



# New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report  
2018-2019

Compass Charter School

Visit Date: October 24, 2018  
Date of Report: June 3, 2019

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Renewal Outcomes



Board selfevaluation processes and documents  
Student/family handbook  
Staff handbook and personnel policies  
A list of major assessments  
Teacher and administrator evaluation processes  
Interventions offered at the school  
Schoolconducted surveys of teachers, parents, and/or students, and/or NYC DOE Surveys  
Professional development plans and schedules  
Effortstowards achieving enrollment and retention targets  
School submitted Annual Reports



New York State Education Department  
 Charter School Performance Framework Rating

Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Approaches
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning School leaders have systems in place designed to improve academic outcomes, and educational success.	



## Summary of Findings

*Compass Charter School (CCS) is in year five of operation and serves students in kindergarten through Grade 5. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: meeting seven benchmarks, approaching two benchmarks*



In 20172018, 52% of students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

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

In 20172018, 33% of students with disabilities attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in ELA. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework. In 20172018, 20% of students with disabilities attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

In 20172018, 39% of economically disadvantaged students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in ELA. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework. In 20172018, 23% of economically disadvantaged students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

*2.b.i. Proficiency - Agofii .i. P*

*2.b.ii. Proficiency*

Table 4: Grade Level Proficiency for All Students Mathematics

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13 / N	Variance to NYC CSD 13 / NYS	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13 / N	Variance to NYC CSD 13 / NYS
Grade 3	11%	49% / 48%	-38 / -37	47%	54% / 54%	-7 / -7
Grade 4	.	. / .	. / .	32%	47% / 48%	-15 / -16

NOTE:

(1) Data in the table above represents all students tested who scored proficiently (level 3 or above) on each state assessment.

## Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

*School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to -being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSL) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.*

### Finding: Meets

Element

Indicators

- a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to NYSL
- b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding an

1. Curriculum











## Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

### Financial Condition

Compass Charter School appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted cash.

The Charter School Office reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted cash, are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of the school. The Charter School Office uses three measures: the current ratio, unrestricted cash, and the debt-to-capital assets ratio. For 2016-2017, Compass Charter School had a current ratio of 2.1, unrestricted cash of 41 days, and a debt-to-capital assets ratio of 0.2.

### Overall Financial Outlook

A composite score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. For 2016-2017, Compass Charter School had a composite score of 2.0.

Compass Charter School Composite Scores  
2014-2015 to 2016-2017

Year	Composite Score
2014-2015	2.1
2015-2016	2.3
2016-2017	2.0

Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services

### Near-Term Indicators

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

The *current ratio* is a financial ratio that measures whether or not a charter school has enough resources to pay its debts over the next 12 months. The ratio is mainly used to give an idea of the school's ability to pay back its short-term liabilities (debt and payables) with its short-term assets (cash, inventory, receivables). The higher the current ratio, the more capable the school is of paying its obligations, with a ratio under 1.0 indicating concern. For 2016-2017, Compass Charter School had a current ratio of 2.1.

*Unrestricted cash* measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Charter schools typically strive to maintain at least 90 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2016-2017, Compass Charter School operated with 41 days of unrestricted cash.





## 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. Board Oversight and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise meet the needs of the school</li><li>b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning b setting priorities v P } o • š Z š Œ o ] P v Á ] š Z š Z • educational philosophy</li><li>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school managen fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals</li><li>d. The board regularly updates school policies</li><li>e. The board utilizes a performance based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers</li><li>f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the sch and stakeholders.</li></ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

#### Element: Board Oversight and Governance

Indicator a: The board has increased to 12 members over the charter term and includes trustees with backgrounds in education, law, nonprofit management, operations, and finance. New members have recently added real estate expertise. The board continues to recruit new members to its board and its committees as part of its succession planning.

Indicator b: The board cites that its current focus is on improving student achievement data while maintaining the positive school culture and focus on inquiry based, child centered instruction. Positions have been added to support teachers and the academic leadership for the school has become centralized in the position of the CLC. The finance committee has formalized its budget development process.

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leaders in June 2018. During the site visit, the board reflected on its efficacy by citing the  
institution of its 360-degree leadership evaluation tool as well as a data dashboard to be  
used at monthly board meetings in order to enhance its oversight capabilities.  
Indicator f: The Board demonstrates legal compliance and goals for oversight and  
compliance with all regulations regarding the school. No conflict of interest has been  
reported.





