

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM
CHARTER SCHOOL**

VISIT DATE: MAY 14, 2025

REPORT DATE: AUGUST 21, 2025

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

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Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit to Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School (“Capital Prep Harlem”) on May 14, 2025. While the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all the [State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks](#) (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle charter school evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks addressing the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the charter school organization. It provides a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (e.g., curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and services for at-risk students), as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal. The Institute provided the school an Accountability Summary that outlines the school’s previous three years of performance, if available, and to the extent to which the school is meeting, coming close to meeting, or not meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Within the performance review, the Institute shares if the school’s renewal is in jeopardy based on the quantitative record of performance. For more information about the school’s performance, see the 2023-24 School Performance Review section below.

The Appendix to the report contains a School Overview with descriptive and historical information about the school, as well as background information on the conduct of the visit. Together this information puts the visit in the context of the school’s current charter term.

This report serves as a summary of the school’s program based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report in order to highlight areas of concern. As such, limited detail about positive elements of the educational program is not an indication that the Institute does not recognize other indicators of program effectiveness.

While the Institute posts the evaluation report on its website and makes it publicly available, the Institute encourages school leaders to share the report with its stakeholders including, but not limited to, the full board of trustees, staff members, and families.





CHARTER BACKGROUND

CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

2041 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10035 | Grades: 6-12 | CSD 5

“ MISSION

The mission of Capital Preparatory Schools is to provide historically disadvantaged students with the college and career readiness skills needed to become responsible and engaged citizens for social justice.

CURRENT CHARTER

Opened:
2016

Serves:
6th – 12th

Chartered Enrollment:
700

Charter Expiration:
June 30, 2026

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

High expectations rooted in the school's Five Learner Expectations	+
A student-centered and data-driven instructional approach	-
A longer school day and year	+
Social justice as a central theme throughout the model	+
Partnerships with local colleges	+
A two sport requirement for all students	+
Robust professional development	-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Capital Prep Harlem is a charter school under the education corporation Capital Prep Charter Schools NY (“Capital Prep Schools NY”), which contracts with the charter management organization (“CMO”) Capital Preparatory Schools, Inc., for network-wide academic, operational, and talent development support across partner schools. Capital Prep Schools NY articulates a mission to prepare historically underserved students for college through a social justice-focused program. However, Capital Prep Harlem has not yet demonstrated it delivers a consistently high quality, college-preparatory program aligned across all aspects of its mission. The school’s academic results remain mixed. While students outperformed the district in English language arts (“ELA”) in 2023-24, the school’s mathematics performance declined from the prior year and fell below the district comparison. Further, only 64% of students in the most recent cohort graduated after four years falling below the district rate.

During the current charter term, Capital Prep Harlem experienced considerable instability due to persistent staffing turnover, declining enrollment, and shifting student needs. School leaders reported an increase in students entering overage, undercredited, and significantly below grade level, placing greater demands on the school’s academic and behavioral systems. In response, the school undertook efforts to rebuild a positive school culture, re-establish foundational routines, and stabilize program operations. These challenges contextualize the school’s academic and organizational performance across the term.

The school maintains foundational systems for instructional planning, teacher collaboration, and professional development. Students benefit from extended learning opportunities and academic interventions. The school also employs inclusive practices and technology supports to meet diverse learner needs. However, these structures have not yet resulted in consistently rigorous or coherent teaching. Classroom instruction frequently lacks alignment to college readiness standards and lesson plans. High chronic absenteeism, ongoing enrollment challenges, and staffing constraints hinder program stability and fidelity of implementation.

The school benefits from a strong cultural identity, bolstered by the principal’s deep ties to the Harlem community and visible leadership presence. In the wake of significant turnover and past safety concerns, leaders have focused on re-establishing trust and creating a student-centered environment. Despite these efforts, the school has not yet developed the instructional leadership capacity necessary to drive consistent improvement in teaching and learning. While coaching systems exist, inconsistent execution and limited follow-through diminish their impact. Leaders recognize the need to increase the consistency and depth of instructional coaching to better support teacher development and improve classroom practice.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2023-24 CHARTER PERFORMANCE REVIEW

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,¹ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Throughout the charter term, the Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures on an annual basis and provides an Accountability Summary to each school detailing the school's progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Because The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (the "Act") requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"² and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"³ for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. More information about the required Accountability Plan measures can be found on the [Institute's website](#).

