark; however, they remain well-informed and are open to ideas about ways to structure the process and involve every board member.

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

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

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>School Leadership</i>	<p>a. The school has an effective school leadership team that communicates a clearly defined mission and set of goals to staff and the school community.</p> <p>b. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place to ensure effective communication across the school.</p> <p>c. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel that meets the needs of all students and subgroups, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</p> <p>d. School leadership is familiar with NYSED Charter School Performance Framework standards and has a plan to ensure that the school meets these standards.</p>
2. <i>Professional Climate</i>	<p>a. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and the board of trustees are clearly defined and adhered to.</p> <p>b. The school ensures that staff has the requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet all students' needs, including students in subgroups.</p> <p>c. The school is fully staffed with personnel who are able to meet all operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communications.</p> <p>d. The school has established procedures for effective collaboration among teachers.</p> <p>e. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality through a formal evaluation process for teacher and other staff.</p> <p>f. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher and staff feedback and to gauge their satisfaction.</p>
	<p>a. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</p>

Element

Indicators

3. *Contractual Relationships (if applicable)*

- b. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners and has established an effective working relationship.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as “Meets.”

1. Element: ***School Leadership:***

- **Indicator a:** The GUG II network leadership team effectively communicates a clear mission and goals to staff and the school community, despite some confusion around the strategic plan initiative: “Rooted in Inquiry; Grounded in Criticality.” At the elementary level, the team includes the school leader, assistant school leader, director of supports, three instructional coaches, and grade-level leads. The middle school team is comprised of the school leader, assistant school leader, director of support services, two instructional coaches, a school culture coordinator, and grade-level leads. Both campuses share an ENL coordinator to support ELLs. According to school leadership, weekly campus meetings allow the elementary and middle school leadership teams to review academic and cultural data, observational trends, and upcoming events, fostering informed goal setting and decision making. Goals are communicated to the school community through staff meetings, professional development, and newsletters (“Daily Updates” for elementary staff and “Weekly Word” for middle school staff), with consistent tracking of progress in areas like culture, attendance, professionalism, and family engagement. School-based goals are reinforced through one-on-one coaching and grade-level meetings, ensuring that staff practices align with mission-driven objectives. This structured communication fosters a unified approach, supporting equitable learning outcomes for all students; however, when asked to define “criticality,” members of each focus group struggled to explain its meaning in connection to the school’s mission.
- **Indicator b:** GUG II has established effective communication systems and decision-making processes that facilitate clear, consistent messaging across the school. According to the renewal application, for the elementary school, “Daily Updates” are emailed each morning, providing information on instructional focus, events, volunteer opportunities, and recognitions, with over 90 percent of staff regularly engaging. The middle school’s “Weekly Word” newsletter serves a similar role, delivering weekly updates on instructional focus, community events, and professional development, also maintaining high viewership. G-Chat spaces support targeted communication for grade teams, culture teams, and emergencies, offering real-time updates during fire drills and lockdowns. For K-8 family communication, GUG II uses ParentSquare, which ensures accessibility by automatically translating messages into families’ preferred languages and receives positive feedback from both staff and families. Parents spoke very highly about the communication they receive from the school.
- **Indicator c:** According to network and school leadership, the GUG network is dedicated to attracting, supporting, and retaining talented personnel to meet the diverse needs of all students. Led by the director of talent, the staffing process emphasizes strategic recruitment, a rigorous hiring process, ongoing coaching, and strong retention efforts. The strategic recruitment approach includes a variety of outreach methods, such as in-person events, digital campaigns,

and staff referral bonuses. GUG II participates in events like the Progressive Public and Charter School Job Fair for Educators of Color to ensure alignment with its mission to promote diversity. School leaders said that they are always looking for talented educators and frequently talk to potential teachers as they meet them. The hiring process, according to the renewal application, includes multiple interview stages, classroom demonstrations, and reference checks, with a focus on mission-aligned areas such as data use, social-emotional learning, and anti-racist pedagogy. Instructional coaches provide staff with continuous feedback. Clear expectations are set verbally and in writing, with verbal warnings and increased support for staff needing improvement. If necessary, a performance improvement plan is implemented, followed by potential termination discussions with human resources if performance does not improve. Middle school focus groups indicated that employee attendance has notably improved under the new leadership, which speaks to the positive work environment. According to school leadership, staff satisfaction surveys show high ratings for workplace joy and positive school culture, supplemented by “stay interviews” and mid-year check-ins for new staff.

- **Indicator d:** The leadership at GUG II is highly attuned to NYSED Charter School Performance Framework standards, implementing a structured plan to consistently meet and exceed these benchmarks. According to the renewal application, this includes regular discussions and planning related to onboarding and training, strategic planning, and professional development. During the CSO site visit, the site visit team noted that the strategic planning is embedded in guiding GUG II’s daily operations. However, the school’s emphasis on “criticality” created some gaps in understanding for the members of focus groups.

