New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report
2017-2018

New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III

Visit Dates: November 29, 2017 & December 1, 2017
Date of Report: June 6, 2018

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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary[1]

Name of Charter School	New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III (AMS III)
Board Chair	Lior Evan
District of Location	NYC CSD 22
Opening Date	August 2013
Charter Terms	Initial Charter Term: 7/1/2013 to 6/30/2018
Proposed Renewal Term	7/1/2018 to 6/30/2023
Authorized Grades/Maximum Authorized Enrollment	Grades 9-12/600 students
Management Company	New Visions for Public Schools
Educational Partners	Lincoln Center Education Hunter College Brooklyn College
Facilities	3000 Avenue X, Brooklyn (Co-located)
Mission Statement	*AMS III is part of the New Visions charter school network. New Visions charter schools provide all students, regardless of their previous academic history, the highest quality education in an atmosphere of respect, responsibility, and rigor. New Visions schools ensure that graduates have the skills and content knowledge necessary to succeed in post-secondary choices by engaging students, teachers, and administrators in learning experiences that allow risk-taking, embrace multiple attempts at learning, cultivate students' imaginative and creative abilities, and celebrate achievement. Through an intensive study of math and science concepts, students learn how to generate research questions, develop the skills necessary to answer those questions, create products that demonstrate understanding, and defend their knowledge publicly.*
Key Design Elements	• Learning Framework: Capacities for Imaginative Thinking • System of assessment and continuous assessment of data • Aligned goal setting focused on student need • Team Teaching • Extended day and Saturday classes • Additional math and reading specialists on staff • Challenge-based curriculum and Anchor Projects • Cascade of writing

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

	• Remediation and Acceleration • Adult inquiry
Revision History	October 20, 2015 – non-material revision to add a lottery preference for the children of school employees approved by NYSED
Requested Revisions	***To decrease its maximum authorized enrollment from 600 to 500 students in the renewal charter term***

Renewal Outcomes

The following renewal outcomes are possible:

- **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

Approved Enrollment for the Current Charter Term

	Year 1 2013 to 2014	Year 2 2014 to 2015	Year 3 2015 to 2016	Year 4 2016 to 2017	Year 5 2017 to 2018
Grade Configuration	Grade 9	Grades 9- 10	Grades 9-11	Grades 9-12	Grades 9-12
Total Approved Enrollment	125	249	397	542	600

Proposed Enrollment for the Renewal Charter Term

	Year 1 2018 to 2019	Year 2 2019 to 2020	Year 3 2020 to 2021	Year 4 2021 to 2022	Year 5 2022 to 2023
Grade Configuration	Grades 9-12	Grades 9-12	Grades 9-12	Grades 9-12	Grades 9-12
Total Approved Enrollment	430	460	475	500	500

METHODOLOGY

A one and one-half day renewal site visit was conducted at New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III (AMS III) on November 29 and December 1, 2017. The CSO team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, and parents. In cooperation with school leadership, the NYSED Charter School Office (CSO) administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted 16 classroom observations in Grades 9-12. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the principal and/or an assistant principal.

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

For the site visit conducted on 11/29/17 and 12/1/17 at AMS III, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework Rating

	Performance Benchmark	Level
Educational Success	**Benchmark 1: Student Performance:** The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Meets
	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.	Meets
	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.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	**Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:** The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	**Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:** The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for 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.	Meets
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

Summary of Findings

New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III (AMS III) met Board of Regents student performance standards in its initial charter term. The school posted a 91% graduation rate for its 2013 Cohort, thereby exceeding the 80% performance target with its first graduating class. The school awarded higher percentages of Regents Diplomas and Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation than similar schools. During the renewal visit, school leaders expressed confidence that the four-year graduation rate for the 2014 Cohort will be similarly strong. Leaders reported that 93% of students in the cohort were on-track to graduate in 2018.

The school's instructional leadership team provides robust supports for all teachers to improve teaching and learning. The principal and four assistant principals communicate high expectations for student achievement and hold teachers accountable for delivering high quality instruction that meets the needs of all students. To supplement the numerous supports already in place for diverse learners, the school is working with its charter management organization (CMO) on embedding the Equal Access for All Learners (EAAL) framework throughout the academic program. This instructional framework is designed to reduce the barriers that traditionally exist for students with disabilities by making the curriculum accessible for all students, normalizing the differences that exist among learners, and presuming competence for all so that all students can participate in the classroom as "full citizens."

