



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

Renewal Recommendation Report

Ark Community Charter School

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION	1
RECOMMENDATION	2
REQUIRED FINDINGS	3
CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS	3
BACKGROUND & REPORT FORMAT	3
GENESIS AND MISSION	5
RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORTS AND CHARTER TERMS	6
RENEWAL BENCHMARK CONCLUSIONS	11
APPENDIX	
SCHOOL OVERVIEW	31
FISCAL DASHBOARD	34
SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES	36

This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the *Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).¹

Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended) (the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm.

SPECIFIC SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	March 2001
School Opening Date	September 4, 2001

Current Location

Address	District	Facility	Enrollment	Grades
762 River Street, Troy, NY 12180	Troy City	Private	220	K-6

Renewal History

Type of Renewal	Date Approved by SUNY Trustees
Initial Short-Term Renewal (Two Years)	March 13, 2006
Special One-Year Renewal	March 11, 2008
Full-Term Renewal	January 16, 2009

¹ Revised September 4, 2013, and available at: <http://newyorkcharters.org/documents/SUNYRenewalPolicies.pdf>.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation

Non-Renewal

The SUNY Charter Schools Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees deny the Application for Charter Renewal of the Ark Community Charter School, and not allow the school to provide instruction beyond the 2013-14 school year.

To earn a Subsequent Full-Term Renewal of five years, a school must have met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals during the Accountability Period.

Where a school fails to meet the criteria for any other type of renewal, the charter will not be renewed; the charter will be terminated upon its expiration and the education corporation will be dissolved.²

Despite strong performance at the outset of the Accountability Period,³ the school is no longer meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan Goals. With the exception of one increase in mathematics performance in 2009-2010, the second year of the Ark Community Charter School's (the "Ark's") current five-year Accountability Period, the school has shown declines in the attainment of both its English language arts ("ELA") and mathematics goals. In the final year (2012-13) of the Accountability Period, it met none of the comparative measures in either goal and showed a significant decline in student academic growth as measured by New York State assessments. As the school does not meet the criteria for a subsequent renewal, the Institute recommends that the Ark's charter not be renewed.

² SUNY Renewal Policies, page 12.

³ For the purpose of reporting student achievement results, the SUNY Renewal Policies define the Accountability Period as the time the Accountability Plan was in effect. In the case of a Subsequent Renewal, the Accountability Plan covers the last year of the previous charter term through the first four years of the charter term under review.

Required Findings

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees' specific renewal criteria, the Institute, in order to make a positive recommendation, must make the following findings required by the Act:

- the school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- the school can demonstrate the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and
- given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.⁴

In the case of the Ark, the Institute cannot make all of the required findings especially those related to improving student learning and achievement in a subsequent charter term.

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the means by which it will meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL") program. SUNY⁵ and the Board of Regents finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school in July 2013. The Institute, acting on behalf of the SUNY Trustees, considered the school's plans for meeting its enrollment and retention targets as part of its renewal review.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the school district in which the charter school is located regarding the school's Application for Charter Renewal. As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response.

Background & Report Format

The Institute makes its non-renewal recommendation based on a variety of evidence gathered and analyzed over the charter term. This includes the school's Annual Reports, its Application for Charter Renewal, the school's record in meeting or posting a positive trend toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals, qualitative data gathered during evaluation and renewal visits using State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (Version 5.0, the "SUNY Renewal

⁴ See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

⁵ SUNY Trustees' Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

Benchmarks”),⁶ which specify in detail what a successful school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. Over the charter term, the Institute provides the school annual performance summaries indicating progress or lack thereof toward the school’s Accountability Plan goals. Subsequent to any evaluation visit during the charter term, the Institute provides a written letter or more formal report with an analysis of data gathered using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks as a frame for the aforementioned data gathering and analysis. In the case of schools struggling to post evidence of success in meeting Accountability Plan goals during a charter term, Institute staff also meets with the school’s board and leadership to review the SUNY Trustees renewal policies and the school’s standing as it approaches renewal. The Institute’s Executive Director met with the Ark’s leadership team and board chair on March 27, 2013 to discuss SUNY renewal policies, visit the school, and underscore the importance of its academic performance as a priority for renewal. The Institute followed these standard evaluation and reporting protocols over the Ark’s current charter term.

The Institute uses the following four interconnected renewal questions for framing benchmark statements to determine if a school has made an adequate case for renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school an effective, viable organization?
3. Is the education corporation fiscally sound?
4. If the school’s charter is renewed, what are its plans for the next charter term, and are they reasonable, feasible and achievable?

The report’s Appendix provides a School Overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school and additional evidence on student achievement contained in the School Performance Summaries.

⁶ Available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND & PRIOR RENEWAL HISTORY

Genesis and Mission

In 2001, the founders of the Ark After School Program, a social service group founded in 1971 that provides after-school tutoring and social service programs in the Taylor Apartments (a federal housing project located in south central Troy, NY) applied for and received a charter from the SUNY Trustees. The application conveyed the founding team's deep commitment to children and its track record of stewarding limited resources to provide support through the Ark After School Program. The Ark After School Program provides counseling, crisis intervention, advocacy, arts and tutoring for low-income children and young adults. Named to symbolize the founders' commitment to providing "safety from the storm in a haven from surrounding dangers," the developers sought to build on the tutoring and service work to provide a charter school that would mirror the Ark Center's focus on creating "a safe place from the dangers of hopelessness and failure, a haven that encourages and supports children and young adults as they discover and celebrate their strengths and become part of an educational and arts community."

The executive summary of the original charter application states that the Ark Charter School, designed for children at risk of academic failure, would endeavor to provide a "progressive education that holds the child at the center of the educational process ... providing a close-knit community for at-risk students who may have "fragmented relationships with adults."

While the characteristics of the instructional program have evolved during the 13 school years of the school's operation, the community origins and focus on serving as a safe haven amidst turmoil are still very much in evidence. The Ark continues to aspire to be a nurturing, mutually supportive, caring environment for both adults and children that celebrates effort and positive attitude in personal growth.

The mission of the school is as follows:

The Ark Community Charter School's mission is to nurture a community that fosters academic, social and ethical growth in a challenging and supportive environment. We are committed to developing healthy, responsible citizens who are intellectually curious, self-reliant and open-minded.

The board and leadership of the Ark remain committed to supporting the school's students and families through the numerous significant challenges faced every day. Children do not arrive at school each day without bringing those challenges through the schoolhouse door. The commitment to supporting students and families in addressing those challenges demonstrated by the school's teachers, leadership and board is significant. However, under New York's charter schools statute, a charter school must do more than create a supportive environment for children and families. A charter school must demonstrate its ability to provide educational outcomes for students that meet the demands of New York State education standards.

Unlike district schools, which have the opportunity to re-tool and attempt to turnaround performance without losing the authority to operate, in applying for and receiving a charter from

the SUNY Trustees, charter school founders agree to demonstrate academic success over the course of each charter term as defined in statute and in Accountability Plans agreed upon by both SUNY and the charter school.

Renewal Recommendation Reports and Charter Terms

Currently in its 13th year of operation and fourth charter term, this is the fourth time the Ark's charter has been up for renewal.

Institute Renewal Recommendation Report (summary below)	Resulting Charter Term	Length of Term	School Years
N/A	Initial	5	2001-02 to 2005-06
2005-06 Report	Short-Term Subsequent	2	2006-07 to 2007-08
2007-08 Report	One-Year with Conditions	1	2008-09
2008-09 Report	Full-Term Subsequent	5	2009-10 to 2013-14

The Ark opened in September 2001 serving 90 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. At the end of the initial charter term from 2001-2006, the Institute recommended and the SUNY Trustees approved a two-year Short-Term Renewal. At the end of the subsequent two-year charter term from 2006-2008, the Institute recommended non-renewal. Because the Trustees were at that time transitioning short term initial renewal policies from two years to three years to allow schools to post two additional years of data prior facing another renewal decision, the SUNY Trustees granted the school a One-Year Renewal with Conditions. At the end of that one-year term from 2008-2009, based on the Ark's improved performance on state assessments and the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, the Institute recommended and the SUNY Trustees approved a Five-Year Full-Term Renewal. The following section delineates these Institute renewal recommendations and SUNY Trustee renewal decisions.

2005-06 Renewal Report. In the fifth year of the Ark's initial charter term, the Institute recommended a two-year Short-Term Renewal, stating that the Ark had struggled with student academic performance over the life of the charter but that the school had in place an instructional program that indicated a future upward trend in performance on Accountability Plan goals. The most serious deficiency was the Ark's failure to implement a program to serve the specific needs of ELLs.

The 2006 report cautioned, however, that while the Ark had been able to achieve various instructional milestones, the pacing of improvements was potentially too slow to reap results prior to the end of the next charter. The 2006 report also noted that the school's board of trustees and administration failed to establish annual goals that would provide the school markers along the way with which to gauge progress toward renewal requirements included its Accountability Plan. This lack of strategic planning (including specific measurable annual academic benchmarks) was also evident in teacher evaluations. The net result was that school leaders could not measure academic achievements compared to annual plans and could not gauge progress toward meeting the school's Accountability Plan goals.

2007-08 Renewal Report. At the end of the Ark's two-year Short-Term Renewal, the Institute recommended that the charter not be renewed. While the Ark had met its mathematics goal in 2007, it did not come close to meeting its ELA goal. Although the SUNY Trustees evaluate the strength and effectiveness of a school's academic program during a subsequent renewal review almost exclusively by the degree to which the school has succeeded in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals,⁷ the Institute also examines qualitative evidence of a school's academic program. In doing so, the Institute concluded that some aspects of the school's academic program improved since the school's previous renewal review. However, significant problems and shortcomings remained. The following conclusions resonate with the current, 2013-14 renewal review.