2. Element: *Professional Climate:*

- **Indicator a:** The roles of network and school-based leadership, staff, management, and the board at GUG are clearly outlined to ensure effective operations and accountability. Network leaders handle overarching organizational decisions, guide school leaders in evidence-based practices, codify processes, and oversee implementation within a framework set by the board and network staff, according to the renewal application. School-based leaders focus on daily operations and make campus-specific decisions aligned with these guidelines. The board asserts that its role is to hold the executive director accountable for regulatory compliance and effective support of school leaders.
- **Indicator b:** GUG II maintains a well-structured professional development framework to equip staff with the skills and expertise needed to meet diverse student needs. According to school leadership, each school year begins with a comprehensive professional development launch, aligning staff with GUG II's mission and core values. Throughout the year, ongoing support includes instructional coaching, regular observations, and targeted feedback. The network leadership team conducts an annual data review to identify improvement areas and plan training. Coaching cycles run from October to June, providing continuous support and feedback. Specialized roles, such as the director of multilingual learning and the director of sustainability and experiential learning, play critical roles in implementing instructional practices and key design elements consistently across campuses, according to school leaders. On the 2023-2024 New York City Staff Survey, 88 percent of staff agreed or strongly agreed that “professional development experiences this year have directly related to my students’ needs.”
- **Indicator c:** GUG II's commitment to a fully staffed, efficient operational team is key to fostering a positive and effective school environment. Nearly all operational positions are consistently filled, ensuring diverse needs in finance, human resources, and communications are met. The finance team, led by the managing director of finance, handles financial planning and reporting, with daily activities supported by the finance manager and finance associates. Human resources

functions are managed by the managing director of human resources and the director of human resources operations, while the director of talent focuses on recruitment and staff development. The director of family engagement and communications leads communications and family engagement strategies, and the chief operating officer oversees overall efficiency, supported by information technology (IT) coordinators and a facilities and security manager who ensure smooth IT and facility operations. Additional support from the director of enrollment and data operations, office manager, and other administrative roles helps maintain daily operations and security.

- **Indicator d:** GUG II has established comprehensive procedures to facilitate effective collaboration among teachers, enhancing instructional quality and alignment across K – Grade 8. According to coaches, grade-level leads play a pivotal role organizing weekly grade team meetings focused on curriculum development, instructional strategies, and student progress. For middle school, triad and department meetings provide additional collaborative spaces to ensure consistency. Coaching meetings support this framework by offering targeted professional development aligned with school mission and network priorities, according to school leaders. Coaches work directly with teachers to refine instructional methods, introduce new approaches, and meet the specific needs of SWD and ELL students, fostering inclusive and responsive teaching strategies. Weekly staff meetings enable horizontal and vertical collaboration among all faculty members, serving as a platform for professional development, cross-disciplinary discussions, and sharing best practices.
- **Indicator e:** GUG II upholds high organizational and instructional standards through a rigorous evaluation process for teachers and staff. A key element of this process is frequent mini observations, conducted 15-20 times annually for each teacher. These brief, 10–15 minute observations are scheduled at various points in lessons to capture a broad perspective of teaching practices across subjects. Observation frequency is tailored based on data to support effective coaching. The site team noted that during observations, staff and students were unphased by the presence of outside evaluators in the room. According to the renewal application, teachers receive in-person debriefs within 48 hours of each observation, highlighting strengths and areas for growth. Coaches provide written follow-ups to reinforce action points, and coaching meetings throughout the year focus on these growth areas collaboratively. According to the renewal application, the Marshall evaluation rubrics are applied at three key intervals—September/October, January, and May—to guide discussions between teachers and their supervisors or coaches. These rubrics help set goals and assess progress, ensuring continuous development based on observations and other professional responsibilities.
- **Indicator f:** The renewal application indicates that GUG II actively gauges staff satisfaction through its annual "Building a Supportive Workplace" survey, conducted each winter to capture insights on various aspects of the school environment and operations. This survey includes sections tailored to distinct roles within GUG II, with questions on individual experiences, school culture, leadership performance, and the contributions of the Operations and Facilities teams. Feedback on the network also addresses roles that support multiple GUG schools. The renewal application notes that in times of change or challenge, such as the change in the middle school principal, the school leaders conduct listening tours with grade teams, providing an additional platform for staff to voice experiences and concerns. Informal feedback is also gathered during coaching meetings, evaluations, and, starting in 2024-2025, through “stay interviews” with effective returning staff to identify successful practices. This comprehensive approach encourages leadership that is responsive to staff needs, supporting continuous improvement and a positive professional climate. Several interviewed staff indicated that GUG II is the “best place [they] had ever worked.”

3. Element: ***Contractual Relationships:***

- **Indicator a:** n/a
- **Indicator b:** n/a

Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

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

Finding: Meets

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

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained consistent as "Meets."

