



# New York State Education Department

## ***Renewal Site Visit Report 2018-2019***

### **Compass Charter School**

**Visit Date: October 2-4, 2018  
Date of Report: June 3, 2019**

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## SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

### Charter School Summary<sup>1</sup>

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Compass Charter School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Scott Marshall Brandon
<b>District of location</b>	NYC CSD 13
<b>Opening Date</b>	Fall 2014
<b>Charter Terms</b>	July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2019
<b>Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment</b>	K-Grade 5/ 300 students
<b>Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment</b>	K-Grade 5/ 300 students
<b>Comprehensive Management Service Provider</b>	None
<b>Educational Partners</b>	None
<b>Facilities</b>	300 Adelphi Street, Brooklyn, NY 11205 (Public Space)
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>Compass Charter School is a safe and nurturing educational environment that honors the individuality of each learner. By engaging in a process of inquiry, our graduates will be equipped with the necessary skills to lead fulfilling personal and professional lives, including a developed sense of self, the ability to think in innovative and flexible ways, and the inspiration to make a positive impact on their community.</i>
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inquiry</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• The Arts</li> <li>• Multi-faceted assessment practices</li> <li>• Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT)</li> <li>• Looping</li> <li>• Extended school day</li> </ul>
<b>Requested Revisions</b>	<b>The school is seeking to add a key design element: “Commitment to Diversity”</b>

**Noteworthy:** Compass Charter School has a high percentage (25%) of students with special needs and serves them in integrated classrooms supported by general education teachers, special education providers, and social/emotional practitioners.

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

## Renewal Outcomes

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

- **Full-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for the maximum term of five years. For a school to be eligible for a full-term renewal, during the current charter term the school must have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or exceeding Benchmark 1, and at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all other performance benchmarks in the Framework.
- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. As discussed above, the Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal, which is consistent with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short-term renewal, a school must either:
  - (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1, but at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework which will likely result in the school's being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short-term renewal permits, **or**
  - (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1, but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.
- **Non-Renewal:** A school's charter will not be renewed if the school does not apply for renewal or the school fails to meet the criteria for either full-term or short-term renewal. In the case of non-renewal, a school's charter will be terminated upon its expiration and the school will be required to comply with the Charter School Office's Closing Procedures to ensure an orderly closure by the end of the school year.

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

## SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

### Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2014-2015	Year 2 2015-2016	Year 3 2016-2017	Year 4 2017-2018	Year 5 2018-2019
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	K-Grade 1	K-Grade 2	K-Grade 3	K-Grade 4	K-Grade 5
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	132	198	264	300	300

### \*Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2019 to 2020	Year 2 2020 to 2021
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	K-Grade 5	K-Grade 5
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	300	300

\*The proposed chart was approval by the Board of Regents.

## METHODOLOGY

A three-day renewal site visit was conducted at Compass Charter School (CCS) on October 2-4, 2018. The New York State Education Department’s Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, intervention providers, teachers and parents. In cooperation with school leadership, the CSO administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted twenty classroom observations in kindergarten through fifth grade. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the co leader of curriculum and instruction and the co-leader of strategic development.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included the following:

- **Renewal Application**
- **Academic data**
- **Renewal Site Visit Workbook**
- **Current organizational chart**
- **A master school schedule**
- **Map of school with room numbers and teacher names**
- **Board materials (roster, minutes, and strategic plan, if applicable)**

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

## BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

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

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

Observational findings from the review of the renewal application, supporting data, and the site visit will be presented in alignment with the [Performance Framework](#) benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below, although not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit. A brief summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; however, the report narrative will highlight those indicators not fully met by the school.