In 2023-24, Capital Prep Harlem met its ELA goal but did not meet its mathematics or high school graduation goals for the second consecutive year. The school must work urgently to improve its performance to make the most compelling case for earning subsequent renewal. The SUNY Trustees placed conditions on the school's renewal in 2020-21. The school met its conditions following the 2023-24 school year and is therefore eligible to apply for renewal in fall 2025.

Capital Prep Harlem met its ELA goal in 2023-24 exceeding the targets for four of the five required measures under its goal area. With 68% of tested students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency, the school outperformed the local district by 26 percentage points. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, Capital Prep Harlem performed higher than expected to a large degree. The school also posted its first mean growth percentile suitable for analysis during the term and exceeded the target by six percentile points.

In mathematics, Capital Prep Harlem did not meet its goal and posted declining performance from the prior year. In 2023-24, only 18% of tested students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency falling under the district results by 12 percentage points. Among all tested students, the school's proficiency rate of 29% was still under the district comparison. Laudably, 83% of the school's 8th grade students who sat for the Regents exam in lieu of the typical 8th grade exam passed. Capital Prep Harlem posted an effect size of -0.40 according to the Institute's comparative performance analysis. This level of performance fell under the target of 0.3 and indicates that the school performed lower than expected compared to demographically similar schools statewide. The school also posted a mean growth percentile eight points below the target. At the high school level, the school's 2020 Total Cohort did not produce Regents mathematics outcomes that demonstrate evidence of goal attainment.

The school did not meet its high school graduation goal in 2023-24. That year, only 64% of students in the 2020 Graduation Cohort graduated after four years according to the New York State Report Card. This level of performance was 14 percentage points below the absolute target of 75% and 16 percentage points below the local

1. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. In the case of initial renewal, the Accountability Period covers the first four years of the charter term.

2. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

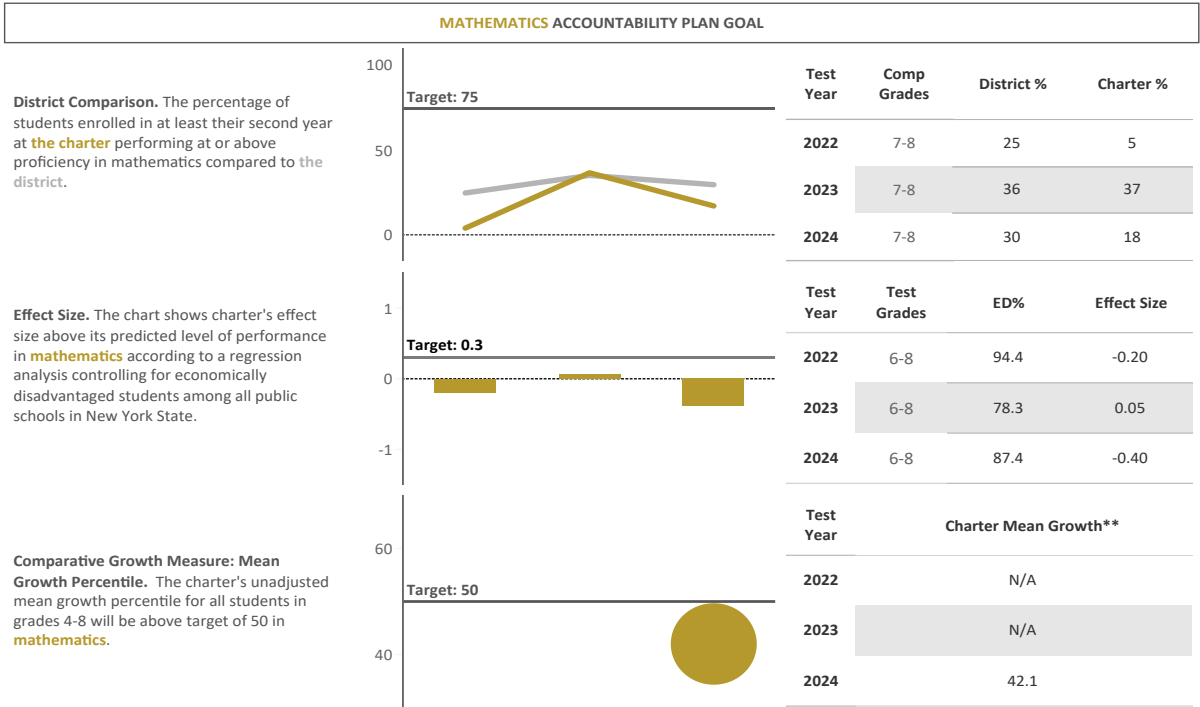
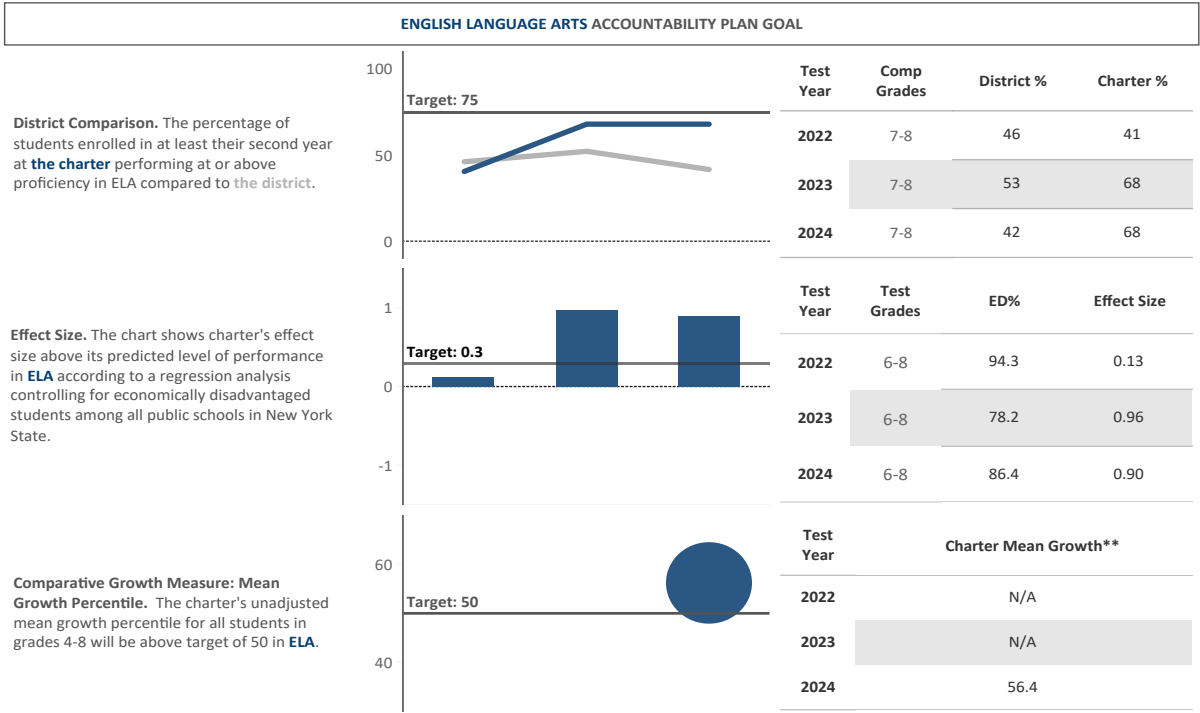
3. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

district results. Capital Prep Harlem reports high rates of credit accumulation for its first and second year cohorts and must work urgently to ensure that these leading indicators translate into future success in fourth and fifth year graduation outcomes. Additionally, the school must work with the Institute to ensure that the school's academic reporting aligns to the New York State Report Card.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL



*The district of comparison for Capital Preparatory Harlem was Manhattan CSD 4 in 2022 and 2023, and Manhattan CSD 5 in 2024.