1. Element: **Mission and Key Design Elements:**

- **Indicator a:** At GUG II, a shared understanding of the school's mission and key design elements is actively cultivated through professional development, public communication, hiring practices, and ongoing staff support. Professional development sessions are designed to clarify key concepts like "anti-racist" and "rigorous." For example, according to the renewal application, the "High Expectations as Anti-Racist Education Practices" program addresses misconceptions by providing evidence-based resources on promoting productive struggle, engaging students in rigorous tasks with multiple entry points, and positioning teachers as supportive facilitators rather than barriers to challenging content. The mission statement is present on public facing documents, as evidenced by the school's website.
- **Indicator b:** GUG II has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter. According to the renewal application, these include:
 - **Dedication to Academic Rigor:** Instructional leadership ensures that curricular programs align with New York State and Next Generation Learning Standards. Since the last renewal, they evaluated and revised curricula to enhance rigor and depth, adopting evidence-based resources in math and ELA, and refining unit and interim assessments to match State exam rigor. Staff is trained on mindsets, planning, and instructional best practices to maintain rigor.
 - **Hands-on Learning:** From playdough in kindergarten to building models of ancient West African tools and middle school labs where students use recyclable materials to simulate pollution's impact on lungs, this approach helps deepen student understanding of concepts across grades and subjects. The director of sustainability and experiential learning collaborates with K-8 instructional leaders to ensure that units are designed with hands-on opportunities in mind.
 - **Actionable Assessment System:** Three annual "Looking Forward, Looking Back" assessments, aligned with State exam standards, provide timely data to guide instructional adjustments and reinforce continuous progress. The CSO site visit team

- spoke with the assessment team about these assessments, who noted that school performance has improved post-pandemic as measured in these assessments.
- **Green Education:** Central to GUG II's mission, green education includes weekly lessons in elementary grades, a sustainability course for elementary and middle school, and projects like the Planting Project and Sustainability Fair that engage students in environmental practices and research. During the CSO site visit, the team was able to visit an art class that focused on students repurposing everyday items and see the art on display in the school.
 - **Expansive Support Services:** GUG II maintains a robust staff, including a networkwide multilingual learner (MLL) director, a school-based director of support services, special education and ENL teachers, in-house counselors and deans, and a culture coordinator, dedicated to support the achievement of special population students.
 - **Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT):** There are ICT classes in every grade, with the quantity of ICT cohorts dictated by the frequency of ICT mandates in any given cohort. Instructional leaders across all levels of organization ensure co-teachers are equipped to effectively plan, execute a wide range of co-teaching models, and maximize the "power of two" through staff training, best practice shares, targeted feedback, and co-teaching resources.
 - **Intervention:** Intervention is data-driven and cyclical, with students assessed every 6-8 weeks to determine the level of support needed. Intervention includes in-class small group support or specialized assistance from learning specialists, with regular reassessment to adjust support as needed. There is the tiered response to intervention (RTI) process K-8, with tutoring opportunities at the elementary school and office hours at the middle school. The daily instructional schedule is built to ensure effective and increased intervention can take place based on students' needs.
 - **ELL:** GUG II has increased support for ELL students with the addition of three ENL teachers and a network MLL director. Professional development for teachers and instructional coaches emphasizes effective strategies for supporting ELL students, including training on SIOP best practices. This training covers pedagogy, planning, and execution, with feedback provided on SIOP integration.
 - **Counseling:** Counselors and school deans provide both direct student support and strategies for teachers. Initiatives include peer support groups, social skills groups, short-term counseling, and push-in lessons on social-emotional topics identified through surveys. There is a monthly counseling corner newsletter distributed to families and counselor collaboration with instructional and culture staff to reinforce students developing SEL skills throughout the school day and year.
 - **Deliberate School Culture:** Staff modeling and listening, Responsive Classroom, Developmental Designs, and community-building activities foster a positive school culture. During the CSO site visit, the team was able to observe multiple examples of Responsive Classroom being used in elementary classrooms.
 - **Professional Environment:** A supportive professional environment encourages teacher growth through goal setting, summer training, coaching, and data-driven instruction, cultivating a culture of reflection and continuous improvement. Elementary and middle school leadership teams talked about the importance of professional learning in introducing, implementing, and successfully utilizing the network curricula.

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 SWD, 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. High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.

Finding: Approaches

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

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has been consistent as “Approaches” due to continuing under-enrollment of ELL students.

1. Element: **Target are met:**

- **Indicator a:** The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to come close to meeting the contracted enrollment outlined in the charter. For the 2023-2024 year, GUG II enrolled 95 percent of their contracted aggregate enrollment, an improvement from the aggregate over-enrollment from the previous charter term. Enrollment of SWD was +10 percentage points above the DOL, the highest differential in the past five years. In addition, enrollment of ED was +5 percentage points above the DOL.

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

- **Indicator a:** The 2023-2024 enrollment of ELL students was below the DOL -7 percentage points.
- **Indicator b:** The school has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts and implemented program services to attract and retain ELL students. Examples provided by school and network leaders are noted below:

- The school distributes multilingual flyers notifying prospective and current families of virtual open houses, in-person tours, registration events, and other special recreational and academic events.
- The school partners with local preschools and community organizations and conducts additional community outreach.
- A weighted lottery system was used during the 2021-2022 year to prioritize ELL students.
- The school uses Parent Square, a platform that translates materials for potential and current families and facilitates the enrollment process. The school's use of Parent Square as a communication tool is described in greater detail in the Benchmark 3 section "Family Engagement and Communication."
- The school's bilingual operations staff supports families through the enrollment process in-person and works closely with the MLL team to ensure families understand GUG II's educational programs.
- The school has four ENL teachers and a network MLL director on staff and providing tailored supports for students, which contributes to retention. Additional information about these supports is described in the Benchmark 2 section "Supports for Diverse Learners."
- The school has offered migrant rights workshops at the school and distributed "Know Your Rights" cards to families in a variety of languages.