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

For the site visit conducted from October 2 - 4, 2018 at Compass Charter School, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

**New York State Education Department  
Charter School Performance Framework Rating**

<b>Performance Benchmark</b>		<b>Level</b>
<b>Educational Success</b>	<b>Benchmark 1: Student Performance:</b> The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning:</b> School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students’ well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement:</b> The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
<b>Organizational Soundness</b>	<b>Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:</b> The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 5: Financial Management:</b> The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance:</b> The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity:</b> The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
<b>Faithfulness to Charter &amp; Law</b>	<b>Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:</b> The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention:</b> The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Falls Far Below
	<b>Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance:</b> The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets



## Summary of Findings

- *Compass Charter School (CCS) is in year five of operation and serves students in kindergarten through Grade 5. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: meeting seven benchmarks, approaching two benchmarks, and falling far below one benchmark. Additional details regarding those ratings are provided below.*
- **Areas of Strength:** The school was founded by three educators committed to a serving a diverse group of learners in a child-centered, inquiry-based instructional model. The school is in shared public space in the gentrifying Fort Greene area in Brooklyn and is fully enrolled. An enrollment preference for students eligible for free and reduced price lunch has been implemented. All classes are staffed with two teachers, one with a special education background to support all students' needs within the general education environment. The school has high retention rates for families and staff alike. Parents and teachers reported a high degree of support, respect, and satisfaction. Changes to the organizational structure of the school, its curriculum, staffing, and dissemination of data have been instituted. The board conducted a formal review of school leadership in 2018 instituting a 360-degree evaluation protocol. Changes to the school's curriculum and its interim assessment of students have resulted in increased student achievement in both ELA and math. The new leadership structure has been widely embraced by the school community. As reported to NYSED, these new leadership roles and responsibilities are clear to all stakeholders. Parents and teachers reported a high degree of support, respect, and satisfaction.
- **Areas in Need of Improvement:** Throughout the charter term and for the 2017 administration of the NYS math and ELA exams, the school's percent of students proficient did not exceed the proficiency rates for the school's district of location, NYC CSD 13 or the statewide average for all students in both subjects. However, the school's proficiency rate for students with disabilities on the ELA exam did exceed the district proficiency rate by three percentage points. From the 2016-2017 to the 2017-2018 school year, the average proficiency rate for students with disabilities at CCS increased in both ELA and math. During that same time period, proficiency rates for economically disadvantaged students enrolled at Compass increased to a great extent in ELA and slightly in math. Despite this positive trend, the school's proficiency rates in 2017-2018 for math remains below the district of location and in ELA proficiency were comparable. In April 2019, the school was required by NYSED to develop a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) establishing strategies and measurable outcomes to improve student performance in math and to meet enrollment targets for economically disadvantaged students that are comparable to the school's district of location.

## Benchmark 1: Student Performance

*The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).*

### Finding: Approaches

- CCS currently serves children in kindergarten through Grade 5.
- CCS employs a co-teaching model with two certified teachers in every classroom.
- CCS utilizes the workshop model for ELA and math instruction with a focus on responsive classroom techniques to increase student engagement and increase higher order thinking skills.
- Instruction at CCS is student centered; with students working to master skills and content knowledge through a variety of settings ranging from whole class, to small groups or partners, to individual work.
- CCS utilizes Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) to support students with disabilities enrolled in the school as appropriate. Push-in and pull out services are employed as needed, as well as social emotional supports and counseling.
- English language learners (ELLs) /multi-lingual learners (MLLs) are supported primarily through the ICT model adjusted to address their learning needs and are provided additional pull-out support when needed.

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

#### Indicator 1: All Schools

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

The school's ESEA Accountability Designation for 2017-18 was a school in Good Standing.

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

In the renewal request, the school reported we provided them with a list of 69 similar schools based on 2016-17 enrollment data. During that time frame the school served K- Grade 3. By removing the schools that did not have a third grade, the list went down to 45 schools. When compared, Compass Charter School ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> in ELA and 45<sup>th</sup> in math.

Using that same list to compare 2017-18 performance, the school's rank rose to 21<sup>st</sup> in ELA and 42<sup>nd</sup> in math. Proficiency rated were aggregate not grade-level specific.

#### Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

##### *2.a.i. Trending Toward Proficiency – Aggregate Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:*

In 2017-2018, 56% of students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in ELA. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

In 2017-2018, 52% of students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

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

In 2017-2018, 33% of students with disabilities attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in ELA. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework. In 2017-2018, 20% of students with disabilities attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

In 2017-2018, 39% of economically disadvantaged students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in ELA. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework. In 2017-2018, 23% of economically disadvantaged students attending Compass Charter School were trending towards proficiency in math. This falls below the minimum expectation of 75% as set forth in the Charter School Performance Framework.