- The Institute determined that the school board's drive for academic results was not sufficient in quantity or quality to make it likely that the school would meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals.
- The Ark had abandoned curricular programs in ELA and mathematics that were in place at the time of the school's previous renewal and began adopting new curricular programs in those content areas. The Ark did not provide evidence that these programs would prepare students to meet state performance standards.
- The Ark's principal had put in place an instructional leadership team comprised of curriculum coordinators to monitor and support the school's academic programs. However, the Institute found a regular process for communicating and documenting teachers' instructional strengths and weaknesses was not in place.
- Students across the school engaged in purposeful activities with defined objectives.
- The school board did not establish a high level of accountability for the school's principal. The board did not complete the evaluation according to its prescribed protocol resulting in a laudatory commentary on the head of school's performance despite the school's failure to meet its ELA performance goal.

The Ark's board of trustees appealed the recommendation to the SUNY Trustees. As noted above, the Trustees were at the time in the process applying a modified short term renewal policy from two year short term renewals to three year short term renewals. Given the timing of the release of state assessment results, the Trustees determined short term renewals should be for a three-year duration. The Ark argued that the SUNY Trustees should have granted the school a Three-Year Short-Term Renewal when they made their previous renewal decision, given that the Trustees had granted a Short-Term Renewal of that length to another school.⁸ Further, given that in 2007-08 the state was administering the ELA exam much earlier than it does now, the Ark board claimed that, based on preliminary unofficial results, the school had met a key ELA measure. Based on these arguments, the SUNY Trustees granted the school a one-year renewal with conditions.

⁷ SUNY Renewal Policies, page 11.

⁸ Having recognized that two years was too short a renewal period to grant for an initial short-term renewal, given the lag time in state test reporting and challenges of program implementation, the SUNY Trustees began to approve initial short term renewals of three years and adopted policies to reflect initial renewal outcomes as follows: a) full term; b) initial short-term of three years; or c) non-renewal.

2008-09 Renewal Report. In the Ark's one-year charter renewal, the Trustees set as a condition of eligibility for a Full-Term, Five-Year Renewal that the school had to meet or come close to meeting both its ELA and mathematics Accountability Plan goals. In fact, for this one-year Accountability Period, the Ark posted strong results on state assessments, coming close to meeting each of the five required measures in both in ELA and mathematics and therefore coming close to meeting both Accountability Plan goals. The Institute recommended that the SUNY Trustees grant the school a Full-Term, Five-Year Renewal.

Institute staff conducted a renewal visit to ensure that the structures, personnel and practices that resulted in the school's positive assessment outcomes remained in place and to determine if the school was abiding by the other conditions set by the SUNY Trustees in granting the previous one-year renewal. Institute staff ascertained that the school had satisfied all the conditions enumerated in its renewal charter and as such, the school was granted a full, five-year renewal.

Current Charter Term Evaluation Reports

In addition to the Institute's Renewal Recommendation Report, two school evaluation reports in the current charter term are of note.

2010-11 Institute Sponsored External School Evaluation.

Reflected in the Full-Term Five-Year Renewal the Trustees granted in 2009, the Ark's academic performance was strongest at the outset of the current charter term. As demonstrated by the charts provided below and Performance Summaries included at the end of this report, the Ark's performance has continually declined starting in the first year of the Accountability Period (2008-09) in ELA and the second year (2009-10) in math. When an Institute-sponsored external vendor conducted a school evaluation in the fall of 2010, the second year of the current charter term, the Ark was still meeting both its ELA and math goals as reflected in a report issued on behalf of the Institute.

Consistent with the school's academic performance at the time, the school evaluation report concludes that the Ark had systems in place to deliver the academic program. The report indicates that teachers reported using assessment results to develop and modify instructional plans and that the school had a well-defined curriculum framework aligned to New York State standards. External reviewers found instruction to be largely competent. A review of lesson plans indicated that lesson designs included higher order questions, but in practice teachers reportedly only challenged students with questions designed to check for factual understanding. In all classes observed, the visiting team found efficient use of instructional time and students who were on task and engaged.

The Ark leadership team reported providing ongoing mentoring to the teaching staff. The report states that the school's professional development was a collaborative effort between teachers and administrators to facilitate and design a variety of activities. The school reportedly had a strong culture based on kindness and respect with school-wide expectations for behavior based on the values of community, mutual respect and co-responsibility, fairness, tolerance, honesty and

integrity. Despite the optimism communicated in the external evaluators' report, the Ark's academic outcomes continued to decline.

2012-13 Ark Self-Sponsored External School Evaluation.

At the end of the 2012-13 school year around the time that the school administered the last set of state ELA and math exams available for this renewal review, the Ark engaged an external organization to conduct a school evaluation on behalf of the school. That report indicates overall positive findings that do not align with the school's comparative performance on state assessments nor the Institute's findings during the renewal visit.

The commissioned evaluation report addresses the Ark's climate and culture, curriculum, instruction and student interventions. It concurs with Institute reports that the school provides a safe and caring environment. The report indicates that the school focuses on aligning its curriculum to the Common Core Learning standards as a work in progress and trains and supports staff in incorporating the new standards into their instructional planning.

The report found the school has "average-to-exemplary instruction overall" based on the scoring of classroom observation protocols used by the evaluator and shows "better than average performance generally when compared to other charter schools that have been audited [as clients] serving a similar demographic population." The following sections of this report include findings from the Institute's renewal visit team that do not align with the Ark's commissioned evaluation.

Summary

Through the Ark's history, it has adhered to its original mission of providing a refuge in a low-income neighborhood and fostering academic, social and ethical growth. The work of the school in supporting students and families through links with social service agencies, food banks and other resources to support children and their families is meritorious and significant in the lives of children. The Ark has not, however, fostered an academic program sufficient to sustain student achievement such that it continues to consistently meet the school's charter Accountability Plan goals. The school showed strong results at the outset of the Accountability Period, but has experienced a steady downward trend through the course of the period. While the school presents a compelling set of services to students, the charter school accountability bargain requires charter schools to create compelling academic success in exchange for the opportunity to operate a school.

The school does present compelling anecdotes of individual student success noting that of the over 750 students the school has enrolled in the last 12 years, a handful of students went on to attend private schools on scholarships. A few have moved on to prestigious universities. Similarly, the Ark provides many admirable examples of assisting students and families through partnership with local, state and federal organizations. School leaders and board members at the Ark regularly assert that state test results do not capture other positive student outcomes that reflect the strength and quality of the school's educational program. As one way to support evidence of other positive student outcomes, the Institute has informally suggested that the school keep and report quantitative data on the types of non-academic supports the school provides to children and

families. Systemically gathered outcome data regarding numbers of families and children served and categories of assistance would, if available, provide stronger evidence to support the school's accomplishments. Unfortunately, Institute visitors found the school has no system in place to quantify the level or analyze the strength of such efforts over the life of the charter. Similarly, over the charter term the Institute suggested the school gather and report data on students' academic pursuits once they leave the Ark. The school does not report systemic strategies to follow students who leave (i.e. an alumni group or other regular follow up activities) in order to determine if its program provides positive benefits after 6th grade, the highest grade the school serves. While such systems are not required components of the school's Accountability Plan, focused attention to gathering such data would support the school's claims that after 12 years and 750 students it achieves strong results outside of those measured by state assessments.

As demonstrated by earlier renewals, the school has at times created improved performance for a year or two. It has not sustained those improvements to create an education program that continuously improves and prepares students to meet or exceed Accountability Plan goals. Over the course of its operation, the school has improved the coherence and strength of structures to support teachers and procedures for delivering an educational program; lessons have become more intentional and behavioral expectations more clear and supportive. The school has systematized its targeted interventions including fully serving ELLs. The trajectory of continued low performance on comparative and growth measures including measures that compare its outcomes to schools serving students with similar attributes continues. As such, the Institute cannot find that the school is likely to provide sustained improved learning and achievement in the future.

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

The Institute is unable to find the Ark an academic success as it has failed to meet, or come close to meeting, its ELA and math Accountability Plan goals. Qualitative data on educational program implementation indicate that the school is likely to continue to fail to meet these key academic goals based on evidence collected during the current charter term and during the renewal evaluation visit.

Academic Attainment. At the beginning of the charter term, the Ark, working with the Institute, developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and math. The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) goals. For each goal, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal.

Note: This year the Institute is not reporting results for the two absolute ELA and math measures. Because of the high standards in the new state testing program only a handful of schools statewide met the absolute proficiency target and the state has not yet recalibrated the absolute Annual Measurable Objective. This lack of reporting does not diminish the validity of the Ark’s achievement results.

Comparative Measures

From early in the Ark’s five-year Accountability Period, the school has shown overall declines in the attainment of both its ELA and math goals. In the final year (2012-13) of the Accountability Period, it met none of the comparative measures in either goal and showed a significant decline in student academic growth. Starting in the first year of the Accountability Period (2008-09) in ELA and the second year (2009-10) in math, the Ark has continually exhibited a decrease in student proficiency relative to its local district. (See graph, page 14.) This trend exactly parallels the other comparative measure in its Accountability Plan; the school performs lower than expected in comparison to similar schools statewide. (See graph, page 14.) Similar schools are identified based on the proportion of economically disadvantaged students enrolled. In 2012-2013, the Ark underperformed its district of location in both ELA and math and performed far worse than predicted in comparison to similar schools.

