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Executive Summary - Charter School Renewal

School: Harlem Success Academy Charter School (HSACS)			
Date(s) of Site-Visit:	September 23-24, 2010	**Members of Site-Visit Team:**	Kathryn Ahern, LoriAnn Curtin, Vickie Smith

I. Introduction/Background Information:

The Harlem Success Academy Charter School (HSACS) opened in the 2006-2007 school year with 165 students in grades K through 1, and currently serves 610 students in grades K through 5 in New York City Department of Education (NYDOE) Community School District (CSD) 3 in Harlem. The school is located in a public facility, which it shares with P.S. 149, Sojourner Truth School. The school is a part of the Harlem Success Network of charter schools, which currently offers support services to seven charter schools in New York City.

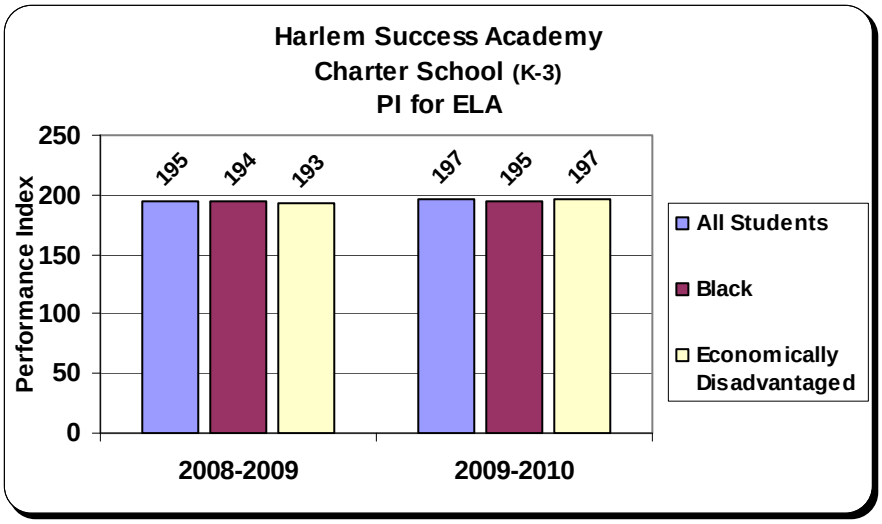
II. Guiding Questions:

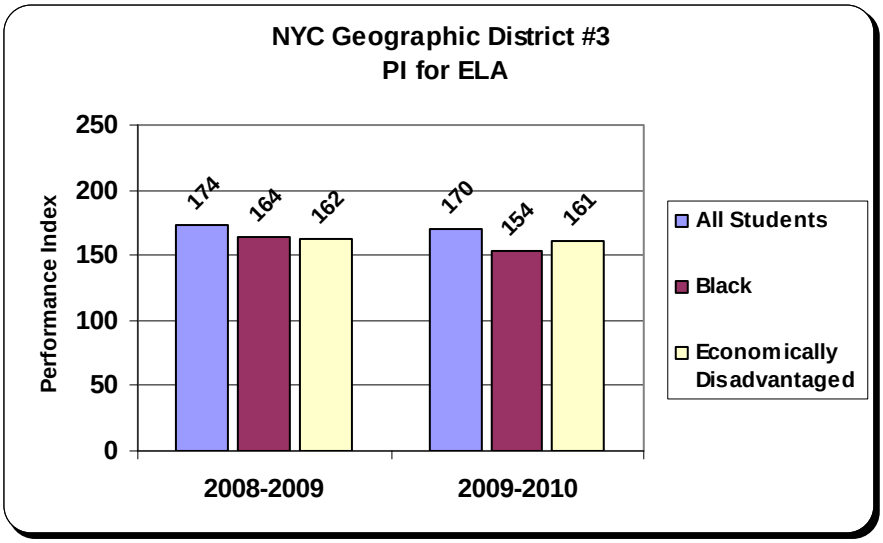
A. Can the school demonstrate the ability to operate in an educationally sound manner?