*2.b.i. Proficiency - Aggregate School Level Proficiency for All Students:* See Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes for All Students: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates**

	ELA					Math				
	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13	Variance to District	NYS	Variance to NYS	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13	Variance to District	NYS	Variance to NYS
2016-2017	29%	49%	-20	43%	-14	11%	49%	-38	48%	-37
2017-2018	57%	57%	0	49%	+8	41%	51%	-10	51%	-10

NOTE:

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

2.b.ii. Proficiency – Subgroup School Level Proficiency: See Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup**

Subject	School Year	Students with Disabilities (Variance to the district of location)	Economically Disadvantaged (Variance to the district of location)
ELA	2016-2017	0% (-25)	5% (-28)
	2017-2018	32% (+3)	16% (-25)
Mathematics	2016-2017	0% (-26)	0% (-35)
	2017-2018	13% (-11)	4% (-30)

**NOTES:**

- (1) Data in the table above represents tested students in respective subgroups who scored proficiently (level 3 or above) on each state assessment.
- (2) For the students with disabilities both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.
- (3) In some cases, student subgroups still did not have enough tested students to form a representative sample (<5 students). For these subgroups testing data was withheld.

**NOTE: A “.” In any table indicates that the data is suppressed, no student sat for the exam, or the exam was not given.**

2.b.iii. Proficiency – Grade Level Proficiency: See Tables 3 -4 below.

**Table 3: Grade Level Proficiency for All Students: ELA**

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13 / NYS	Variance to NYC CSD 13 / NYS	Compass CS	NYC CSD 13 / NYS	Variance to NYC CSD 13 / NYS
Grade 3	29%	49% / 43%	-20 / -14	67%	57% / 51%	+10 / +16
Grade 4	.	. / .	. / .	45%	57% / 47%	-12 / -3

**NOTE:**

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

**Table 4: Grade Level Proficiency for All Students: Mathematics**

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

NOTE:

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

## Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

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

### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSLs.</li> <li>b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.</li> <li>c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.</li> <li>d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.</li> </ul>
2. <i>Instruction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.</li> <li>b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.</li> </ul>
3. <i>Assessment and Program Evaluation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments.</li> <li>b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.</li> <li>c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.</li> </ul>
4. <i>Supports for Diverse Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to: students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students.</li> <li>b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.</li> </ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

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

- Indicator a: The school's English language arts (ELA) curriculum includes *Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop (TCRWP)* and *Words Their Way*. For math, the school uses *Technical Education Research Center's Investigations (TERC)*, *Engage NY*, *Heinemann's Contexts for Learning*. The school's integrated units are supported by Cloud Institute's *Education for Sustainability*; *Integrated Arts- NYC Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts* and *National Core Arts Standards*. Integrated units are designed to cover Science and Social Studies and respond to students' inquiry projects. The school is piloting *TCRWP*

*Phonics* in kindergarten and first grade; and will expand this program in upper grades pending results during the current school year.

- Indicator b: The co-leader, curriculum and instruction (CLCI) facilitates planning meetings where teachers and grade level leaders, develop unit and lesson plans following school designed templates. Completed templates were available outside each classroom during the site visit. Teachers were observed engaging students with classroom activities and teaching for conceptual understanding.
- Indicator c: Horizontal curriculum alignment is facilitated by co-planning time. All grade levels share a common planning period. The school's standards-aligned curriculum maps ensure vertical alignment for ELA and math. The integrated studies units are organized by essential questions that are designed to build on prior work from year to year. The CLCI attends some grade-level planning periods, allocating more attention for grades that need more support.
- Indicator d: The school implements the following opportunities for differentiation: Guided Reading differentiated by Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) scores, direct math instruction, mini lessons, and station teaching. The school is in its third year of training in Visual Thinking Strategies to target visual and kinesthetic learners.