Participants in the NYSED parent focus group voiced great enthusiasm for the school and made particular note of appreciating frequent communications with teachers. Family School Alliance (FSA) meetings were also identified as being helpful in providing families with detailed information regarding school programs.

The school's faithfulness to its mission and key design elements were evident during the renewal visit, as were its continued good faith efforts toward attracting, recruiting, and retaining students from targeted subgroups. Due to challenges in recruitment of students in general, though, AMS III is requesting a decrease to its maximum authorized enrollment from 600 to 500 students to be gradually phased in over the next charter term.

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: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

AMS III is meeting the Board of Regents standards for student achievement. The school's first graduating class (2013 Cohort) exceeded the target graduation rate of 80% by 11 points and posted strong four-year Regents passage rates in English language arts (ELA) (97%), math (91%), science (93%), Global History and Geography (79%), and U.S. History and Government (90%). Every one of these 4-year cohort outcomes exceed the state averages. However, annual Regents testing outcomes for AMS III students overall have been mixed. In its second year of operation, 2014-15, AMS III administered seven Regents tests. The school outperformed the state average passage rate for only two of those exams, Integrated Algebra and Living Environment. The following year, AMS III's 91% passage rate for Common Core ELA was the only one of eleven rates for administered Regents that exceeded the state average. In 2016-17, the school's passage rate for only two of ten administered Regents, Algebra I (Common Core) and the U.S. History and Government, exceeded that of the state.

AMS III's 91% 4-year graduation rate for its 2013 Cohort exceeds the target rate. The school's graduation rate for economically disadvantaged students nearly matches this overall rate, with 90%. Economically disadvantaged students earned Regents Diplomas (66%) and Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation (22%) at higher percentages than the statewide averages of 50% and 19% respectively for economically disadvantaged students in the same cohort. Two percent of these AMS III students were awarded Local Diplomas compared to seven percent statewide. The graduation rate for students with disabilities was 32 percentage points higher than the state rate for the same subgroup (89% compared to 57%), with 56% earning a Regents Diploma (compared to 29% statewide) and 33% earning a Local Diploma, topping the state's 24% average. No students in this subgroup were awarded a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation compared to a 4% average for the state. The school enrolled too few English language learners (ELLs) to report targeted subgroup data for the 2013 Cohort.

The school reported promising data regarding aggregate and subgroup populations on-track to graduate. According to the renewal application, 93% of AMS III's 2014 Cohort passed three or more Regents with scores at or above 65. Subgroup performance is similarly strong: 95% of economically disadvantaged students and 94% of students with disabilities are on-track to graduate. School leaders stated during the renewal visit that 77 of 91 students in the 2014 Cohort earned at least 28 credits and passed five Regents exams.

<u>Indicator 1: All Schools</u>

1.a.i. Accountability - ESEA Accountability Designation:
Throughout the charter term, AMS III has been designated a school in Good Standing according to the state's ESEA accountability formula.

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

In 2016-17, AMS III posted a 91% graduation rate for the cohort of students who entered the school in 9th grade in 2013. This success rate in the first year the school operated a 12th grade placed the school in the top 10% when compared to similar schools. Also, according to the analysis included in the renewal application, the school's Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation rate of 21% exceeded that of similar schools by 13 percentage points. The school awarded a higher percentage of Regents Diplomas (66%) and lower percentage of Local Diplomas (3%) compared to similar schools (8% and 6%, respectively).

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

3.a.i. Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate Annual Regents Outcomes: See Table 1.

Table 1: Annual Regents Outcomes – Aggregate

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	17%	60%	-43	26%	55%	-29	-	N/A	N/A
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	42%	62%	-20	70%	72%	-2	76%	74%	+2
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	47%	80%	-33
English Language Arts (Common Core)	75%	80%	-5	91%	87%	+4	78%	84%	-6
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	53%	64%	-11	34%	64%	-30
Geometry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	61%	67%	-6	64%	68%	-4	60%	68%	-8
Integrated Algebra (>65)	68%	62%	+6	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	80%	77%	+3	67%	78%	-11	55%	74%	-19
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	67%	76%	-9	56%	74%	-18
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	36%	72%	-36	15%	71%	-56	9%	69%	-60
Physical Setting/Physics (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	14%	82%	-68
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	76%	82%	-6	91%	81%	+10

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

3.a.ii. Regents Testing Outcomes – Subgroup Annual Regents Outcomes: See Tables 2-4.