The renewal application asserted that progress toward these goals underscores GUG II's commitment to serving a diverse student body and meeting community needs.

- **Indicator c:** Leveraging its network staff, GUG II evaluates its enrollment, recruitment, and retention strategies by tracking the percentage of students progressing through application, lottery, and registration stages. According to the renewal application, the school has strengthened ties with community organizations, specifically, early childhood providers in NYC CSD 28, resulting in a 28 percent increase in kindergarten enrollment since 2016. They gather data on prospective students and families, including addresses, ages of children, and how they learned about the school. The school customizes its open houses, tours, and promotional materials based on application data. Weekly reports from the director of enrollment and data operations show that many families learn about GUG II through word of mouth, contributing to strong community connections and retention rates.

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: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations 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; addressing complaints; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health, safety, civil rights, and student assessment requirements.b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when required, and/or as requested by the Board of Regents and/or the NYSED Charter School Office and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.c. The school has a plan to ensure that teachers are certified in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.d. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or the NYSED Charter School Office approval for material and non-material revisions.e. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet the expectations detailed in the enrollment plan outlined in the charter and within the parameters set forth in the charter agreement.f. The school seeks guidance from its legal counsel when updating documents and handling issues that arise.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained “Approaches” due to exceeding the allowable number of uncertified teachers.

1. Element: **Legal Compliance:**

- **Indicator a:** GUG II has a record of substantial compliance with laws, regulations, and charter provisions. According to the board of trustees, the executive director and school leaders regularly consult with general counsel on matters related to compliance, legal liability, and charter provisions. To ensure adherence to requirements such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and NYS educational regulations, the school has established systems and reporting protocols, according to the renewal application. Staff members receive annual training during professional development sessions covering responsibilities as mandated reporters under NYS law, key aspects of IDEA and Parts 200 and 201 of the Chancellor's Regulations, and FERPA guidelines. The board adheres to the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are promptly posted on the school website. The school complies with

all assessment requirements, has requested guidance when they needed it, and has provided the CSO liaison with requested documents in a timely manner.

- **Indicator b:** In February 2020, prior to this charter term, GUG II submitted corrective action plans to enhance academic outcomes in ELA and mathematics. These plans focused on increasing instructional time, maintaining consistent guided reading groups, and utilizing content coaches to support teacher development in data analysis and classroom instruction. Since implementing these strategies in 2020, GUG II has not been required to submit any further academic corrective action plans. In January 2025, GUG II submitted a corrective action plan to address their non-compliance with teacher certification requirements. .

Indicator c: Although the number of uncertified teachers exceeds the allowable maximum, the school has developed and implemented a structured plan to ensure that teachers will be certified in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. To support them, the GUG network covers 80 percent of certification costs, grants additional time off for exams and workshops, and has established a certification committee dedicated to guiding teachers through the process. GUG II is actively working with the NYC Charter School Center to assist uncertified staff on completing their certification. The human resources team provides regular updates to school leaders and individual staff members on certification progress. This comprehensive process was implemented several months ago, so it will still take some time for the results to be evident. The goal is for all teachers to be fully certified by June 30, 2026, according to school leaders, though several will complete their certification in 2025. The school provided the site visit team with detailed materials regarding which certification each teacher is working toward, where they are in the certification process, and their anticipated date of completion.

- **Indicator d:** GUG II has obtained approval from the Board of Regents and the CSO for significant revisions to its operations. In 2021, the school received permission for a “revised phase-in” enrollment plan and the addition of a 12:1:1 class to enhance support for students with higher needs.
- **Indicator e:** As noted in Benchmark 9, for 2023-2024, GUG II was at 95 percent of its contracted enrollment. In addition, according to network leaders, the school has had waitlists for both its elementary and middle school for the past few years.
- **Indicator f:** GUG II relies on both general counsel and outside counsel to ensure ongoing compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and charter provisions. According to the renewal application, the general counsel prioritizes professional development in NYS Education Law and is an active member of both local and national school law organizations, enabling the school to stay informed and responsive to evolving legal requirements.

2025 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Overview

Charter School Selection

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL II

BEDS Code

342800860824

2023-2024 Enrollment

775

ESEA Accountability Designation (2023-2024):

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

Charter School Information

School District of Location:	NYC CSD 28
Total Public School Enrollment of Resident Students attending Charter Schools:	5%
Additional School District: (if applicable)*	-
Total Public School Enrollment of Resident Students attending Charter Schools:	-
Grades Served:	K-8
Address:	84-35 152ND ST, JAMAICA, NY, 11432
Website:	www.gugcs.org
RIC:	NEW YORK CITY
Regents Region:	NEW YORK CITY - QUEENS
Regent:	Judith Chin
Active Date:	7/1/2016
Authorizer:	REGENTS
CEO:	MR. MATTHEW GREENBERG
CEO Phone:	347-642-4306
CEO Email:	greenberg@gugcs.org
BOT President:	MR. MARC GREENBERG
BOT President Phone:	917-913-0098
BOT President Email:	marc@iahh.org
Institution ID:	800000086908

*An additional district may be used for comparison if a school is chartered to serve a school district other than the one in which they are located or if 40% of their students are residents of a district other than the district in which they are located.