2. Element: **Instruction:**

- Indicator a: Teachers are trained and use Responsive Classrooms to support accountable talk, higher order questioning, and expectations for listening. The Workshop Model which includes mini lessons, independent or partner work, group work was observed in all lessons, . The school uses the Understanding by Design curriculum framework in planning lessons and units.
- Indicator b: Compass employs an Integrated Co-teaching model (ICT) pairing a general education teacher and special education teacher in each classroom. Examples of team-teaching strategies that were observed during the site visit include parallel teaching, co-teaching, stations and alternative teaching settings. A high level of engagement was observed in lower grade classrooms.

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

- Indicator a: Compass uses a variety of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments. F&P benchmark assessments, *Words Their Way Spelling Inventory*, and skills-based math assessments (designed by the school's Math Coach) are used for formative assessment. CCS uses the NYS ELA and math exam as the primary measure of summative student progress toward grade- level proficiency.
- Indicator b: Compass has a regular system for analyzing student data which includes monitoring achievement for subgroups, identifying changes in instructional planning as well as interventions for struggling students.
- Indicator c: Compass uses a cumulative portfolio system and narrative progress reports to support their qualitative feedback for students. School provides a standards-based progress report three times each year. Parents reported satisfaction with the school's narrative report structure.

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

- Indicator a: Compass employs the ICT model which allows for smaller student to teacher ratio, a special education teacher in every classroom and small group instruction plus a 45 min period daily intervention period. Twenty-five percent of CSS students are mandated to receive special education services. Supports for students who are economically disadvantaged include daily intervention period, differentiated classroom groups and

- homework and afterschool skills-based instruction. Supports also include mental health support and connections to social services. Support for ELL/MLL students is provided through push in to the classrooms and building staff capacity to serve ELL/MLL students (6% of total students). The school reports that to the best of the school's ability, students who are in need of support services receive them regardless of classification status.
- Indicator b: Compass uses assessment data and 8-week Response To Intervention (RTI) cycle to identify and support struggling students. Supports include classroom based, targeted interventions with increasing intensity and focus as needed. Special education evaluations are called when students do not achieve adequate progress through the three tiers of interventions defined by the RTI system. School is transitioning to a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), which is a broad system that includes RTI and views interventions through a schoolwide lens and includes an emphasis on social, emotional and behavioral support.



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

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

**Finding: Meets**

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Behavior Management and Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy.</li> <li>b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.</li> <li>c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination.</li> <li>d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.</li> </ul>
2. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students’ strengths and needs.</li> <li>b. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions.</li> <li>c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns.</li> <li>d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.</li> </ul>
3. <i>Social-Emotional Supports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students.</li> <li>b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students’ social and emotional health.</li> </ul>

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:**

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

- Indicator a: The school uses the Responsive Classroom approach to student discipline and has a written code of conduct that is included in the Family Handbook. School uses a case-management system to support the creation and monitoring of behavioral interventions.
- Indicator b: A new position has been created, director of school culture in addition to a mental health coordinator, both of whom work to support students and teachers to minimize distractions in the classroom as well as to enable the student to take responsibility for their actions in a supportive and structured multi-tier approach.
- Indicator c: Compass maintains an emphasis on maintaining a positive, inclusive community, the use of consistent behavior management strategies, and implements a comprehensive discipline policy with no tolerance for harassment, bullying, fighting, or violence of any kind. Staff members participate in school safety training prior to the start of school each year.

Classroom observations affirm a schoolwide approach consistent among classrooms and teachers reported the effectiveness of the training.

- Indicator d: Classroom environments were observed to be conducive to learning, despite occasional instances of students engaged in non-productive behavior. Classrooms were steeped in productive routines and positive reinforcement. Staff was equipped to address behaviors with strategies that were respectful of all and supported quick recovery and return to productivity. Behavioral challenges were primarily noted in upper grades.