The Ark provided a number of comparative analyses of the school to the Troy City School District and to selected local schools within the district. The Ark shows that it had a higher proficiency rate than two Troy schools with similar demographic characteristics -- a school in the same neighborhood with a slightly higher economically disadvantaged profile and a school some distance away with a slightly lower profile. Both of these schools are clearly low performing. The school asserts that if mean scale scores, which indicate level of skill and knowledge, are used instead of proficiency rate, it performs relatively better in 2012-13 than the district. However, SUNY uses proficiency rate instead of mean scale score as its district comparative measure. While comparisons between school level and district level based on scale scores can reveal marginal differences in performance, these analyses are often misleading if not set within the context of proficiency level cut scores, because extreme outlier scores can distort the overall average. Even with marginal score differences, the question of lagging proficiency rates remains. It is usually the

case that scale score differences do not translate to comparable differences in proficiency rates. Importantly, SUNY's Accountability Plan measures are not tied to comparisons to the lowest performing schools but instead require schools to meet or post progress toward meeting much higher goals.

Effect Size

The Institute expresses this actual-compared-to-predicted performance as an Effect Size; whereby the more negative the Effect Size, the further a school is from its predicted level of performance as determined by the performance of similar schools in improving student achievement. In ELA, the Ark's 2012-13 Effect Size is -0.96, which is lower than the 2012-13 Effect Size of the three SUNY schools that closed most recently because of low academic performance (i.e., -0.88, -0.06 and 0.16); similarly in math, its 2012-13 Effect Size is -0.90, which is also lower than the Effect Sizes for the three closing schools (i.e., -0.49, -0.34 and 0.45, respectively).

Growth

The decline in academic performance is also apparent in year-to-year growth. Prior to the introduction of the new state testing program in 2012-13, the standard for proficiency on the state exams essentially did not vary so that gains in the proficiency rate of the same students could be compared from year to year.⁹ In the Institute's growth-to-standard measure used during the first four years of the Ark's Accountability Period, the proficiency rate for the same year-to-year cohort of students declined in both ELA and math each year after the first year of the Accountability Period.

The 2012-13 absolute results are not directly comparable to the previous years because of the new higher standards on the state exams. Nevertheless, only six (6) of 92 Ark students enrolled at the school for at least two years scored proficient on either the ELA or mathematics exam.

The state has implemented a new academic growth model that provides a statewide comparison for measuring student growth year-to-year.¹⁰ A school's growth is expressed as its rank compared to all other public schools based on overall school-wide change in performance. The Ark's students showed much lower year-to-year growth compared to statewide results in the last three years, the years for which data is available. In 2012-13, the school placed at the 39th percentile in ELA growth and the 34th percentile in math growth. Average growth is at the 50th percentile.

Academic Summary

In its Application for Charter Renewal, the Ark acknowledges that in the final year of the charter term, it underperformed the district and performed worse than predicted in comparison to similar schools; however, it contends these negative outcomes occurred in 2012-13 for the first time.

⁹ In order to maintain consistency, the State Education Department ("SED") adjusted the cut scores for determining proficiency in 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12. The Institute adopted these "time-adjusted" cut-scores" to make year-to-year comparisons in absolute results. In the case of this growth measure, for the purpose of establishing year-to-year continuity, the Institute uses the time adjusted cut score in 2009-10 for a year-to year comparison with 2008-09. The 2009-10 to 2010-11 and 2010-11 to 2011-12 year-to-year comparisons are based on the revised cut scores only, as the cut scores are the same in each of the paired years.

¹⁰ This growth model accounts for change in each student's relative performance on the new exam compared to the performance of all other students who had the same score on the previous exam.

While the school had indeed not registered results at this low a level previously, the decline in academic performance has continued unabated throughout the charter term. Further, the school asserts that its decline in 2012-13 is consistent with statewide trends, as virtually all schools statewide had lower proficiency rates than in the previous year. However, comparative measures to similar schools, combined with the growth measure, show that the Ark's 2012-13 decline is steeper than other schools. In comparison to other schools statewide in 2012-13, the Ark was at the sixth percentile in ELA and the eighth percentile in math, a very low performance.

During the Accountability Period, the school has met its science goal and is in good standing under the state's NCLB accountability system. The ELA and math results appear on the following page and in Performance Summaries at the end of the report.

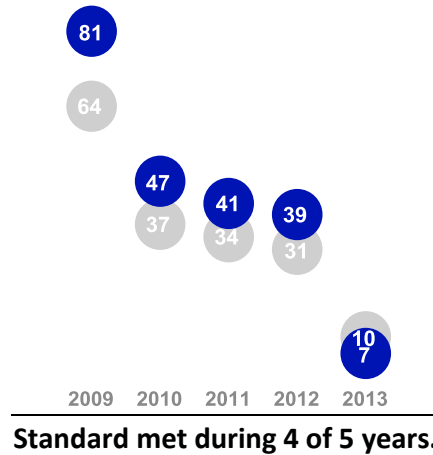
In addition to the graphic presentation of ELA and math results on the next page, a more detailed presentation of results appears in the School Performance Summaries in the Appendix. These summaries contain six years of data including the last year of the previous Accountability Period.

Ark Community Charter School

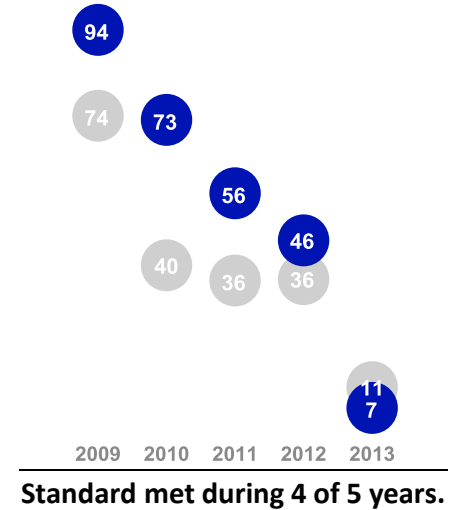
Comparative Measure: District Comparison.

Each year, the percent of **students enrolled at the Ark** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the **local school district**.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

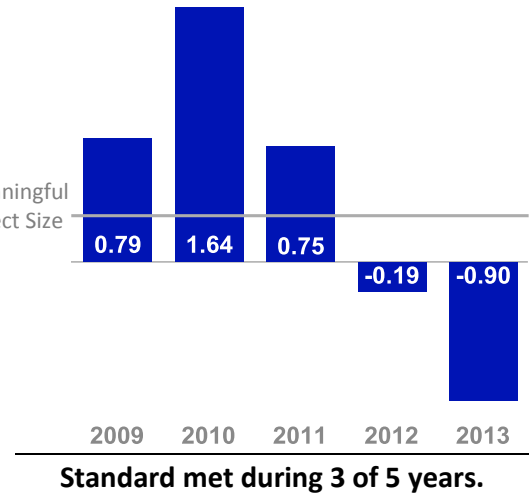
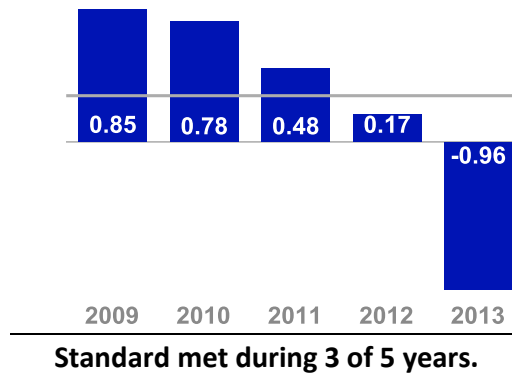


MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



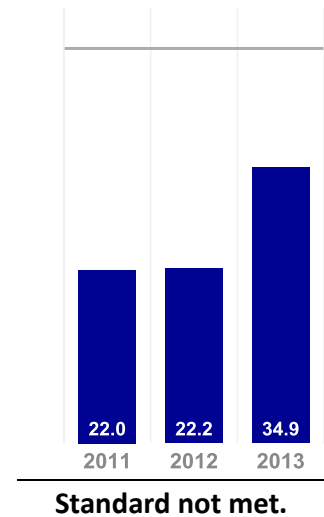
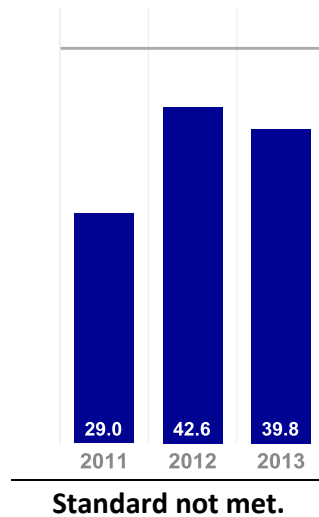
Comparative Measure: Effect Size.

Each year, **the Ark** will exceed its predicted level of performance by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.

Each year, **the Ark's** unadjusted mean growth percentile for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.



Qualitative Education Benchmarks

Members of the school's board, leadership team and staff demonstrate consistent and strong dedication to Ark students, but this commitment does not translate into the sustained systems and routines necessary to ensure that each school day is packed with high quality instruction. The school organization lacks the accountability for results necessary to deliver an effective instructional program. School leaders continually reference the difficulty of educating "children in poverty" and point to anecdotal non-academic achievements as indicators of success. This focus on nurturing students is notable and significant in the daily challenges students bring to school each morning. However, academic results indicate the school has not successfully balanced these challenges with preparing students for sustained academic success. The Ark has in place significant social service supports for students and families. Charter schools however, also face accountability for academic performance.

The school's board expresses absolute confidence in the founding principal despite declining student achievement scores. The head of school reports basing teaching assignments or staffing decisions such as which teachers to rehire more on the teachers' cultural fit than on their effectiveness in enabling students to achieve. In this context, there is limited evidence of high expectations for student achievement; teachers do not express a belief that all students can and will post academic success sufficient to prepare them for the path to college.