Table 2: Annual Regents Outcomes – Students with Disabilities

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	32%	27%	+5	40%	41%	-1	58%	46%	+12
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
English Language Arts (Common Core)	50%	49%	+1	67%	61%	+6	58%	57%	+1
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	25%	28%	-3	26%	31%	-5
Comprehensive English	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Geometry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	11%	34%	-23	56%	36%	+20	50%	37%	+13
Integrated Algebra (>65)	36%	39%	-3	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	40%	46%	-6	52%	48%	+4	38%	44%	-6
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	33%	42%	-9	0%	40%	-40	0%	39%	-39
Physical Setting/Physics (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	38%	54%	-16	93%	54%	+39

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

Table 3: Annual Regents Outcomes – English Language Learners

	2014-2015			2015-2016			2016-2017		
	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	0%	27%	-27	50%	44%	+6	60%	46%	+14
English Language Arts (Common Core)	20%	34%	-14	86%	40%	+46	60%	41%	+19
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
Geometry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	20%	36%	-16	29%	33%	-4	20%	36%	-16
Integrated Algebra (>65)	80%	47%	+33	-	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	20%	40%	-20	27%	42%	-15	13%	34%	-21
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	0%	32%	-32	*	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

Table 4: Annual Regents Outcomes – Economically Disadvantaged Students

	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance	CS	NYS	Variance
Algebra 2 / Trigonometry	17%	48%	-31	27%	45%	-18	-	N/A	N/A
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	38%	49%	-11	69%	63%	+6	77%	67%	+10
Algebra II (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	X	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	49%	70%	-21
English Language Arts (Common Core)	75%	73%	+2	91%	80%	+11	79%	77%	+2
Geometry (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	-	N/A	N/A	50%	48%	+2	33%	50%	-17
Geometry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Global History and Geography (>65)	60%	56%	+4	59%	57%	+2	58%	58%	0
Integrated Algebra (>65)	70%	58%	+12	*	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
Living Environment (>65)	81%	68%	+13	64%	69%	-5	55%	64%	-9
Physical Setting/Chemistry (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	69%	63%	+6	54%	61%	-7
Physical Setting/Earth Science (>65)	32%	59%	-27	15%	57%	-42	7%	55%	-48
Physical Setting/Physics (>65)	-	N/A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	12%	73%	-61
US History and Government	-	N/A	N/A	74%	74%	0	91%	73%	+18

Notes:

- "0" indicates that no tested student(s) obtain a score of proficiency.
- "-" indicates that no students sat for exams.
- "*" indicates too few students (less than 5) sat for exams to report assessment data.
- "X" indicates that no exam was given.

3.a.iii. High School Outcomes – Aggregate Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Table 5.

Table 5: High School 4-Year Cohort Outcomes for All Students: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: **All Students**	**2013** Cohort		
Subject	School	State	Variance
ELA	97%	85%	+12
Global History & Geography	79%	78%	+1
Math	91%	85%	+6
Science	93%	84%	+9
US History & Government	90%	81%	+9

3.a.iv. High School Outcomes – Subgroup Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Tables 6-8.

Table 6: High School Total 4-Year Regents Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – Students with Disabilities: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: **Students with Disabilities**	**2013** Cohort		
Subject	School	State	Variance
ELA	89%	54%	+35
Global History & Geography	44%	40%	+4
Math	67%	49%	+18
Science	78%	50%	+28
US History & Government	33%	48%	-15

Table 7*: High School Total 4-Year Regents Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – English Language Learners (*All relevant data for this subgroup is suppressed.)

Table 8: High School Total 4-Year Regents Cohort Outcomes by Subgroup – Economically Disadvantaged Students: School and NYS Level Aggregates

4-Yr Cohort: **Economically Disadvantaged Students**	**2013** Cohort		
Subject	School	State	Variance
ELA	96%	80%	+16
Global History & Geography	76%	70%	+6
Math	90%	80%	+10
Science	90%	78%	+12
US History & Government	89%	74%	+15

3.b.i. & ii. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Cohort Graduation Rates: See Table 9.