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

- Indicator a: There are structures and procedures in place to support teacher/ parent communication. Each child receives a home visit from a staff member prior to their beginning at CCS. The first parent teacher conference is formatted as a listening conference, designed to have parents/ guardians orient their child's new teacher to how they learn best. Other formal structures include quarterly parent-teacher conferences and progress reports generated three times a year.
- Indicator b: The school uses New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Annual School Survey and school developed surveys at beginning and end of year. School has responded to parent's need of orientation to the school's instructional methods and philosophy by instituting regular academic program presentations at the Family School Collaborative. Parents reported access to co-leaders and staff who were responsive to students' needs. Parents noted that school staff was often proactive in reaching out to help solve problems. Parents interviewed were satisfied with the instructional program as well as the supportive inclusive environment.
- Indicator c: CCS maintains a complaint policy that is included in the Family Handbook. The policy outlines the steps to make a formal or informal complaint beginning with their child's teachers before approaching school leadership. If parents are not satisfied with the response at the school level, the policy provides a formal complaint form that can be submitted to the CCS Board of Trustees, as well as information about the timeline for resolution and how to contact the authorizer.
- Indicator d: Co-leaders share academic data at the school year's beginning and end that includes plans to target areas of improvement, internal assessment data and plans for the coming school year including staffing updates. A parent curriculum night and ongoing Family School Collaborative meetings are held to ensure that families are partners in the life of the school. Parents reported that co-leaders are accessible to parents and conduct informal check-ins with students and families

3. Element: **Social- Emotional Supports:**

- Indicator a: The school's mission includes a focus on developing students socially and emotionally. Observers noted classroom practices that were consistent with developing children's ability to make productive decisions, respect everyone and everything and to help one another. Practices include Caring School Communities, Responsive Classroom, a buddy class program and counseling to serve the social, emotional needs of students.
- Indicator b: CCS implements Caring School Community which offers lessons on classroom rules and procedures, and self-management, interpersonal, and executive function skills. Lessons are delivered in all grades during a weekly period dedicated to social-emotional learning and visual thinking strategies. Additionally, the school's RTI team which includes the director of learning support, CLCI, learning specialists, mental health coordinator, social workers, related service providers (when necessary), and the classroom teachers responds to students in need of monitoring or support.

#### Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

#### **Finding: Meets**

#### **Financial Condition**

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

The Charter School Office reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school's capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school's capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.

#### **Overall Financial Outlook**

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department's Office of Audit Services. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. Compass Charter School's 2016-2017 composite score is 2.0.

**Compass Charter School's Composite Scores  
2014-2015 to 2016-2017**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2014-2015	2.1
2015-2016	2.3
2016-2017	2.0

*Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services*

#### **Near-Term Indicators**

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

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

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

*Enrollment maximization* measures whether or not a charter school is meeting its enrollment projections, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Actual enrollment that is over 85 percent is considered reasonable. Compass Charter School's enrollment maximization for 2016-2017 was at 81 percent.

### **Long-Term Indicators**

A charter school's *debt to asset ratio* measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. It is calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets. A ratio of 0.9 or less meets a standard of low risk. For 2016-2017, Compass Charter School's debt to asset ratio was 0.3.

*Total margin* measures the deficit or surplus a charter school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Total margin is calculated as net income divided by total revenue. A total margin that is positive indicates low risk. For 2016-2017, Compass Charter School's total margin was 2 percent.

## **Benchmark 5: Financial Management**

*The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.*

### **Finding: Approaches**

The NYSED Charter School Office reviewed Compass Charter School's 2016-2017 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

However, the auditor noted the following, which it did not consider to be a significant deficiency or material weakness in the management letter:

### **Financial Policies and Procedures Manual**

Numerous polices in the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (FPPM) were not being followed:

- Transfers between bank accounts are not being approved or reviewed by the board treasurer.
- The finance manager is making deposits and recording all deposits into QuickBooks. These duties should be segregated.
- Packing slips are not retained and attached to cash disbursement packets.
- Purchases paid through Bill.com are not being pre-approved.
- A member of the board is not approving purchases over \$10,000.
- Credit card statements are not being reviewed and signed off by the Board Treasurer.
- The Board Chair or Treasurer is not signing checks over \$20,000.

The auditor recommended the school update its FPPM to accurately describe the procedures being followed, being sure to implement strong internal controls.

The auditor also provided the status of unresolved matters in prior years' management letters:

### **Director's Expense Reimbursement Forms**

In 2016, a director's expense reimbursement form was approved by another director rather than a board member, which is not in accordance with the school's FPPM. Although the auditor recommended that the school adhere to its FPPM, the auditor noticed no changes through December 2016. The finance manager did tell the auditor in January 2017 that the director and board were adhering to the FPPM in this regard.