Instructional Leadership. The Ark lacks the instructional leadership required to raise student achievement. The school's principal places responsibility for creating a strong instructional program on the director of curriculum and instruction ("DCI") and instructional coaches. The DCI and coaches focus on analyzing assessments and developing curriculum, but the school does not adequately develop teachers' pedagogical competence and inculcate in the teachers an abiding sense of urgency to accelerate student achievement such that they are prepared to meet the demands of state standards.

- While the founding principal remains the head of school, the Ark has experienced turnover in other instructional leadership roles during the charter term. The school has had two DCIs during the current term. According to the principal, the previous DCI was not up to the task of preparing the school to meet the demands of Common Core testing and did not effectively develop curriculum and identify instructional needs. The school provided no coherent system for holding DCIs accountable for results or ensuring their work was improving students' skills and abilities. In addition to turnover in the DCI position, three different individuals served as ELA coaches since the start of the current charter term. According to school leaders, teachers viewed the previous coaches as poor instructors and did not accept their feedback as credible thus thwarting the school's ability to provide students the improved instruction necessary to meet its Accountability Plan goals. The senior leadership's differing descriptions of the purpose of the coaches' roles suggest a lack of clarity. While the principal refers to the position as "curriculum coach," the DCI uses the term "instructional coach" and acknowledges the inconsistency in both title and expectations.
- The school reports its instructional leadership team includes the principal, DCI and ELA and math coaches. The DCI monitors assessment results and classroom observations to

determine teacher need and deploys the coaches accordingly. She meets with the coaches weekly to coordinate their coaching efforts and share observations, identifying teachers with the greatest need for support and those who are in need of additional coaching or professional development. Despite having invested in what would seem to be sufficient instructional leadership positions and introducing tools such as the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the Ark does not leverage these and other resources to effectively develop a sustained strategy for improving the quality of instruction.

- The Ark's professional development activities focus on topical issues such as implementing Common Core standards, but the school's professional development program does not sufficiently address or build teachers' instructional competencies. Teachers and assistant teachers attend weeklong summer professional development on topics including therapeutic response, handle with care (for student targeted intervention staff), writing curriculum, math fluency program roll-out, commercial reading curriculum training and curriculum planning, as well as implementing the Lucy Calkins writing program. Teachers new to the school receive two weeks of off-site Responsive Classroom training during the summer. Additionally, the school conducts weekly afternoon professional development sessions. The vast majority of topics on the 2012-13 calendar of professional development sessions covered curriculum, intervention procedures, school culture and data analysis. Less clear was the school's attention to improving instructional practice and lesson delivery.
- Although appointed to the position at the start of the school year, the ELA coach's attention and time did not fully focus on coaching until three weeks prior to the renewal visit, as she had been diverted to manage other responsibilities earlier in the fall. While understandable in September, at the time of the renewal visit in November, it again underscores a lack of urgency to improve student academic achievement.
- The school has adopted the Danielson framework, which provides a clear set of expectations for teacher performance as the basis of its teacher evaluation system. Nonetheless, despite having a wealth of assessment data available, the school has not used student achievement data as part of its teacher evaluation system. As such, the Ark has failed to hold teachers accountable for high quality instruction and student learning outcomes.

Curriculum & Assessment. The Ark uses the Common Core State Standards as its curriculum framework. In order to provide a core set of curriculum materials for teachers to develop their curriculum and plan lessons, the school employs the Atlas curriculum mapping software to organize materials such as scope and sequence documents and supplemental resources, although it continues to rely on commercial products as the basis for enabling teachers to determine what to teach and when to teach it. School leaders, in attributing the school's poor performance on state tests to the lack of alignment of the commercial material to the standards, have been vigilant in identifying supplemental material in order to cover better the full scope of the Common Core standards. Notwithstanding these efforts, the school continues to use the same commercial assessments that accompany the texts to monitor student progress, albeit with modifications to test item construction. The reliability of these revised items is uncertain.

Curriculum

- During the 2011-12 school year (the third year of the current charter term), the school implemented a commercial curriculum, which the publisher purports aligns to the Common Core. Since then, instructional leaders identified areas where the commercial curriculum the school chose is not aligned with the Common Core. During the 2012-13 school year, the leaders began to supplement the commercial curriculum and its related assessments to address the perceived deficiencies.
- In 2012-13, in order to improve the alignment of its math text with the Common Core, the school changed the scope and sequence, reordered topics and supplemented the material with another commercial product and material from the state's on-line Common Core resource. In the case of the reading text, the school has supplemented on-line Common Core modules. In acknowledging the alignment shortcomings, school leaders report also incorporating more opportunities for read aloud, varied trade books and an enhanced social studies program.
- The school's 2012-13 Accountability Plan Progress report suggests school leaders view the key to improved student achievement as first and foremost finding the right mix of curriculum materials. Thus, the school has pinpointed poorly aligned reading topics and evaluated the relative effectiveness of alternative early intervention reading programs. While it is commendable to fine-tune the material for improving foundational skills, the use of these assessment results obscures the larger point: the assessment results may show marginal improvement in foundational skills, but the main issue is that students are not achieving at an acceptable level despite the marginal difference.
- The school uses a computer-based reading program intended to help students develop cognitive skills based on assessment results. The school reports that after one year of use "40 percent of students made greater than a one-year gain in reading level." Further, "Baseline data showed that the majority of our students were at the 22nd percentile in reading. After using the program, the majority of students scored at the 48th percentile." Aside from the low expectation that the program is successful when 52 percent of students are further behind expected annual gains, the conclusion that students scored at the 48th percentile demonstrates the poor alignment of the school's assessments to Common Core performance standards, as the school scored at the sixth percentile statewide in ELA on Common Core aligned state assessments.

Assessment

- The school administers baseline assessments of student ability at the start of every school year to group students by ability level and to identify those students at-risk of academic failure. The school uses commercial assessments linked to the curriculum materials to monitor student achievement in math and ELA.
- Responding to concerns that the commercial material does not align with the Common Core because it places too much weight on multiple choice questions and basic skills, instructional leaders have recently begun working with teachers to transform existing multiple choice items from the commercial material into constructed response and open-ended items. Notwithstanding these changes, the school lacks assessments that measure skills applications and critical thinking – centerpieces of the Common Core standards. As with the initial use of all school created assessments, ensuring validity - that the

assessments actually do measure the skills the teachers intend - along with ensuring reliability – that such assessments accurately measures student knowledge and understanding -- is quite difficult. Ensuring validity and reliability of such school created assessments requires their use across multiple sets of students as well as analysis of performance when matched with multiple years of state test results. Although school leaders recognize the limited predictive value of the commercial assessments, they continue to rely on them, along with classroom assessments that cannot be directly predictive of performance to prepare students for state tests.

- In writing, instructional leaders and teachers were, at the time of the renewal visit, developing their own items to ensure that assessments better align to the Common Core and state tests by more accurately targeting specific skills. Instructional leaders and teachers use the Common Core standards, commercially produced and well regarded writing rubrics to guide item development. The improved validity of these has yet to be determined.
- In most grades, teachers hold students to higher writing standards than observed in previous years and utilize a more robust rubric to evaluate student work. Teachers and instructional leaders normed the writing rubric during summer professional development activities and continue to calibrate the scoring as the school year progresses.
- Teachers score assessments and report results to instructional coaches and the principal during regularly scheduled data meetings. The instructional leaders and teachers use the results to develop a general plan to regroup students and reteach particular skills. However, despite this procedure for using data to inform instruction, teachers only verbally commit to a certain general level of student performance improvement without delineating their alternative instructional approaches. The coaches observe subsequent lessons and examine lesson plans, but do not evaluate summative assessment results to determine the effectiveness of these modified instructional strategies.

Pedagogy. Instruction at the Ark has not prepared students to meet grade level performance standards during the charter term. Instruction focuses on building students’ foundational skills and is generally purposeful insofar as teachers plan lessons centering on clearly stated learning objectives. However, many lessons lack rigor, urgency and opportunities for students to build deeper understanding and higher order thinking skills. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 28 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school renewal visits.

Classroom Observation Sample by Grade and Subject

	Grade						Total
	K	1	2	3	4	5/6 ¹¹	
ELA		1	2	1	6	2	12
Writing		1		1	1	1	4
Math		1	2	1	2	2	8
Science				1	1	2	4
Total	0	3	4	4	10	7	28

¹¹ The Ark departmentalizes its 5th and 6th grades.

The school dedicates considerable resources to classroom instruction: two teachers, a lead and a cooperating teacher, provide instruction in most classrooms with additional student teachers often present to both observe and support individual students. In most classrooms across grade levels, both teachers have clearly defined roles in differentiating content through center-based learning in extended ELA and mathematics blocks. During small-group center activities, students spend significant time on self-directed curriculum-based computer programs with little supervision from teachers; this often results in students working on skills far below grade level.