Indicator b: The school has articulated roles for each leader and their direct reports.  
co-leader

Indicator c: Weekly, the co-leaders communicate updates on important initiatives and reminders of upcoming events through two email newsletters, one for staff and one for families. The CCS social media accounts and text messaging system are used to send reminders and information and the website is also frequently updated with calendar events and links to important documents like the Family Handbook. The Leaders also send a daily staff-only email. Parents noted appreciation for the posts of pictures of classroom activities on BLOOM, a parent communication platform.

Indicator d: The school has a recruitment plan that includes the needs of current staff members. Hiring process includes school visit and group discussion with existing staff members to gauge alignment with school culture. Staff retention is high and staffing decisions prioritize student and classroom success.

2. Element: Professional Climate

Indicator a: The school is fully staffed except for one sudden teacher vacancy.

Indicator b: The school uses the structures of co-teaching pairs, grade level meetings and

## 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 mission and key design elements outlined in the charter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions</li></ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

#### Element: Mission and Key Design

Indicator a: Parents, teachers, school leadership and board have a shared understanding of mission and key design elements. Focus groups with parents and teacher stakeholders alignment with the mission of the school and noted key design elements as reasons for choosing the school.

Indicator b: Each of the key design elements (with the exception of extended day) was observed to be in full implementation during the site visit. Parents and teachers articulated the key elements and cited examples of recent activities as examples. CDS utilizes Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) to support students with disabilities enrolled in the school. In-Past pull out services are employed as needed, as well as social emotional supports and counseling. ELLs/MLL are supported primarily through the Integrated teaching (ICT) model and provided additional pull out support when needed.

The school is requesting to add a key design element *commitment to Diversity*, to emphasize its commitment to enrolling and serving a diverse population. The school proposes this new key design element *commitment to Diversity* to encompass the concept that classrooms function best when they are made up of *or less* who have a variety of different background experiences. Using a fair lottery system and admissions policy, it will work to create a school population that reflects the racial ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic, and academic diversity of NYC CSD 13.

### Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

*The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.*

Finding: Falls Far Below

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Targets are met	a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter
2. Targets are not met	<p>a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets</p> <p>b. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include, but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, efforts to academic 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 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:

##### 1. Element: Targets are Not Met:

Indicator a: The school maintains a high rate of applications for kindergarten seats and has a waitlist to draw from should a seat open up during the school year. All grades served. Unfortunately, despite a rigorous recruitment/retention plan and staff/family outreach the school has not yet been able to meet enrollment targets for two of the three at risk groups: ELLs/MLLs and ED students.

Indicator b: The school continues to develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan to enroll all students including SWDs, ELLs/MLLs, and ED students. School leadership outlined its recruitment strategies as well as program services to support student needs. The school exceeds CSD 13 in enrollment of SWDs. There is a low number of ELLs/MLLs in the district. Recruitment plans to increase ELL/MLL applications were articulated by the board. According to the leadership team and outreach staff, based on conversations in the community there is an oversaturation of options in the school district. The school has a NYSED approved lottery weighting of 40% to provide more of a chance for economically disadvantaged students to gain a seat through the lottery. For the 2018 lottery, the school was approved to implement a preference for ED students. The school has not been able to meet targets for enrollment of ED students, despite yearly adjustments to its preferences in their lottery.

Indicator c: The school leadership team continues to review district data, the aggregate and demographic trends of applicants, and the demographics of enrolled students. They also review the experiences (shared anecdotally) of enrolled students and their families. In addition, it is a standard practice to ask families who receive a seat in the lottery and choose to decline, why they no longer wish to enroll. This information helps to identify common reasons for declining within student subgroups. The board indicates that it will continue their oversight in this area utilizing a monthly examination of the data dashboard.

Table 5: Student Demographics- Compass Charter School Compared to District of Location

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Compass Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Variance	Compass Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Variance
Students with Disabilities	17%	20%	-3	25%	21%	+4
EL/MLL	1%	7%	-6	1%	7%	-6
Economically Disadvantaged	33%	57%	-			

## Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Legal Compliance</i>	<p>a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to: those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meeting Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements.</p> <p>b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.</p> <p>c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.</p>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

Indicator a: According to all documents reviewed and conversations with the board and school leadership, the school is in compliance.

Indicator b: The school has reached out to its counsel and NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) when it has had questions regarding compliance requirements.

Indicator c: The school has reached out to its counsel and NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) when requesting material or non-material revisions to its charter.