Table 9: High School Total 4-Year Graduation Rates: School and Target Level Aggregates

Student Population	**2013** Cohort		
	School	Variance	State Target
All	91%	+11	80%
Students with Disabilities	89%	+9	80%
English Language Learners	*	N/A	80%
Economically Disadvantaged	90%	+10	80%

"*" indicates that too few students (less than 5) sat for the exam to report assessment data.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. Curriculum	a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSLS. 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. c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades. d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.
2. Instruction	a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding. b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.
3. Assessment and Program Evaluation	a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments. b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes. c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.
4. Supports for Diverse Learners	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. 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.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

Curriculum

AMS III prepares students to meet Regents exam and graduation requirements with NYSLS-aligned curricula and supports teachers in delivering its high-quality content with ongoing professional development activities. The school's CMO provides teachers with foundational materials such as scope and sequence documents and unit plans that designate student performance expectations. Though New Visions for Public Schools, Inc. provides additional supporting materials such as relevant texts and sample student activities, teachers modify the network-created materials in order to meet the needs of AMS III

students. Instructional plans provided during the renewal visit demonstrate meticulous planning for each lesson. Using a common lesson plan template, teachers prepare focused plans that maximize the use of instructional time while building students' deep conceptual understanding and knowledge. The template includes prompts for teachers to anticipate individualization needs and differentiate activities and supports to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.

School leaders reported a continual process of review and revision of AMS III's instructional materials. Review of curricula for Regents-culminating courses begins in July with analysis of June Regents results. As an example of ongoing review, leaders pointed to careful standards-aligned planning as well as school-wide literacy and numeracy interventions as drivers of markedly improved pass rates for Common Core Algebra I. Leaders noted that teacher collaboration during weekly grade level and department team meetings ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of curricula. Additionally, school leaders confirmed information included in the renewal application regarding ongoing efforts to ensure that the school's curricular materials are appropriate for students with special needs: AMS III is partnering with the CMO on the implementation of the new Equal Access for All Learners (EAAL) framework. According to the renewal application, the framework "aims to reduce curricular and instructional barriers, normalize learner difference, presume competence, and be culturally responsive" in order to facilitate full access to materials and participation in classroom activities.

Instruction

Instruction observed during the renewal visit was consistent in structure and aligned to instructional leaders' stated priorities for use of classroom time. Observers noted the use of the workshop model, anchored by an essential question, across grades and departments. Lessons featured deliberate groupings of students to foster peer-to-peer learning and assigned work frequently required students to apply higher-order thinking skills. Instructional leaders who joined the visit team's classroom observations demonstrated deep knowledge of teachers' pedagogical skill levels.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

AMS III uses a balanced system of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning. According to the renewal application, the school administers the Performance Series Reading assessment to all 9th and 10th grade students twice a year and uses the resulting proficiency data to place students in targeted literacy interventions. Teachers also use the data to plan classroom instruction. Math, science, and social studies teachers use weekly formative assessments to pace content delivery. AMS III also administers a variety of summative assessments including Regents and mock Regents exams, unit tests, and cumulative projects. Instructional leaders reported using formative and summative assessment data to identify teachers in need of additional coaching support. Additionally, AMS III leaders reported using student performance data to modify the academic program. For example, the school created a 9th grade strategic reading course based on incoming students' 8th grade NYS English test results.

School leaders reported that teachers use department and grade level inquiry teams to review student performance data and tailor instructional plans to meet the needs of all learners. Content teams have flexibility to use data in creative ways to engage students in the learning process. For example, the Living Environment team adopted a "responsibility protocol" to encourage increased student ownership of academic outcomes. According to the protocol, teachers group students based on pre-test data and Lexile levels. Students then create group and individual learning goals, and teachers adapt instruction based on item analyses and student goals.

Supports for Diverse Learners

AMS III implements and monitors the effectiveness of multiple research-based interventions to ensure diverse learners have full access to all programming. Like other network schools, it utilizes a multi-tiered Response to Intervention (RtI) framework to address the full continuum of students' academic needs. According to the renewal application, the RtI process begins with a review of Performance Series literacy and numeracy data as well as incoming students' 8th grade state testing results. The school then assigns students to leveled literacy intervention classes. AMS III uses a variety of scripted commercial products such as Wilson Just Words and Read 180 in these intervention classes.