BoR Charter School Office Information

Regional Liaison:	Brandy Marshall
Performance Framework:	2019
Current Term:	07/01/21 - 06/30/25
2020-2021	Renewal
2021-2022	Check-in
2022-2023	Midterm
2023-2024	Check-in
2024-2025	Renewal

Benchmark Rating	Year of Rating
BM1	
BM2	
BM3	
BM4	
BM5	
BM6	
BM7	
BM8	
BM9	
BM10	

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

Charter School

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL II

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

Elementary/Middle School Trending Toward Proficiency - Minimum Expectation = 80%

Growing Up Green CS II	ELA				Math			
	All Students	SWD	ELL	ED	All Students	SWD	ELL	ED
2018-2019	49%	14%	33%	52%	49%	38%	67%	48%
2021-2022	53%	32%	73%	51%	36%	19%	23%	38%
2022-2023	47%	24%	42%	44%	54%	35%	52%	51%
2023-2024	52%	42%	34%	51%	59%	39%	63%	55%

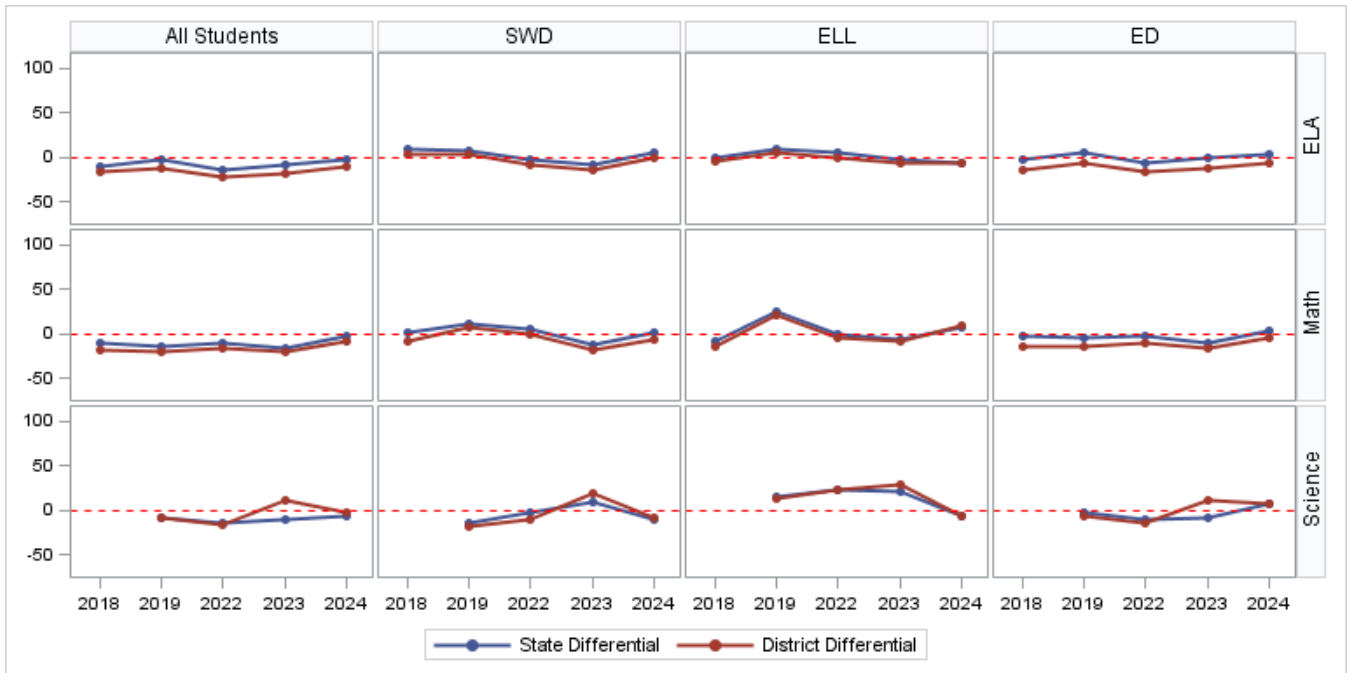
*See NOTES (2), (3), (7), and (8).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

2.b.i. and 2.b.ii Proficiency - Aggregate and Subgroup School Level Proficiency:

Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time
Comparison of Growing Up Green CS and NYC CSD 28



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

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

2.b.i. and 2.b.ii Proficiency - Aggregate and Subgroup School Level Proficiency:

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

		ELA					Math					Science				
		Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	District Differential	NYS	NYS Differential	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	District Differential	NYS	NYS Differential	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	District Differential	NYS	NYS Differential
All Students	2018	41%	57%	-16	51%	-10	44%	62%	-18	54%	-10	.	.	.	.	.
	2019	47%	58%	-11	50%	-3	39%	59%	-20	53%	-14	79%	87%	-8	86%	-7
	2022	32%	53%	-21	46%	-14	30%	46%	-16	40%	-10	66%	81%	-15	80%	-14
	2023	40%	57%	-17	48%	-8	35%	55%	-20	51%	-16	38%	26%	+12	48%	-10
	2024	44%	54%	-10	47%	-3	50%	57%	-7	52%	-2	30%	33%	-3	35%	-5
SWD	2018	33%	29%	+4	24%	+9	30%	37%	-7	28%	+2	.	.	.	.	.
	2019	28%	25%	+3	20%	+8	37%	30%	+7	25%	+12	55%	72%	-17	69%	-14
	2022	14%	21%	-7	16%	-2	20%	21%	-1	15%	+5	57%	66%	-9	60%	-3
	2023	11%	25%	-14	19%	-8	12%	29%	-17	23%	-11	33%	14%	+19	24%	+9
	2024	23%	23%	0	18%	+5	26%	32%	-6	25%	+1	6%	13%	-7	15%	-9
ELL	2018	33%	37%	-4	33%	0	33%	47%	-14	40%	-7	.	.	.	.	.
	2019	43%	37%	+6	33%	+10	64%	43%	+21	39%	+25	88%	75%	+13	73%	+15
	2022	35%	35%	0	30%	5	26%	30%	-4	27%	-1	88%	64%	+24	65%	+23
	2023	27%	33%	-6	29%	-2	29%	36%	-7	34%	-5	43%	13%	+30	22%	+21
	2024	21%	27%	-6	26%	-5	45%	36%	+9	37%	+8	14%	19%	-5	20%	-6
ED	2018	37%	50%	-13	40%	-3	41%	54%	-13	43%	-2	.	.	.	.	.
	2019	46%	51%	-5	40%	+6	38%	51%	-13	42%	-4	78%	84%	-6	81%	-3
	2022	30%	45%	-15	36%	-6	27%	36%	-9	29%	-2	63%	77%	-14	72%	-9
	2023	37%	49%	-12	38%	-1	31%	47%	-16	40%	-9	33%	22%	+11	40%	-7
	2024	41%	46%	-5	37%	+4	45%	49%	-4	42%	+3	34%	27%	+7	26%	+8

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

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

2.b.iii. Aggregate Grade-Level Proficiency:

All Students Grade-Level Proficiency

All Students		ELA					Math					Science				
		Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
Grade 3	2018	41%	57%	-16	51%	-10	44%	62%	-18	54%	-10	.	.	.	.	.
	2019	53%	60%	-7	52%	+1	37%	61%	-24	55%	-18	.	.	.	.	.
	2022	31%	57%	-26	46%	-15	33%	59%	-26	48%	-15	.	.	.	.	.
	2023	39%	58%	-19	45%	-6	25%	64%	-39	54%	-29	.	.	.	.	.
	2024	54%	50%	+4	43%	+11	64%	61%	+3	54%	+10	.	.	.	.	.
Grade 4	2019	41%	55%	-14	48%	-7	42%	56%	-14	51%	-9	79%	87%	-8	86%	-7
	2022	21%	50%	-29	42%	-21	51%	49%	+2	43%	+8	66%	81%	-15	80%	-14
	2023	56%	61%	-5	49%	+7	55%	61%	-6	54%	+1	.	.	.	.	.
	2024	51%	59%	-8	47%	+4	74%	67%	+7	58%	+16	.	.	.	.	.
Grade 5	2022	16%	44%	-28	38%	-22	3%	44%	-41	37%	-34	.	.	.	.	.
	2023	29%	53%	-24	45%	-16	27%	54%	-27	50%	-23	.	.	.	.	.
	2024	35%	51%	-16	44%	-9	30%	58%	-28	49%	-19	30%	37%	-7	35%	-5
Grade 6	2022	42%	59%	-17	57%	-15	35%	39%	-4	39%	-4	.	.	.	.	.
	2023	35%	51%	-16	46%	-11	32%	48%	-16	48%	-16	.	.	.	.	.
	2024	29%	49%	-20	44%	-15	37%	52%	-15	51%	-14	.	.	.	.	.
Grade 7	2022	49%	57%	-8	48%	+1	23%	39%	-16	36%	-13	.	.	.	.	.
	2023	36%	55%	-19	48%	-12	32%	54%	-22	52%	-20	.	.	.	.	.
	2024	47%	56%	-9	50%	-3	47%	54%	-7	57%	-10	.	.	.	.	.
Grade 8	2023	48%	65%	-17	56%	-8	39%	37%	+2	43%	-4	38%	26%	+12	48%	-10
	2024	48%	55%	-7	52%	-4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

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

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Regents Outcomes

Charter School

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL II

Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Annual Regents Outcomes:

Annual Regents Outcomes

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Total Charter Tested	Growing Up Green CS II	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Growing Up Green CS II	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Growing Up Green CS II	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Growing Up Green CS II	NYS	Differential to NYS
Algebra I	2023-2024	87	33%	83%	-50	22	18%	51%	-33	7	14%	50%	-36	59	36%	72%	-36
Algebra I (Common Core)	2022-2023	66	39%	83%	-44	12	33%	48%	-15	8	38%	53%	-15	52	38%	73%	-35
Living Environment	2022-2023	65	38%	74%	-36	12	33%	40%	-7	7	43%	39%	4	52	33%	63%	-30
	2023-2024	84	45%	74%	-29	22	18%	44%	-26	7	29%	37%	-8	57	46%	63%	-17

*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), (4), and (7).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 9 - Indicator 1: Enrollment and Retention

Charter School

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL II

1.a.i. Aggregate Enrollment:

Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted - Target = 100%

Growing Up Green CS II	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2019-2020	420	434	103%
2020-2021	542	572	106%
2021-2022	693	644	93%
2022-2023	748	682	91%
2023-2024	812	775	95%

1.a.ii. Subgroup Enrollment:

Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District
2019-2020	21%	17%	+4	13%	20%	-7	72%	66%	+6
2020-2021	19%	17%	+2	5%	20%	-15	67%	66%	+1
2021-2022	22%	18%	+4	13%	20%	-7	70%	65%	+5
2022-2023	27%	18%	+9	14%	20%	-6	76%	68%	+8
2023-2024	27%	17%	+10	16%	23%	-7	76%	71%	+5

*See NOTES (2) and (6).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 9 - Indicator 1: Enrollment and Retention

1.b.i. and 1.b.ii. Retention:

Retention - Aggregate and Subgroups

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District	Growing Up Green CS II	NYC CSD 28	Differential to District
2019-2020	82%	87%	-5	79%	87%	-8	75%	86%	-11	83%	87%	-4
2020-2021	90%	88%	+2	90%	86%	+4	91%	88%	+3	89%	89%	0
2021-2022	76%	79%	-3	87%	71%	+16	77%	82%	-5	77%	82%	-5
2022-2023	77%	86%	-9	84%	88%	-4	82%	86%	-4	79%	86%	-7
2023-2024	81%	87%	-6	84%	86%	-2	81%	86%	-5	80%	87%	-7

*See NOTES (2) and (6).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Notes

- (1) Data in the table above represents tested students who scored proficiently on the NYSTP ELA, math, or science assessments or on the Regents math or science exams.
- (2) For the students with disabilities and the English language learners 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).
- (11) Data in the table above is a comparison of the differentials of the 3-8 assessments and the 4-year graduation rate for the school and other schools with the same grade structure and similar subgroup enrollment pattern. The notation +/- 5, indicates the highest level of similarity.
- (12) Data in the table above represents students who passed their Regents ELA exam with a score equal to or higher than 75 and also passed at least one of their Regents math exams with a score equal to or higher than 80.
- (13) Schools are considered 'similar' for the purpose of this comparison when they serve the same grade band as the school in question. The degree of similarity is determined by comparison of the percentage of each subgroup's enrollment (students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students). An assignment of +/- 5 (7.5, or 10) indicates that the schools' subgroup enrollments are within 5 (7.5, or 10) percentage points for each subgroup.

Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary

GROWING UP GREEN CHARTER SCHOOL II

2019 20	2020 21	2021 22	2022 23	2023 24
K-4	K-6	K-7	K-8	K-8
K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
420	542	693	748	748
748	748	748	748	748
434	572	645	682	777

Grades Served
Maximum Chartered Grades Served
Chartered Enrollment
Maximum Chartered Enrollment
Actual Enrollment

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents
Grants and Contracts Receivable
Prepaid Expenses
Other Current Assets

2,413,029	3,554,716	2,427,983	8,329,764	1,398,640
188,466	153,434	454,107	1,135,824	784,754
231,425	274,591	480,388	1,237,302	891,683
-	209,460	235,063	1,067,190	10,225,136
2,832,920	4,192,201	3,597,541	11,770,080	13,300,213

Non-Current Assets

Property, Building and Equipment, net
Restricted Cash
Security Deposits
Other Non-Current Assets

1,700,787	1,954,078	2,242,780	3,547,083	4,229,438
75,386	75,425	1,077,716	148,226	200,028
199,665	200,165	219,018	415,250	408,966
-	-	-	99,729,973	141,294,482
1,975,838	2,229,668	3,539,514	103,840,532	146,132,914
4,808,758	6,421,869	7,137,055	115,610,612	159,433,127

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

112,221	329,817	193,766	541,429	594,156
495,388	823,861	836,465	2,143,956	2,415,638
-	511,397	1,298,772	-	-
-	29,021	1,368	1,074,390	143,236
471,791	1,060,564	1,237,904	2,494,402	2,784,032
1,079,400	2,754,660	3,568,275	6,254,177	5,937,062

Total Current Liabilities

Long-Term Liabilities

Deferred Rent

1,491,300	2,571,983	96,418	-	-
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Other Long-Term Liabilities

807,328	807,328	-	101,270,172	145,318,372
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Total Long-Term Liabilities