### **Policies and Procedures**

In 2015, the auditor noted that the employee handbook states that employees are eligible to accrue and use up to 40 hours of paid sick time per calendar year and that unused sick time may be carried over from year to year. Discussions with management revealed that it was not its intention to allow employees to carry over sick time and that it should be forfeited at the end of the school year. The auditor recommended that the update the policy to reflect its true intent, and management agreed. The auditor noted in 2017 that this has not been done.

## Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

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

### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Board Oversight and Governance</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.</li><li>b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission and educational philosophy.</li><li>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.</li><li>d. The board regularly updates school policies.</li><li>e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers.</li><li>f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.</li></ol>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

#### Element: **Board Oversight and Governance:**

- Indicator a: The board has increased to 12 members over the charter term and includes trustees with backgrounds in education, law, nonprofit management, operations, and finance. New members have recently added real estate expertise. The board continues to recruit new members to its board and its committees as part of its succession planning.
- Indicator b: The board cites that its current focus is on improving student achievement data while maintaining the positive school culture and focus on inquiry-based, child-centered instruction. Positions have been added to support teachers and the academic leadership for the school has become centralized in the position of the CLCI. The finance committee has formalized its budget development process to prioritize school leaders' input.
- Indicator c: The board has made the following changes to ensure that the school meets its academic achievement goals: based on a formal review of school leadership in 2018 by instituting a 360-degree evaluation protocol they revised the organizational structure, centralizing instructional leadership in the position of CLCI; they have developed a data dashboard which will track revenue and expenses monthly as well as attendance and enrollment data.
- Indicator d: The board revised and updated its bylaws to ensure compliance with all applicable laws. The Family Handbook is revised each year. The Finance Committee reviews any changes to its Fiscal Policies and Procedures.
- Indicator e: The board adopted a new leader evaluation tool that aligns to the NYSED CSO Performance Framework and the school's charter and includes a measure for student

academic performance. The board completed the evaluation for the school's three co-leaders in June 2018. During the site visit, the board reflected on its efficacy citing the institution of its 360-degree leadership evaluation tool as well as a data dashboard to be used at monthly board meetings in order to enhance its oversight capabilities.

- Indicator f: The Board demonstrates legal compliance and has goals for oversight of and compliance with all regulations regarding the school. No conflict of interest has been reported.

**Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity**

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

**Finding: Meets**

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>School Leadership</i>	<p>a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning.</p> <p>b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school.</p> <p>d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</p>
2. <i>Professional Climate</i>	<p>a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.</p> <p>b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers.</p> <p>c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students’ needs.</p> <p>d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice.</p> <p>e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.</p>
3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i> □ N/A	<p>a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider.</p> <p>b. Changes in the school’s charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</p> <p>c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.</p>

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:**

**1. Element: School Leadership:**

- Indicator a: CCS is led by two co-leaders who report to the CCS Board of Trustees. The co-leaders were part of the CCS applicant team and have been co-leaders since inception. One co-director position was eliminated at the end of last year. Teachers and Parents reported confidence in the school’s leadership and reviewers noted enthusiasm for the vision of the school as well as the new initiatives taking place this year.