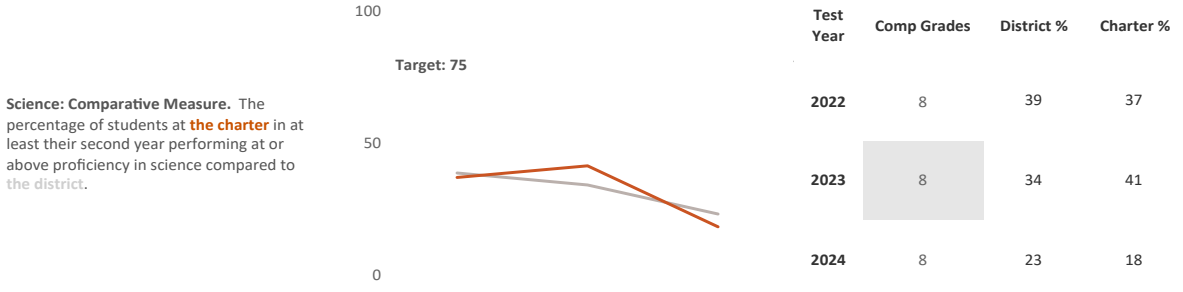
** Student growth percentiles for Capital Prep Harlem are unavailable for 2022-23.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



Science: Comparative Measure. The percentage of students at the charter in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in science compared to the district.

TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2022		2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	137	131	72	73	48	43
School Tested %	93.8%	90.3%	93.5%	94.8%	98.0%	87.8%
District Tested %	86.7%	84.7%	78.9%	85.9%	78.1%	81.8%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	37	18	14
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	16.2	50.0	64.3
District Percent Proficient	17.3	20.5	19.0
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	8	5	4
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	50.0	s	s