- Consistent with the school's focus on children's well-being, the Ark's teachers demonstrate dedication, caring and concern to their students and work to establish classroom environments that are resource rich, happy, and promote an interest in learning.
- Most teachers deliver lessons aligned to the school's curriculum (20 out of 28 classrooms observed). Objectives are clear and well communicated to students, but are often basic and reflect below-grade-level expectations. Lessons rely heavily on commercial curriculum thus generally build on skills and knowledge acquired in previous instruction within units, but lesson activities and written work assignments fail to challenge students. For example, in an upper-grade ELA lesson, the teacher led a small group of students through reading a low-level text and asking them to distinguish between facts and opinions. The teacher spent over half of the lesson referencing the previous lesson to review the definitions of fact and opinion and supplying examples of each. The amount of time spent on this review and the slow pace of reading resulted in limited time to discuss examples from the text or elaborate on them, thereby failing to meet the lesson's basic objective.
- Most teachers attempt to check for student understanding (25 out of 28 classrooms observed). However, teachers rely heavily on individual questioning of students within small groups or one-to-one conferences. While individualized questioning can give a teacher insight into each student's level of understanding, such time-consuming techniques slow the pace of lessons, resulting in covering less content and giving students who are not directly interacting with the teacher opportunities to be off-task. Some teachers utilize cursory questioning techniques to elicit student participation during lessons and to curtail misbehavior. Few teachers use information from student responses to make ad-hoc adjustments to instruction.
- Few teachers effectively challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills (9 out of 28 classrooms observed). Most teachers provide basic foundational instruction with few opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking. Most questioning does not move beyond asking students to recall factual information or to give an opinion. Teachers often miss opportunities that could result in higher order thinking by doing most of the work for students. For example, one teacher provided a conceptual definition map during small group vocabulary instruction, but guided the students through the activity without requiring the students to work independently. A notable exception to this trend was an interdisciplinary science lesson where students worked in groups to analyze and dissect differentiated texts about wolves, then collaborated to generate a set of written questions to guide discussions with other groups.
- Many teachers have sufficient classroom management techniques and routines to prevent serious disruptions to lessons but they do not consistently use techniques to minimize

transitions and maximize learning time (16 out of 28 classrooms observed). Teachers utilize technology, such as interactive white boards and laptops in the upper grades to increase student engagement. However, in many classrooms, teachers do not ensure that students are on-task during independent center activities. Some teachers have limited control over their students even during small group instruction. Many classroom observations noted the lack of a sense of urgency, as well as the pedagogical skills required to raise student performance to grade level standards.

- Observers found little evidence that instructional leaders challenge teachers to develop robust lessons, deploy strong questioning techniques, or consistently focus students on producing high quality work products.

At-Risk Students. The Ark has programs in place to serve students at-risk of academic failure, students with identified disabilities and ELLs. As noted throughout this report, while programs are in place the result of the implementation does not result in the school meeting or coming close to meeting Accountability Plan goals.

General Education Students Receiving Targeted Interventions

Program	The school has a tiered intervention system in place with a clear and well documented referral process. General education students can receive daily push-in classroom support individually or in small groups and/or pullout support in small homogenous groups. If students need additional remedial support, the school reduces group size.
Staff	The staff consists of an intervention coordinator, three full-time intervention teachers and general education teachers who provide classroom support.
Identification Process	The school, which screens all new entrants for remedial needs, has a comprehensive identification process. It uses baseline tests, state exams, curriculum-based assessments and teacher recommendations to identify students for academic and/or behavioral interventions.
Coordination	Intervention providers meet with classroom teachers bi-weekly to discuss student progress, performance data and on-going instructional needs. The providers meet with the intervention coordinator weekly.
Progress Monitoring	Students also participate in school-wide assessments and benchmark tests. They have an assessment profile on the school server, which allows teachers and staff to access progress monitoring data.
Classroom Teacher Professional Development	Instructional leaders provide support and suggestions for differentiation and effective strategies to classroom teachers at team meetings, as requested or based on observed need.

Students with Disabilities

Program	The school relies on district special education teachers to provide push-in and pullout services mandated by students' Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs"). The intervention staff provides additional small group or individualized interventions as needed.
Staff	The DCI serves as special education coordinator; two special education providers are district employees of Troy and Lansingburgh.
Identification Process	The school refers students for special education evaluations based on performance on baseline tests, state exam scores, curriculum-based assessments, teacher recommendations and documented failure to make progress in targeted interventions.
Coordination	Special education providers consult with classroom teachers weekly as indicated by student IEPs. The special education providers also participate in meetings with the school intervention team.
Progress Monitoring	Special education teachers track students' progress toward their IEP goals. The school distributes IEP progress reports quarterly with school report cards. Students with disabilities also participate in school wide progress monitoring measures.
Classroom Teacher Professional Development	The special education coordinator provides teachers with IEP overviews and suggestions on instructional approaches and strategies for each student. She has presented professional development seminars on executive dysfunction and effective techniques for students with attention disorders.

		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Enrollment (N)		(14)	(11)	(16)
Results	Tested on State Exams (N)	(3)	(8)	(N/A)
	Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	5 ¹²	0	N/A
	Percent Proficient Statewide	15.5	5	N/A

English Language Learners (ELLs)

Program	Identified ELLs receive push in and/or pullout support individually or in small groups, according to grade level and proficiency level, which determines the intensity of weekly support. Transitional students who continue to struggle academically can attend the ELL program for a reduced amount as needed.
Staff	The staff consists of one full time certified ELL teacher and a teacher assistant.
Identification Process	All new entrants complete the home language survey during the registration process. The Ark also uses the Language Assessment Battery-Revised ("LAB-R") to identify students for language acquisition support.
Progress Monitoring	ELL teachers, who rely on informal progress monitoring, develop

¹² Due to the small size of this group of students, actual reported data has been suppressed to protect privacy.

	individual student portfolios over the course of the year to demonstrate progress. ELL students also participate in school wide progress monitoring measures.			
Classroom Teacher Professional Development	The ELL teacher provides professional development to grade level teams to suggest and model individualized strategies, interventions and goals for specific ELL students.			
		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Enrollment (N)		(14)	(12)	(6)
Results	Tested on NYSESLAT ¹³ Exam (N)	(14)	(12)	()
	Percent Proficient or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	79	58	--

¹³ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.
 SUNY Charter Schools Institute ■ Renewal Recommendation Report

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Insofar as the Ark has not met its Accountability Plan goals, the school is not an effective, viable organization. While the education corporation board of trustees (the “board”) has worked to ensure the financial viability of the school, and the board conveys a deep commitment to the school, its students and families, the school’s academic outcomes indicate continued and insufficient oversight to the educational program.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board Oversight. The Ark board of trustees transmits extraordinary concern for the school; its students and its staff. The board diligently focuses on the school’s mission and takes pride in the accomplishments over the last 12 years. These include guiding the school through prior renewals as well as overseeing a fiscally sound organization such that the school was able to purchase a permanent facility. In many ways the boards has built a viable organization, but for the academic results that are required for a viable charter school. The board is thoughtful and dedicated to the students, staff and family at the school. The dedication has not, however, resulted in the school sustaining the ability to deliver on its promise to improve student learning and achievement. The board’s comments during the renewal visit interview indicate an understanding of the challenges faced by the students living in poverty the school serves. Board comments lacked a balancing sense of urgency regarding the academic component of the school’s mission. Notably, the board’s definition of school success, as conveyed during the renewal visit interview, includes no mention of absolute student achievement. Rather, the board measures the school’s success by parent demand, engagement with the surrounding community and a supportive school culture.

- Board members remain passionate about the school and show deep commitment to leveraging their diverse skills to support the Ark. While the board has put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school and oversee management of day-to-day operations in order to ensure the school’s success as a financially healthy and legally compliant organization, the board does not ensure the school’s academic success.
- The board requests, and school leaders provide, detailed information regarding the school’s program and finances on a regular basis. Board members review this information carefully and are able to speak knowledgeably about the school’s progress in some areas. However, board members indicated they were surprised at the last two years of testing results, suggesting that the information provided to them is incomplete or inaccurate in its presentation of the state of the Ark’s academic program relative to the school’s Accountability Plan requirements.
- The Ark board does not establish clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals for academic performance. During a board interview conducted in conjunction with the renewal visit, board members acknowledged having had no formal strategic plan in place prior at the start of the 2013-14 school year despite the school’s continued decline in student achievement. Board members point to a number of broadly defined “threads” identified during a spring strategic planning day on which to focus in the final year of the school’s current charter but also acknowledge that they have not reviewed these threads following the state’s release of the most recent testing results.

- The board does not have a formal self-evaluation process in place nor does its evaluation of the school's principal include clear student achievement goals.

Organizational Capacity. The Ark board and leadership communicate a strong focus on its commitment to the community and on serving high-needs children. Notwithstanding the significant commitment of the adults at the school and on the board, the Ark's academic results indicate the school has not created a successful balance between focusing on serving student and family needs while setting and delivering strong academic performance.

- The school has an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its program; however, the principal's administrative activities limit the amount of time she spends as the school's instructional leader.
- The school has a student discipline system, fully documented, on-line and in a student handbook. Through comprehensive training in the Responsive Classroom, a commercial, proprietary program for incorporating social and emotional growth into academic learning, teachers consistently apply the school's discipline system. The school promotes its culture of kindness and respect, focusing on the values of community, mutual respect and co-responsibility, fairness, tolerance, honesty and integrity. The school is safe and orderly.
- The school has procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly.
- Given the instructional leadership's lines of responsibilities, the locus of instructional development is the ELA and math coaches. The DCI deploys the two coaches to provide ongoing and focused direction to the teachers, but their work with teachers is for the most part limited to identifying curriculum materials, developing lessons and planning remediation strategies within the scope of the coaches' respective subjects, rather than enhancing pedagogical skills. The continual turnover of inexperienced ELA coaches further undermines the development of teacher effectiveness.
- The school leadership constantly monitors and evaluates assessment results to determine the utility of curriculum materials and the progress of students receiving targeted interventions, without a similar focus on improving classroom instruction. The expectation is that students will show improved scores on the frequently administered commercial assessments; however, such gains are in mastering the basic skills represented in the accompanying commercial texts that do not align well with the Common Core standards. While the school has begun to make the assessments more rigorous by emphasizing writing and more constructed responses instead of multiple choice questions, the validity of the changes is yet to be determined.
- The Ark does not sufficiently monitor its overall program to identify all potential deficiencies; rather, school leaders focus almost exclusively on supplementing curriculum materials. In the school's most recent Accountability Plan progress report, for example, the action plan presented to address the school's failure to meet any measures in its ELA goal includes multiple changes to commercial materials but no mention of professional development of teachers to deliver content effectively, more reliable assessments or more rigorous analysis of data in progress monitoring.