AMS III supports students requiring special education services in integrated co-teaching (ICT) classrooms for core academic subjects. As noted previously, the school is in the process of adopting the network's EAAL framework as it continues to strengthen supports for students with disabilities. The special education coordinator described bi-monthly classroom observations as key to identifying and mitigating barriers in instructional delivery.

The school utilizes a stand-alone English as a New Language (ENL) program to support students in achieving proficiency on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). Leaders reported assigning ELLs to class sections with co-teachers as an additional support.

All teachers receive ongoing professional development focused on meeting the needs of diverse learners throughout AMS III classrooms. School leaders noted during the leadership focus group that teachers have adopted strategies used to support students with disabilities into general education classes. The Equal Access for All Learners initiative guides teachers in the process of identifying barriers to student learning and addressing the needs of all learners through the introduction of new instructional techniques. For example, after identifying insufficient think time as an instructional barrier for students with processing delays, teachers incorporated 30-second windows between segments into lesson planning.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. *Behavior Management and Safety*	a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy. b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment. c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination. d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.
2. *Family Engagement and Communication*	a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students' strengths and needs. 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. c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns. d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.
3. *Social-Emotional Supports*	a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students. b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

Behavior Management and Safety

The AMS III environment maintains consistent focus on academic achievement; observers witnessed no behavioral problems in classrooms or hallways during the renewal visit. Though only a slight majority of teachers surveyed (53%) reported agreement that "there is uniformity in teachers' classroom management across the school," students appeared to understand the school's behavioral expectations. A restorative approach to behavior management is embedded in AMS III's school-wide discipline policy, which includes a clear, progressive ladder of consequences for infractions.

Family Engagement and Communication

AMS III initiates communications with the families of incoming students during the summer when it distributes its school year and assessment calendars along with a welcome letter. The school maintains frequent communication with all families using a variety of methods including a weekly newsletter and PowerSchool updates. According to the renewal application, new families receive PowerSchool training

at the start of the school year from parent coordinators and volunteers from the Family Student Alliance (FSA). During the NYSED renewal visit focus group, participants identified FSA meetings as very helpful in understanding the school's program and new initiatives such as the introduction of Heroes points. Parents also conveyed understanding of the school-wide discipline policy. One participant noted, "I love the school's discipline because it's the same discipline I use at home," and others nodded in enthusiastic agreement.

Social-Emotional Supports

AMS III's advisory program serves as the foundation of its social-emotional supports program. The advisory sequence evinces thorough and intentional planning similar to that seen with core academic subjects. School leaders reported that the school moved to a daily advisory schedule in the current school year. Each day of the week has a prescribed format beginning with teacher-led topic introductions on Mondays and culminating with student-led wrap-ups on Fridays. An additional change in the program introduced in the current school year is an earlier focus on college and career readiness. The advisory curriculum now introduces college and career readiness in 9th grade whereas the previous curriculum did so in 11th grade. In explaining the deliberate shift to early preparation, one NYSED school leader focus group participant stated that the school is trying to help students see connections between the efforts they make throughout their high school years: "We are showing them it's not just about passing Regents. It's also about avoiding remedial classes in college. Living Environment now can impact a biology major in college." The school's counseling team works closely with teachers, in part, by leading weekly Teacher Advisory meetings in which they impart advisory lessons and effective strategies for teachers to employ. At these meetings, they also discuss any social and emotional issues that students may be experiencing.

In addition to the four guidance counselors (each assigned to one grade cohort), two college counselors and a clinical social worker are there to meet students' social-emotional needs as well as to support students and families as they plan for academic readiness and success in high school and beyond.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

Important Notes:

- The key financial indicators used to evaluate this benchmark will be presented within a separate fiscal dashboard instrument that will provide context for the school's performance on each of the metrics, outline the specific targets for each metric, and also provide additional subsidiary detail on each calculation.
- Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school's annual independently audited financial statements.

1. Near-Term Indicators:	
1a.	Current Ratio
1b.	Unrestricted Days Cash
1c.	Enrollment Variance
1d.	Composite Score
2. Sustainability Indicators:	
2a.	Total Margin
2b.	Debt to Asset Ratio
2c.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

Financial Condition

AMS III appears to be in sound 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. AMS III's composite score for 2015-2016 is 2.6. The table below shows the school's composite scores from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016.