2,298,628	3,379,311	96,418	101,270,172	145,318,372
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Total Liabilities

3,378,028	6,133,971	3,664,693	107,524,349	151,255,434
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NET ASSETS

Unrestricted

1,430,730	287,898	3,472,362	8,086,263	8,177,693
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Restricted

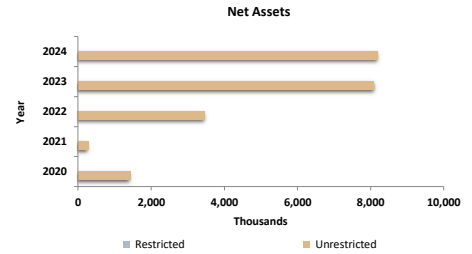
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Total Net Assets

1,430,730	287,898	3,472,362	8,086,263	8,177,693
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Total Liabilities and Net Assets

4,808,758	6,421,869	7,137,055	115,610,612	159,433,127
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OPERATING REVENUE

6,866,744	8,729,380	10,755,667	25,827,519	28,358,322
1,147,813	1,311,345	1,630,052	3,982,537	4,251,638
900,000	2,062,027	3,227,428	5,035,535	5,830,739
187,735	360,370	730,413	1,131,304	1,284,396
34,178	27,711	40,785	101,187	111,664
-	-	-	385,743	-
9,136,470	12,490,833	16,384,345	36,463,825	39,836,759

EXPENSES

Program Services

Regular Education
Special Education
Other Expenses

4,431,439	9,099,479	11,790,774	23,248,501	23,746,411
2,467,029	2,922,025	3,661,597	10,881,885	12,103,046
97,844	-	-	60,441	49,159
6,996,312	12,021,504	15,452,371	34,190,827	35,898,616

Supporting Services

Management and General
Fundraising

1,240,535	1,597,650	2,101,397	4,237,719	5,096,374
10,699	39,622	103,178	189,675	126,460
1,251,234	1,637,272	2,204,575	4,427,394	5,222,834
8,247,546	13,658,776	17,656,946	38,618,221	41,121,450

Total Support Services

1,251,234	1,637,272	2,204,575	4,427,394	5,222,834
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Total Expenses

8,247,546	13,658,776	17,656,946	38,618,221	41,121,450
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Surplus/Deficit from Operations

888,924	(1,167,943)	(1,272,601)	(2,154,396)	(1,284,691)
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SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE

Interest and Other Income
Contributions and Grants
Fundraising Support
Other Support and Revenue

-	-	2,292	159,805	197,035
58,234	11,446	7,057	158,717	179,086
-	-	-	-	-
137	13,665	4,447,716	(313,060)	1,000,000
58,371	25,111	4,457,065	5,462	1,376,121

Total Support and Other Revenue

58,371	25,111	4,457,065	5,462	1,376,121
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Change in Net Assets

947,295	(1,142,832)	3,184,464	(2,148,934)	91,430
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Net Assets - Beginning of Year

483,435	1,430,730	287,898	3,472,362	8,086,263
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Net Assets - End of Year

1,430,730	287,898	3,472,362	1,323,428	8,177,693
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REVENUE & EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

Revenue - Per Pupil

Operating
Support and Other Revenue

21,052	21,837	25,402	53,466	51,270
134	44	6,910	8	1,771
21,186	21,881	32,312	53,474	53,041

Total Revenue

Expenses - Per Pupil

Program Services
Management and General, Fundraising

16,121	21,017	23,957	50,133	46,202
2,883	2,862	3,418	6,492	6,722
19,004	23,879	27,375	56,625	52,923

Total Expenses

19,004	23,879	27,375	56,625	52,923
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% of Program Services

84.8%	88.0%	87.5%	88.5%	87.3%
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% of Management and Other

15.2%	12.0%	12.5%	11.5%	12.7%
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% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses

11.5%	8.4%	18.0%	5.6%	0.2%
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FINANCIAL COMPOSITE SCORE

Composite Score

2.01	(0.01)	2.07	1.08	1.14
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BENCHMARK and FINDING:

Strong: 1.5 - 3.0 / Adequate: 1.0 - 1.4 /
Needs Monitoring: -1.0 - 0.9

Strong	Needs Monitoring	Strong	Adequate	Adequate
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WORKING CAPITAL

Net Working Capital
Working Capital (Current) Ratio

1,753,520	1,437,541	29,266	5,515,903	7,363,151
2.6	1.5	1.0	1.9	2.2

BENCHMARK and FINDING:

Ratio should be equal to or greater than 1.2

Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
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DEBT TO ASSET

Debt to Asset Ratio

0.7	1.0	0.5	0.9	0.9
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BENCHMARK and FINDING:

Ratio should be equal to or less than 1.0

Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard			
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CASH POSITION

Days of Cash

106.8	95.0	50.2	78.7	12.4
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BENCHMARK and FINDING:

Ratio should be equal to or greater than 60 days

Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
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TOTAL MARGIN

Total Margin Ratio

0.1	(0.1)	0.2	(0.1)	0.0
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BENCHMARK and FINDING:

Ratio should be equal to or greater than 0.0

Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	
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