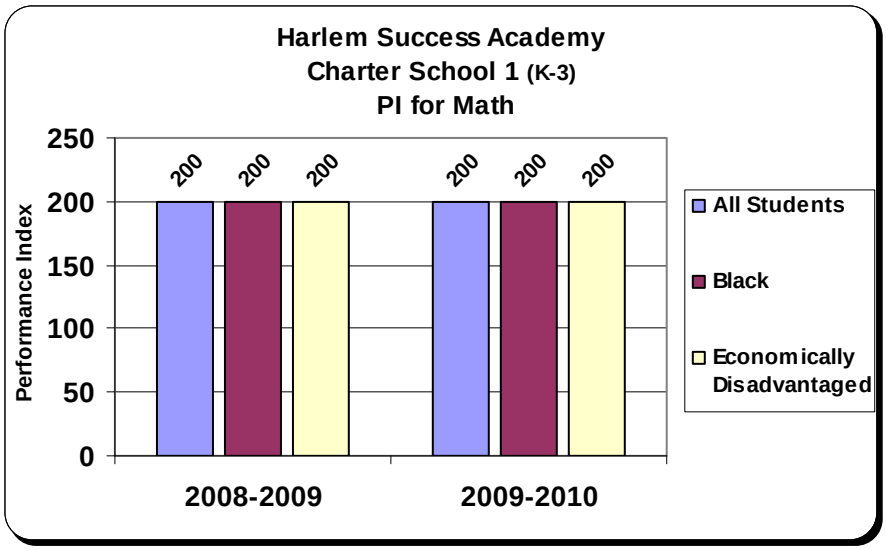
Evidence of Strengths:
The school has a clearly mapped and paced curriculum that is aligned to the NYS learning standards. The renewal site visit team observed common and consistent lessons delivered across classrooms. The Board of Trustees, teachers and parents interviewed during the renewal site visit expressed belief that there is strong and effective instructional leadership in place. Teachers stated that the building leadership is pushing for increased instructional rigor, and that the building leadership team schedules ample instructional meetings to ensure that effective teaching practice is supported. Teachers reported that they feel support for their development as professionals and meet collaboratively at least twice a week. They also indicated that differentiated professional development sessions are offered weekly.

Academic Performance:
The school has made Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for all sub-groups and for the “all students” group during the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school years, the only school years with students in grades 3 and 4. HSACS compares favorably to CSD 3, the district of location, according to results of the 2008-09 and 2009-10 NYS assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. The school is currently (2009-10) among the top achieving charter schools in the CSD with 93.1% of grade 4 students at Levels 3 or 4 on the NYS math assessment, and 86.2% assessed at Levels 3 or 4 on the ELA assessment.

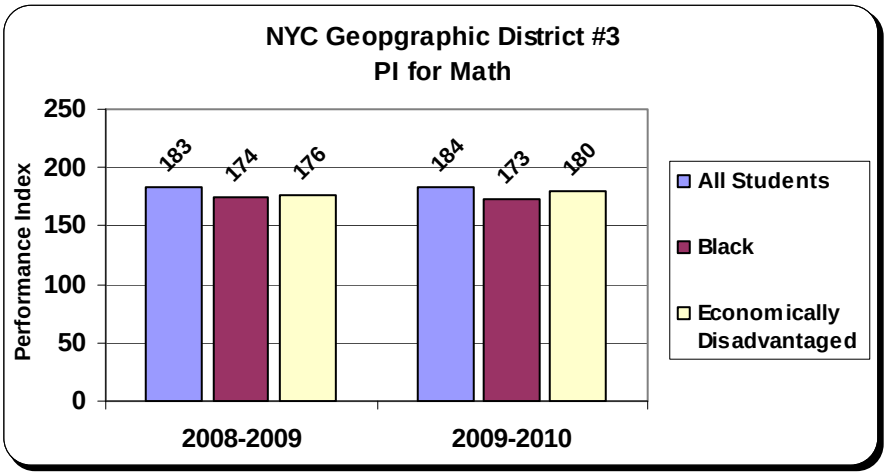
[See Appendix 2]







Source: New York State Report Cards



Source: New York State Report Cards

Evidence of Areas of Concern:
There are no areas of concern.