- Given the limited focus on instructional improvement, the unreliability of internal assessment results and the absence of holding teachers accountable for student achievement, the Ark is unlikely to improve student learning and achievement.

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER & PARENT SATISFACTION

Mission. At the time of the renewal visit, the Ark was fulfilling its mission to cultivate a community that fosters a socially and emotionally supportive environment, but not those elements of its mission related to academic growth. The school has implemented the majority of the key design elements designated in its charter, most notably in continuing to provide students with multiple periods of physical education and music instruction each week while simultaneously increasing time dedicated to developing students' writing skills.

Current Key Design Elements¹⁴	Evident?
Small school design	✓
Enrichment programs	✓
Responsive classroom training	✓
Families as partners	✓
Strong academic support	
At-risk school design	✓
Safe school environment	✓

Parent Satisfaction. According to information provided by the school in its application for renewal, parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.¹⁵

¹⁴ As part of their initial application and their Application for Charter Renewal, schools identify the Key Design Elements that reflect their mission and distinguish the school.

¹⁵ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

Parent Satisfaction Survey Results Spring 2012
Agree or Strongly Agree

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	School Total
Response Rate	61%	68%	73%	64%	46%	45%	94%	64%
I feel welcomed at my child's school	100%	100%	100%	94%	92%	100%	100%	98%
I am informed about school events & news.	85%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98%
My child is safe at school.	90%	92%	100%	100%	92%	100%	100%	96%
My child is safe going to & from school.	90%	92%	100%	94%	92%	89%	100%	94%
Other students are respectful to my child.	90%	73%	96%	83%	83%	100%	94%	87%
The teachers are respectful to my child.	95%	92%	96%	94%	92%	89%	100%	94%
I look at my child's work weekly.	95%	100%	92%	94%	100%	89%	94%	95%
I know what the teacher expects of my child.	95%	85%	96%	94%	100%	100%	100%	94%
The report card informs me of my child's progress	95%	88%	100%	94%	100%	100%	100%	96%

Persistence in Enrollment. The school provided the following statistical information in their renewal application materials.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Percent of Eligible Students Returning From Previous Year ¹⁶	75	76	80

COMPLIANCE

Governance. In material respects, the board implements, maintains and abides by appropriate policies, procedures, systems and processes, which it has in some cases amended over time, to ensure the effective governance and fiscal oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a thorough understanding of its role in holding the school leadership accountable for fiscal soundness, but not necessarily for academic results.

- The education corporation board has a functioning finance committee that has allowed the school to be housed in private space without extensive fundraising.
- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws.
- The board receives reports on fiscal and academic performance and keeps close tabs on the school's overall fiscal health.
- The board utilizes legal counsel effectively and monitors billing and other contentious issues caused by certain local school districts.
- The school board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and code of ethics.

¹⁶ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

Legal Requirements. The education corporation generally and substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.

- Complaints. The school has generated few informal complaints and only one recent complaint that required review by the Institute. In that case the Institute found the school was properly implementing the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In following up on an informal allegation of rough handling of students by a staff member, the Institute found the school had investigated, warned the employee and ultimately terminated the employee.
- Violations. The Institute did not issue any violation letters to the school during its charter term, nor did the Institute or the Charter Schools Committee place the school on corrective action or probation.
- Open Meetings Law. Based on its board meeting minutes, the board appears to substantially comply with the New York Open Meetings Law when it goes into executive session.

The Institute found exceptions to the school's general compliance in the following areas.

- The education corporation did not amend its Code of Ethics to conform to the current requirements of the New York General Municipal Law.
- The education corporation's by-laws had a few technical deficiencies.
- The school facility, due to its age, needs attention to door locks on maintenance closets where cleaners are stored.

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, the Ark is fiscally sound. Evidence collected and examined as part of the renewal review indicates that the education corporation has successfully managed cash flow and has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. The education corporation has used the budget process to effectively ensure that revenues exceed expenses in a typical year and that it maintains accumulated net assets at a healthy level. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard, a multi-year financial data and analysis of SUNY authorized charter schools appears below in the Appendix.

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning. Throughout the charter term, the Ark has used the budget process to effectively align its spending priorities within revenue constraints. The finance committee of the board, spearheaded by its treasurer, provides close financial oversight including approval of the initial budget, monthly review of budget-to-actual results and detailed monitoring of transactions.

- The finance committee develops an annual budget in conjunction with the school's short and long-term plans.
- The committee scrutinizes projected enrollment and school district revenue and determines a conservative estimate based on current enrollment trends. It reviews and budgets other expenses based on historical information and any other known facts, such as insurance policy increases.
- Throughout the year, the committee compares budgets to actual numbers and examines material discrepancies. It approves the board's large purchases, unbudgeted items, salaries and contracts either as part of the budget process or by amendment if unexpected.

Internal Controls. The education corporation has generally established and maintained appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and controls. Its written policies address key issues including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, cash disbursements and receipts, payroll, bank reconciliations, purchasing, contracts and grants, contributions, credit cards, fixed assets capitalization and accounting, procurement, data security and investments.

- The education corporation has accurately recorded and appropriately documented transactions in accordance with established policies.
- The education corporation reviews the school's financial policy and procedures' handbook on an annual basis and updates as needed. The external auditor reviews the procedures and internal controls yearly auditors and corrects any deficiencies as soon as practicable.
- The education corporation enhances Internal control with a fiscally insightful treasurer, other knowledgeable board members and the certified public accountant retained by the school to maintain its books, human resource functions and reporting requirements.
- The education corporation's most recent audit reports of internal control over financial reporting related to financial reporting and on compliance and other matters disclosed no material weaknesses or instances of non-compliance that were required to be reported.
- The education corporation responds to the auditor's management letter comments in a constructive manner and the Institute noted no recurring comments in the renewal review.

Financial Reporting. The education corporation has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and SED with required financial reports that are generally on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles.

- The education corporation presents its annual financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; the independent audits of those statements have received unqualified opinions.
- The education corporation has a history of timely and accurate reporting.

Financial Condition. The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- The Ark has consistently posted a fiscally strong composite score rating on the Institute's financial dashboard indicating a consistent level of fiscal stability over the charter term.¹⁷
- The education corporation has relied primarily on recurring operating revenues and. Importantly, has never required significant fundraising while purchasing its school facility. The education corporation has incurred no long-term debt.

The education corporation has operated with no long-term debt and increased net assets in most years although it had a decrease in net assets of \$150,460 (less than five percent of accumulated net assets) in 2013. Revenues were flat compared to the prior year and the largest increase in expenses was \$85,157 for retirement costs. Cash flow has generally been positive with a dip in 2013 due partly to an increase in accounts receivable and substantial addition of property and equipment. A healthy cash balance of \$949,082 was still available as of June 30, 2013.

The Fiscal Dashboard, presented in the Appendix, provides color-coded tables and charts indicating that the Ark has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of its charter term.¹⁸

¹⁷ The composite score assists in measuring the financial health of an education corporation using a blended score that measures the school's performances on key financial indicators. The blended score offsets financial strengths against areas where there may be financial weaknesses.

¹⁸ The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

ARE THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE?

To the extent that the Ark has not achieved its key academic goals, its plans for implementing the educational program in the next charter term do not appear to be reasonable, feasible or achievable.

Plans for the School's Structure. The school has provided the key structural elements for a charter renewal. The Institute finds the plans presented do not sufficiently address the school's need for academic improvement and as such are not reasonable, feasible and achievable.

The school's Application for Charter Renewal appears to contain all necessary elements as required by the Act. The Institute notes that some parts of the application -- including bylaws and code of ethics -- would need to be amended to fully comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate. In addition, after the renewal visit, the Ark submitted unsolicited amendments to the school's academic program for a future charter term. A review of those materials found them not to be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals in a subsequent charter term.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Current Mission Statement

The Ark Community Charter School's mission is to nurture a community that fosters the academic, social and ethical growth in a challenging and supportive environment. We are committed to developing healthy, responsible citizens who are intellectually curious, self-reliant and open-minded.

School Characteristics

School Year	Proposed Enrollment	Actual Enrollment¹⁹	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
2001-02	96	96	K-5	K-5
2002-03	96	96	K-5	K-5
2003-04	96	96	K-5	K-5
2004-05	96	125	K-5	K-5
2005-06	96	160	K-5	K-5
2006-07	180	179	K-6	K-6
2007-08	180	184	K-6	K-6
2008-09	180	186	K-6	K-6
2009-10	200	205	K-6	K-6
2010-11	200	208	K-6	K-6
2011-12	200	214	K-6	K-6
2012-13	200	212	K-6	K-6
2013-14	200	220	K-6	K-6

¹⁹ Source: SUNY Charter Schools Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

Student Demographics²⁰

	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13 ²¹
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Troy City School District Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of Troy City School District Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	69	33	52	33	51
Hispanic	22	12	28	13	24
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0	1	0	2	0
White	7	52	11	50	10
Multiracial	0	2	8	1	15
Special Populations					
Students with Disabilities ²²	15	NA	10	16	10
English Language Learners	6	2	8	2	5
Free/ Reduced Lunch					
Eligible for Free Lunch	88	54	85	59	84
Eligible for Reduced – Price Lunch	4	7	5	6	6
Economically Disadvantaged	--	--	--	--	88

²⁰ Source: 2010-11 and 2011-12 School Report Cards, SED.