New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science III's Composite Scores

2013-2014 to 2015-2016

Year	*Composite Score*
2015-2016	2.6
2014-2015	2.4
2013-2014	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 2015-2016, AMS III had a current ratio of 4.0.

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 2015-2016, AMS III operated with 75 days of unrestricted cash.

Enrollment stability 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. AMS III's enrollment stability for 2015-2016 was at 89 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 2015-2016, AMS III's debt to asset ratio was 0.2.

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 2015-2016, AMS III's total margin was 9 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: Meets

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

1. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
2. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget in relation to those objectives.
3. The school has allocated budget surpluses in a manner that is fiscally sound and directly attends to the social and academic needs of the students attending the school.
4. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
5. The school has complied with state and federal financial reporting requirements.
6. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
7. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:

The Charter School Office reviewed AMS III's 2015-16 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.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. Board Oversight and Governance	a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school. 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. c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals. d. The board regularly updates school policies. e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers. f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

The school's board members possess a variety of skills and expertise relevant to school governance that equip them to meet the needs of the school. During the renewal visit, the board reported working with the CMO to identify areas of needed additional capacity prior to recruiting new members. During the previous school year, for example, education and compliance expertise were identified as necessary additions. The school's two newest board members bring those areas of expertise to bear in their ongoing oversight of AMS III.

Although the board has not created a formal strategic plan, it acts purposefully to continually improve the school's programs and operations. Board members expressed a shared commitment to understanding the unique needs of each school it governs. The chair identified enrollment and school culture as priorities the board has most recently focused on at AMS III.

The board regularly reviews robust data that provides a comprehensive view of the academic program, day-to-day operations, and fiscal health. It receives a monthly CMO report that includes information on enrollment and attendance, college readiness, progress toward graduation, finances, and staff vacancies among other metrics. The board also receives monthly reports from each school principal.

The board commissioned a formal performance-based evaluation of its and the CMO's effectiveness conducted by an external vendor during the 2015-16 school year. Board members and school leaders reported specific changes that resulted from that evaluation process. Among the changes noted was the creation of a network-level special education support team, which is developing the EAAL framework previously noted.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. School Leadership	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. 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. c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school. d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.
2. Professional Climate	a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication. b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers. c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students' needs. 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. e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.
3. Contractual Relationships ☐*N/A*	a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider. b. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures. c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

School Leadership

School leaders communicate high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance. The administrative structure features clear lines of accountability; leaders have distinct roles and responsibilities. The principal and four assistant principals provide extensive supports for teachers including coaching, professional development, and assistance with instructional planning. Each of the four assistant principals has responsibility for one grade cohort. With a director of operations managing the

school's organizational needs, instructional leaders are free to focus fully on the continual improvement of teaching and learning.

The school's leadership has been responsive to teachers' stated needs. School leaders reported being concerned when only 63% (compared to 78% citywide) of responding teachers agreed or strongly agreed on the NYCDOE's 2016-17 School Quality Survey that professional development activities included sufficient time for them to think carefully about and try new ideas. During the NYSED focus group, one leader summarized that survey finding by saying, "The voice of the community said we need to be more deliberate about our use of time." The switch from a trimester calendar to a semester schedule in the current school year was a direct response to that finding. AMS III also restructured each school day. School leaders reported that structuring and protecting professional development and planning time is a priority in the current school year.

Professional Climate

AMS III strives to maintain a full staff of high quality personnel with the skills and competencies necessary to meet the needs of all students. At the time of the renewal visit, the school had vacancies for two Spanish teachers, one math teacher, and a school assistant. The renewal application notes partnerships with Brooklyn College and a Hunter College-New Visions Charter Residency Program as being mechanisms by which the school and network are addressing a shortage of special education teachers.

Contractual Relationships

AMS III leaders, the school board, and the CMO monitor the efficacy of contracted service providers and partners. The school submitted a proposed management agreement with New Visions for Public Schools as part of the renewal application. One substantive proposed change is a change in the fee structure, which would allow the board to determine a fee of 8-10% based on an annual assessment of finances and programming. As noted above, the board engaged an external evaluator, Quantum Governance, to assess the effectiveness and value-add of the CMO. The results of this evaluation led to changes in the types and structures of network supports. Additionally, the school continues to partner with Lincoln Center Education though the scope of the partnership has evolved over the course of the charter term. School leaders reported that financial considerations drove a shift in programming such that student participants in 9th grade English and 11th grade Spanish attend a Shakespeare performance and a musical with both followed by question-and-answer sessions with artists.