- Indicator b: The school has articulated roles for each co-leader and their direct reports. Interviews with parents and teachers demonstrated the community’s understanding of the co-leaders’ roles and responsibilities which aligned to the organizational management chart.
  - Indicator c: Weekly, the co-leaders communicate updates on important initiatives and reminders of upcoming events through two email newsletters, one for staff and one for families. The CCS social media accounts and text messaging system are used to send reminders and information and the website is also frequently updated with calendar events and links to important documents like the Family Handbook. The Co- Leaders also send a daily staff-only email. Parents noted appreciation for the posts of pictures of classroom activities on BLOOMZ a parent communication platform.
  - Indicator d: The school has a recruitment plan that includes the networks of current staff members. Hiring process includes school visit and group discussion with existing staff members to gauge alignment with school culture. Staff retention is high and staffing decisions prioritize student and classroom success.
2. Element: **Professional Climate:**
- Indicator a: The school is fully staffed except for one sudden teacher vacancy.
  - Indicator b: The schools uses the structures of co-teaching pairs, grade level meetings and school wide professional development to provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate with each other. There is designated time for these meetings. Teachers reported appreciation for the opportunity to work together and for the support it provides to their practice.
  - Indicator c: School conducts weekly half-day professional development (PD), as well as periodic full day sessions. Topics and structures include Visual Thinking Strategies to support arts integration across the curriculum, summer institute, coaching and a special orientation for new staff. Teacher surveys and coaching and observation cycles are used to follow up on and assess the efficacy of PD sessions. School has a formal teacher evaluation process, based on the Danielson rubric, that includes formal observations and informal data from coaching, participation in grade level meetings and informal observations.
  - Indicator d: School has developed a PD plan for the upcoming school year with enhanced feedback opportunities Teachers receive weekly informal feedback as part of the ongoing coaching cycle used by the school leadership team. CLCI conducts mid and end of year formal evaluations of teachers aligned to Danielson rubric through a clinical observation protocol.
  - Indicator e: The school receives feedback and satisfaction data from teachers by administering the NYCDOE survey as well as an open-ended internal survey distributed once a year.
3. Element: **Contractual Relations** N/A

## Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

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

### Finding: Meets

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

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

#### Element: **Mission and Key Design:**

- Indicator a: Parents, teachers, school leadership and board have a shared understanding of and commitment to the school’s mission and key design elements. Focus groups with parents and teachers document stakeholders’ alignment with the mission of the school and noted key design elements as reasons for choosing to join the school’s community.
- Indicator b: Each of the key design elements (with the exception of extended day) was observed to be in full implementation during the site visit. Parents and teachers articulated the key elements and cited examples of recent activities as examples. CCS utilizes Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) to support students with disabilities enrolled in the school. Push-in and pull out services are employed as needed, as well as social emotional supports and counseling. ELLs/MLLs are supported primarily through the Integrated co-teaching (ICT) model and provided additional pull out support when needed.

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

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

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

**Finding: Falls Far Below**

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

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:**

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

- Indicator a: The school maintains a high rate of applications for its kindergarten seats and has a waitlist to draw from should a seat open up during the school year in all grades served. Unfortunately, despite a rigorous recruitment/retention plan and staff/family outreach the school has not yet been able to meet enrollment targets for two of the three at risk groups: ELLs/MLLs and ED students.
- Indicator b: The school continues to develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan to enroll all students including SWDs, ELLs/MLLs, and ED students. School leadership outlined its recruitment strategies as well as program services to support student needs. The school exceeds CSD 13 in enrollment of SWDs. There is low number of ELLs/MLLs in the district, however the school’s ELL/MLL population (1.33%) is less than 5% lower than the district. Plans to increase ELL/MLL applications were articulated by the board. According to the leadership team and outreach staff, based on its conversations in the community there is an oversaturation of options in the school district. The school has a NYSED approved lottery weighting of 40% to provide more of a chance for economically disadvantaged students to gain a seat through the lottery. For the 2018 lottery, the school was approved to implement a preference for ED students. The school has not been able to meet targets for enrollment of ED students, despite yearly adjustments to its preferences in their lottery.

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

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

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Compass Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Variance	Compass Charter School	NYC CSD 13	Variance
Students with Disabilities	17%	20%	-3	25%	21%	+4
ELL/MLL	1%	7%	-6	1%	7%	-6
Economically Disadvantaged	33%	57%	-24	30%	59%	-29

**NOTE:**

- (1) Data in the table above represents a comparison between those grades served in the charter school to only those same grades in the district.
- (2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.

According to NYSED data, in the 2017-2018 school year, 86% of students were retained in Compass Charter School compared with 92% in the district of location.

## Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

### Finding: Meets

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

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

- Indicator a: According to all documents reviewed and conversations with the board and school leadership, the school is in compliance.
- Indicator b: The school has reached out to its counsel and NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) when it has had questions regarding compliance requirements.
- Indicator c: The school has reached out to its counsel and NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) when requesting material or non-material revisions to its charter.