²¹ The Institute derived the 2012-13 Students with Disabilities, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics from the school's October 2012 student enrollment report to SED (2012-13 BEDS Report). District data are not yet available.

²² Students with Disabilities enrollment data are not available for 2010-11. SED released these district data in spring 2012 as the state's Empirical Analysis of Enrollment Targets.

Current Board of Trustees

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Steve Axelrod	Chair
Mary Grace Luibrand	Vice-Chair
David Levow	Treasurer
Peter McDermott, PhD	Secretary
Michelle Baker	Parent member
Daria Klem	Faculty non-voting member
Mary Theresa Streck, EdD	School leader non-voting member
Heidi Andrade, PhD	Member
Ron Eglash, PhD	Member
Joe Fama	Member

School Leader(s)

School Year(s)	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2003-04 to Present	Mary Theresa Streck, Ed D, Executive Director/Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2001-02	First Year Visit	Institute	May 21, 2002
2002-03	Evaluation Visit	Institute	June 6, 2003
2003-04	Evaluation Visit	External	March 9-10, 2004
2004-05	Evaluation Visit	Institute	April 11, 2005
2005-06	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	October 18-20, 2005
2007-08	Subsequent Renewal Visit	Institute	November 28, 2007
2008-09	Subsequent Renewal Visit	Institute	November 7, 2008
2010-11	Evaluation Visit	External	December 7-8, 2010
2013-14	Subsequent Renewal Visit	Institute	November 12-13, 2013

Conduct of the Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
November 12-13, 2013	Natasha Howard, PhD	Director of School Evaluation
	Ron Miller, PhD	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Jeffrey Wasbes	Director of Performance and Systems Analysis
	Heather Wendling	Senior Analyst
	Adam Aberman	Consultant

FISCAL DASHBOARD



Ark Community, The

SCHOOL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 2
Grants and Contracts Receivable
Accounts Receivable
Prepaid Expenses
Contributions and Other Receivables

Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2

Property, Building and Equipment, net
Other Assets

Total Assets - GRAPH 2

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses
Accrued Payroll and Benefits
Deferred Revenue
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt
Short-Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable
Other

Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 2

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2

Net Assets

Unrestricted
Temporarily restricted

Total Net Assets

Total Liabilities and Net Assets

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment
Students with Disabilities
Grants and Contracts
State and local
Federal - Title and IDEA
Federal - Other
Other
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

Total Operating Revenue

Expenses

Regular Education
SPED
Regular Education & SPED (combined)
Other
Total Program Services
Management and General
Fundraising

Total Expenses - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 4

Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

Support and Other Revenue

Contributions
Fundraising
Miscellaneous Income
Net assets released from restriction

Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue

Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue

Total Revenue - GRAPH 1

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1

Functional Expense Breakdown

Personnel Service
Administrative Staff Personnel
Instructional Personnel
Non-Instructional Personnel
Personnel Services (Combined)
Total Salaries and Staff
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes
Retirement
Management Company Fees
Building and Land Rent / Lease
Staff Development
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services
Marketing / Recruitment
Student Supplies, Materials & Services
Depreciation
Other

Total Expenses

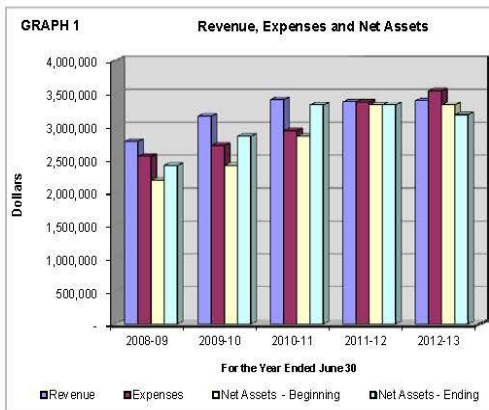
ENROLLMENT

Chartered Enroll
Revised Enroll
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4
Chartered Grades
Revised Grades

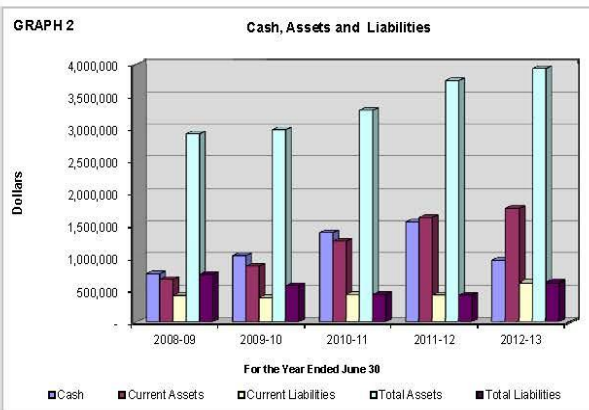
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Assets						
Current Assets						
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 2	536,992	738,102	1,021,390	1,379,134	1,550,626	949,082
Grants and Contracts Receivable	67,333	77,778	170,242	140,880	117,134	107,963
Accounts Receivable	-	-	26,791	83,728	73,451	336,568
Prepaid Expenses	35,915	38,737	11,902	8,242	20,825	3,350
Contributions and Other Receivables	10,000	-	16,110	4,233	842	25,271
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2	650,240	854,617	1,246,435	1,616,217	1,762,878	1,422,224
Property, Building and Equipment, net	2,261,313	2,105,963	2,034,151	2,112,609	2,157,103	2,308,193
Other Assets	-	15,149	-	18,029	15,502	-
Total Assets - GRAPH 2	2,911,553	2,975,729	3,280,586	3,746,855	3,935,483	3,730,417
Liabilities and Net Assets						
Current Liabilities						
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	88,276	49,220	67,320	68,378	137,339	82,614
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	312,136	323,181	346,475	351,672	468,403	468,702
Deferred Revenue	6,900	1,183	15,000	-	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	6,405	6,085	-	-	-	-
Short-Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 2	413,717	378,669	428,795	420,050	605,742	551,316
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	315,361	187,674	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2	729,078	566,343	428,795	420,050	605,742	551,316
Net Assets						
Unrestricted	2,105,374	2,331,924	2,838,681	3,326,805	3,329,741	3,179,101
Temporarily restricted	77,101	77,462	13,110	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	2,182,475	2,409,386	2,851,791	3,326,805	3,329,741	3,179,101
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,911,553	2,975,729	3,280,586	3,746,855	3,935,483	3,730,417
ACTIVITIES						
Operating Revenue						
Resident Student Enrollment	1,996,973	2,337,773	2,551,506	3,047,289	2,968,528	3,005,288
Students with Disabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grants and Contracts						
State and local	298,360	-	214,180	-	-	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	277,545	334,319	179,595	128,679	119,208	138,460
Federal - Other	-	-	24,770	25,348	83,736	32,769
Other	-	85,000	20,000	30,500	5,000	15,500
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	136,475	142,375	171,143	186,688
Total Operating Revenue	2,572,878	2,757,092	3,126,526	3,374,191	3,347,615	3,378,705
Expenses						
Regular Education	1,313,083	1,591,206	1,634,291	1,782,363	2,147,176	2,106,186
SPED	-	-	-	-	-	-
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	444,739	492,273	590,953	573,494	639,037	713,738
Total Program Services	1,757,822	2,083,479	2,225,244	2,355,857	2,786,213	2,819,924
Management and General	648,433	461,672	489,012	577,939	584,656	722,694
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 4	2,406,255	2,545,151	2,714,256	2,933,796	3,370,869	3,542,618
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	166,623	211,941	412,270	440,395	(23,254)	(163,913)
Support and Other Revenue						
Contributions	12,005	20,022	27,223	27,907	23,550	11,350
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	14,607	(5,052)	2,912	6,712	2,640	1,923
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	26,612	14,970	30,135	34,619	26,190	13,273
Total Unrestricted Revenue	2,599,490	2,772,062	3,143,551	3,421,920	3,373,805	3,391,978
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	13,110	(13,110)	-	-
Total Revenue - GRAPH 1	2,599,490	2,772,062	3,156,661	3,408,810	3,373,805	3,391,978
Change in Net Assets	193,235	226,911	442,405	475,014	2,936	(150,640)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1	1,989,240	2,182,475	2,409,386	2,851,791	3,326,805	3,329,741
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1	2,182,475	2,409,386	2,851,791	3,326,805	3,329,741	3,179,101
Functional Expense Breakdown						
Personnel Service						
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	199,780	243,904	262,215	290,619
Instructional Personnel	-	-	1,022,460	1,116,170	1,326,165	1,256,935
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	308,039	282,488	309,590	336,778
Personnel Services (Combined)	1,341,472	1,505,295	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	1,341,472	1,505,295	1,530,279	1,642,562	1,897,970	1,884,332
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	254,610	303,388	357,406	405,993	518,576	487,472
Retirement	-	-	93,854	161,947	173,899	259,056
Management Company Fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease	100,704	100,238	-	-	-	-
Staff Development	31,110	32,661	21,358	19,192	13,044	16,405
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	315,514	215,400	170,219	126,809	145,359	190,054
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	13,002	13,737	10,010	6,928
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	74,292	138,063	128,792	128,267	152,709	169,407
Depreciation	158,923	156,694	166,859	169,360	157,895	180,964
Other	129,630	93,422	232,497	265,929	301,607	348,000
Total Expenses	2,406,255	2,545,151	2,714,256	2,933,796	3,370,869	3,542,618
ENROLLMENT						
Chartered Enroll	180	180	200	200	200	200
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	180	180	200	200	203	206
Chartered Grades	K-6	K-6	K-6	K-6	K-6	K-6
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-	-