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

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

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

AMS III has remained faithful to its mission and implemented the key design elements described in its original charter. Through its continual improvement process, the school has made changes to how some key design elements "live" within the program while remaining true to the original aims. For example, the school's learning framework has shifted from "Capacities for Imaginative Learning" to "Capacities for Imaginative Thinking" though still embedded in arts exploration and partnership with Lincoln Center. AMS III's new daily bell schedule continues to provide students with an extended day and increased learning opportunities while it affords teachers more time for planning and professional development. Saturday classes continue to offer students additional instructional supports. At the time of the renewal visit, school leaders reported that the teaching team is considering adding a community service element to required anchor projects.

The following student comments delivered to a renewal visit team member without prompting illustrate AMS III's success in engaging students and preparing them for post-secondary opportunities.

- "This is a great school. I love it here."
- "They make everyone think about college."
- "I never liked history, but now I love it. They make it mean something to me."

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: Meets

Element	*Indicators*
1. *Targets are met*	a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter.
2. *Targets are not met*	a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets. 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. 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.

Student Demographics – New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math & Science III Compared to District of Location

	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	New Visions AMS III	NYC CSD 22	Variance	New Visions AMS III	NYC CSD 22	Variance
Students with Disabilities	14%	13%	+1	15%	13%	+2
English Language Learners	7%	10%	-3	5%	9%	-4
Economically Disadvantaged	80%	64%	+16	76%	71%	+5

Student Persistence - 2015-16 (% of Students who remained enrolled in the school)

	2015-2016		
	New Visions AMS III	NYC CSD 22	Variance
All Students	83%	80%	+3
Students with Disabilities	78%	78%	0
English Language Learners	100%	72%	+28
Economically Disadvantaged	83%	79%	+4

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

AMS III enrolls higher percentages of economically disadvantaged (ED) students and students with disabilities (SWD) compared to the local school district. The school's enrollment rate of ELLs is slightly lower than the district. The school initiated good faith efforts toward meeting its enrollment and retention targets at the outset of the charter term and continues to employ a variety of methods to attract and retain students from targeted populations. These ongoing recruitment efforts include participating in borough and citywide high school fairs hosted by the NYC DOE; hosting open houses and conducting campus tours for middle school students and guidance counselors; presenting school program information at community events; producing recruitment materials in multiple languages; partnering with social services agencies; and, placing ads in community newspapers such as Caribbean Life and Bay News. Additionally, AMS III worked with the CMO to create the "*Serving Our Students: English Language Learners, Students with Individualized Education Plans or Section 504 Plans"* brochure, which details the school's programs and resources for ELLs and students with special needs.

During the renewal visit, school leaders reported that AMS III is redoubling efforts to attract and retain ELLs. These expanded efforts geared specifically toward ELLs include increasing ENL supports such as the intervention lab. The school has also initiated a relationship with Internationals Network for Public Schools, which operates schools specifically designed to meet the needs of ELLs throughout New York City as well as in other states. One of these schools, International High School at Lafayette, operates in AMS III's neighboring district. School leaders expressed their belief that this proximity makes the International High School attractive to ELLs who might otherwise choose AMS III.

For the past two years, the school has had low enrollment numbers. At the time of the renewal visit, AMS III reported its enrollment of 409 students, which is 68% of its maximum authorized enrollment of 600 students. Despite its high retention rate (over 90%), the school has cited its location and lack of transportation as factors in recruiting new students. AMS III is working closely with the New Visions Charter Management Organization and the board of trustees to come up with innovative ways to attract students from across Brooklyn and to ameliorate transportation issues. In addition, the school is requesting a revision to decrease its maximum authorized enrollment to 500 students, which it will build in gradually over the next charter term.

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

Finding: Meets

Element	*Indicators*
1. Legal Compliance	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. b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements. c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

AMS III appears to have operated in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter throughout the charter term.

The school followed appropriate procedures to gain approval of a change in its lottery preferences in 2015.