B. Can the school demonstrate the ability to operate in a fiscally sound manner?

Evidence of Strengths:
The school has demonstrated sound fiscal practices in the current charter term by maintaining a substantial positive net asset balance with the use of normal operating funds. The projected renewal budget demonstrated fiscal constraint by conservatively estimating grant funding and did not rely on any third party contributions. The per pupil estimated expense actually decreased in the first year of the budget in comparison to previous years, increasing in following years but consistent with previous years' spending.

Evidence of Areas of Concern:
There are no areas of concern.

C. Can the school demonstrate adequate levels of parent and student satisfaction?

Evidence of Strengths:
Many family night activities are held throughout the year and are regularly attended by parents and children. Ninety-nine percent of parents responded to a survey and indicated satisfaction with the school. During focus group interviews with site visit team members, parents indicated that the school leadership was responsive to their concerns and suggestions. Students expressed enthusiasm for their school and knowledge of its core values.

Evidence of Areas of Concern:
Several newsletters and flyers handed out at the school to parents indicate that after-school and Saturday events for parents and children are deemed "mandatory."

D. Can the school demonstrate that it is a viable organization?

Evidence of Strengths:
The school has a strong Board of Trustees and a strong board president with a long-term vision of growth and development. The board president mentors many of the newly appointed trustees. The Board of Trustees appears to be responsive and responsible to the school community it serves, and appears to have a clear decision-making and communication process that results in a common sense of purpose for all school constituencies.

Evidence of Areas of Concern:
There are no areas of concern.

III. Summary

The school has a strong, stable board that clearly understands its responsibilities and is proactive in assuming them. There is strength also in the instructional program which has resulted in consistently high assessment scores in ELA and Math. Parent involvement is high, as is parent satisfaction with the school.

Appendix 1

Harlem Success Academy Charter School – PI for ELA		
Student Group	**2008-2009**	**2009-2010**
All Students	195	197
Black	194	195
Economically Disadvantaged	193	197

NYC Geographic District #3 – PI for ELA		
Student Group	**2008-2009**	**2009-2010**
All Students	174	170
Black	164	154
Economically Disadvantaged	162	161

Harlem Success Academy Charter School – PI for Math		
Student Group	**2008-2009**	**2009-2010**
All Students	200	200
Black	200	200
Economically Disadvantaged	200	200

NYC Geographic District #3 – PI for Math		
Student Group	**2008-2009**	**2009-2010**
All Students	183	184
Black	174	173
Economically Disadvantaged	176	180

Source: New York State Report Cards

Appendix 2

Charter School Longitudinal ELA & Math Data
2007-08 through 2009-2010

School and Grades	2008-2009				2009-2010			
	%L1	%L2	%L3	%L4	%L1	%L2	%L3	%L4
Harlem Success Academy CS ELA Grade 3	0	5	71.7	23.3	0	11.3	58.1	30.6
NYC Manhattan District 3 ELA Grade 3	5.1	23	59.9	11.9	15.4	30.2	32.5	21.9
Harlem Success Academy CS ELA Grade 4	**	**	**	**	0	13.8	81	5.2
NYC Manhattan District 3 ELA Grade 4	3.7	21.8	65.3	9.2	8.9	36.6	45	9.5
Harlem Success Academy CS Math Grade 3	0	0	29.3	70.7	0	3.2	32.3	64.5
NYC Manhattan District 3 Math Grade 3	1.3	7	65.4	26.3	11.6	32.5	31.3	24.7
Harlem Success Academy CS Math Grade 4	**	**	**	**	0	6.9	43.1	50
NYC Manhattan District 3 Math Grade 4	4.4	8.7	47.2	39.7	6.4	30.5	29.8	33.3

** Students not in attendance at the grade level indicated
Source: New York State Department District Student Performance