Ark Community, The

SCHOOL ANALYSIS						
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Primary School District						
Per Pupil Funding						
Troy	11,481	13,360	13,360	15,986	15,986	15,986
Increase over prior year	4.8%	16.4%	0.0%	19.7%	0.0%	0.0%
PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN						
Revenue						
Operating	14,394	15,317	15,633	16,871	16,495	16,401
Other Revenue and Support	148	83	151	173	129	64
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	14,442	15,400	15,783	17,044	16,624	16,465
Expenses						
Program Services	9,766	11,575	11,128	11,779	13,729	13,689
Management and General, Fundraising	3,602	2,565	2,445	2,890	2,881	3,508
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	13,368	14,140	13,573	14,669	16,610	17,197
% of Program Services	73.1%	81.9%	82.0%	80.3%	82.7%	79.6%
% of Management and Other	26.9%	18.1%	18.0%	19.7%	17.3%	20.4%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	8.0%	8.9%	16.3%	16.2%	0.1%	-4.3%
Student to Faculty Ratio						
				10.5	6.3	6.4
Faculty to Admin Ratio						
				1.6	7.1	7.1
Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6						
Score	2.1	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.0	3.0
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring -1.0 - 0.9	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong
Working Capital - GRAPH 7						
Net Working Capital	236,523	475,948	817,640	1,196,167	1,157,136	870,908
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	9.1%	17.2%	26.0%	35.0%	34.3%	25.7%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	1.6	2.3	2.9	3.8	2.9	2.6
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good	Good
Quick (Acid Test) Ratio						
Score	1.5	2.2	2.9	3.8	2.9	2.6
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7						
Score	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Months of Cash - GRAPH 8						
Score	2.7	3.5	4.5	5.6	5.5	3.2
Risk (Low > 6 mo. / Medium 3 - 6 mo. / High < 3 mo.)	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 6 mo. / Good 3 - 6 mo. / Poor < 3)	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year to year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.



This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right, and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

Ark Community Charter School (The)



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

ABSOLUTE MEASURES

1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)

2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)

COMPARATIVE MEASURES

3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.

4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at or above Level 3 on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.

GROWTH MEASURE

5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)

2007-08 Grades Served: K-6				MET	2008-09 Grades Served: K-6				MET	2009-10 Grades Served: K-6				MET
		All Students	2+ Years Students				All Students	2+ Years Students				All Students	2+ Years Students	
Grades		% (N)	% (N)		Grades		% (N)	% (N)		Grades		% (N)	% (N)	
3		59.1 (22)	63.2 (19)	NO	3		84.0 (25)	84.0 (25)	YES	3		70.0 (30)	70.0 (30)	NO
4		76.2 (21)	76.5 (17)		4		63.2 (19)	64.7 (17)		4		82.6 (23)	81.8 (22)	
5		60.0 (15)	58.3 (12)		5		76.2 (21)	88.2 (17)		5		52.9 (17)	56.3 (16)	
6		35.7 (14)	38.5 (13)		6		90.9 (11)	90.0 (10)		6		73.7 (19)	72.2 (18)	
7		(0)	(0)		7		(0)	(0)		7		(0)	(0)	
8		(0)	(0)		8		(0)	(0)		8		(0)	(0)	
All		59.7 (72)	60.7 (61)		All		77.6 (76)	81.2 (69)		All		70.8 (89)	70.9 (86)	
Grades PI AMO				YES	Grades PI AMO				YES	Grades PI AMO				YES
3-6 160 133					3-6 176 144					3-6 169 155				
Comparison: Troy City Schools				YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools				YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools				YES
Grades		School	District		Grades		School	District		Grades		School	District	
3-6		60.7	58.3		3-6		81.2	64.0		3-6		46.5	36.7	
% FL Actual Predicted Effect Size				YES	% FL Actual Predicted Effect Size				YES	% FL Actual Predicted Effect Size				YES
83.3 59.7 53.4 0.44					82.7 77.6 65.0 0.85					85.1 44.9 33.6 0.78				
Gr N Base Target Result				NO	Gr N Base Target Result				NO	Gr N Base Target Result				NO
4 18 61.1 68.1 77.8					3 1 0.0 0.0					3				
5 13 15.4 45.2 61.5 *					4 17 58.8 66.9 64.7					4 22 86.4 86.5 81.8				
6 13 38.5 56.7 38.5 *					5 17 82.4 82.5 88.2 *					5 16 62.5 68.8 56.3				
7					6 10 50.0 62.5 90.0 *					6 19 78.9 79.0 73.7				
8					7					7				
All 48 37.5 62.5					8					8				
				All 45 64.4 77.8				All 57 77.2 77.3 71.9						

(§)2009-10 results for #1, #2, and #5 are based on the State's determined "time adjusted cut score" instead of Level 3 cut scores as in previous years.
Data Source: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Ark Community Charter School



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

	2007-08 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2008-09 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2009-10 Grades Served: K-6			MET						
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)							
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)	3	90.5 (21)	88.9 (18)		3	100.0 (25)	100.0 (25)		3	93.3 (30)	93.3 (30)							
	4	95.2 (21)	94.1 (17)		4	90.0 (20)	94.1 (17)		4	87.0 (23)	86.4 (22)							
	5	76.9 (13)	70.0 (10)		5	80.0 (20)	88.2 (17)		5	82.4 (17)	81.3 (16)							
	6	92.9 (14)	100.0 (13)		6	90.9 (11)	90.0 (10)		6	89.5 (19)	88.9 (18)							
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)							
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)							
	All	89.9 (69)	89.7 (58)	YES	All	90.8 (76)	94.2 (69)	YES	All	88.8 (89)	88.4 (86)	YES						
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO							
	3-6	190	102	YES	3-6	189	119	YES	3-6	188	135	YES						
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Troy City Schools				Comparison: Troy City Schools				Comparison: Troy City Schools									
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District							
	3-6	89.7	69.6	YES	3-6	94.2	74.3	YES	3-6	73.3	39.7	YES						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted level of students at or above Level 3 on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size				
	83.3	89.9	73.6	1.06	YES	82.7	90.8	81.2	0.79	YES	85.1	74.1	43.7	1.64	YES			
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	NO	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	NO	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	NO
	4	19	73.7	74.8	94.7 *		3	1	100.0		100.0		3					
	5	11	81.8	81.9	72.7		4	17	94.1	94.2	94.1		4	22	100.0	100.0	86.4	
	6	14	42.9	58.9	92.9 *		5	17	94.1	94.2	88.2		5	17	88.2	88.3	82.4	
	7						6	10	80.0	80.1	90.0 *		6	19	79.0	79.1	89.5 *	
	8						7						7					
							8						8					
	All	47	63.8		89.4		All	45	91.1		91.1		All	58	89.7	89.7	86.2	

(§) 2009-10 results for #1, #2, and #5 are based on the State's determined "time adjusted cut score" instead of Level 3 cut scores as in previous years.
Data Source: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

Ark Community Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-6			MET			
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)				
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	58.6 (29)	53.8 (26)	NA	3	46.4 (28)	46.4 (28)	NA	3	2.9 (34)	3.1 (32)	NA			
	4	42.3 (26)	40.0 (25)		4	34.6 (26)	34.6 (26)		4	12.5 (24)	12.5 (24)				
	5	40.0 (20)	44.4 (18)		5	23.8 (21)	20.0 (20)		5	10.5 (19)	10.5 (19)				
	6	22.2 (18)	22.2 (18)		6	58.8 (17)	56.3 (16)		6	0.0 (17)	0.0 (17)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	43.0 (93)	41.4 (87)		All	40.2 (92)	38.9 (90)		All	6.4 (94)	6.5 (92)				
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PI	AMO	NO	Grades	PLI	AMO				
	3-6	131	122		3-6	132	135		3-6	50					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Troy City Schools			YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools			YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools			NO			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3-6	41.4	33.7		3-6	38.9	30.6		3-6	6.5	10.4				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO
	87.9	43.0	35.2	0.48		84.7	40.2	37.9	0.17		87.8	6.4	17.7	-0.96	
GROWTH MEASURE 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO			
	4				4				4	35.4					
	5				5				5	40.1					
	6				6				6	45.3					
	7				7				7	0.0					
	8				8				8	0.0					
	All	29.0	50.0		All	42.6	50.0		All	39.8	50.0				

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Ark Community Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-6			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-6			MET			
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)				
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	72.4 (29)	69.2 (26)	NA	3	57.1 (28)	57.1 (28)	NA	3	2.9 (34)	3.1 (32)	NA			
	4	65.4 (26)	64.0 (25)		4	42.3 (26)	42.3 (26)		4	8.3 (24)	8.3 (24)				
	5	65.0 (20)	61.1 (18)		5	28.6 (21)	30.0 (20)		5	10.5 (19)	10.5 (19)				
	6	22.2 (18)	22.2 (18)		6	52.9 (17)	50.0 (16)		6	5.9 (17)	5.9 (17)				
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	59.1 (93)	56.3 (87)		All	45.7 (92)	45.6 (90)		All	6.4 (94)	6.5 (92)				
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	YES	Grades	PI	AMO	NO	Grades	PLI	AMO				
	3-6	154	137		3-6	139	148		3-6	49					
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Troy City Schools			YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools			YES	Comparison: Troy City Schools			NO			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
	3-6	56.3	36.0		3-6	45.6	33.4		3-6	6.5	11.4				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO
	87.9	59.1	45.1	0.75		84.7	45.7	49.4	-0.19		87.8	6.4	21.0	-0.90	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO	Grades	School	State	NO			
	4				4				4	22.0					
	5				5				5	39.0					
	6				6				6	47.8					
	7				7				7	0.0					
	8				8				8	0.0					
	All	22.0	50.0		All	22.2	50.0		All	34.9	50.0				