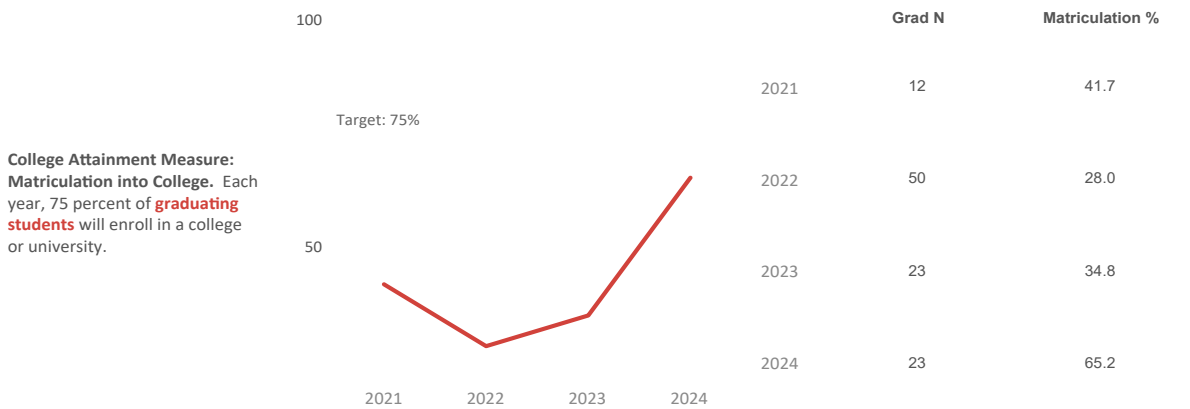
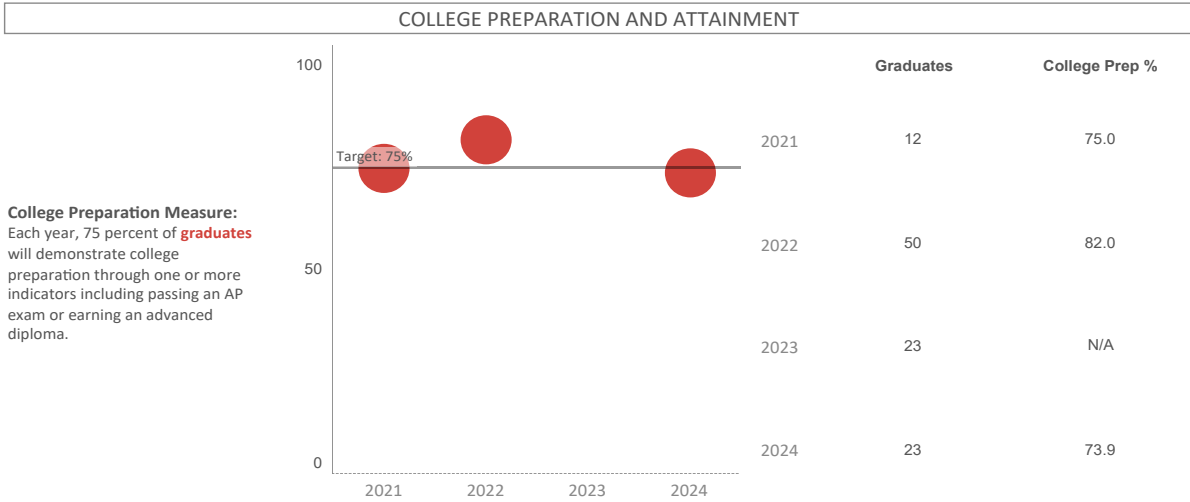
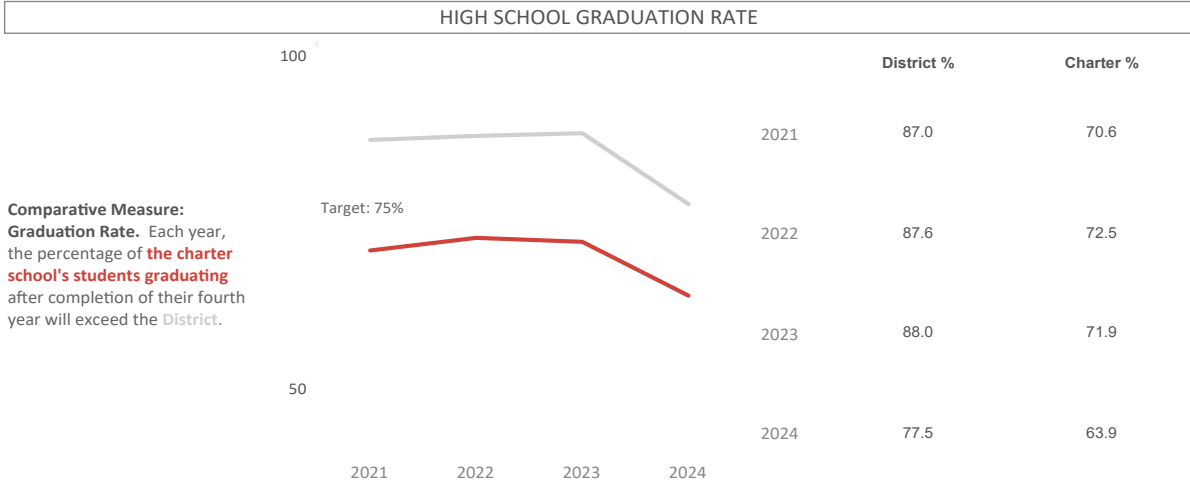
* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and English language learners ("ELLs") above is not tied to separate goals in the charter school's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam. "Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding. In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s".

**The district of comparison for Capital Preparatory Harlem was Manhattan CSD 4 in 2022 and 2023, and Manhattan CSD 5 in 2024.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL



*The district of comparison for Capital Preparatory Harlem was Manhattan CSD 4 from 2021 through 2023, and Manhattan CSD 5 in 2024.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,⁴ describe the elements in place at schools that are highly effective at providing students from low-income backgrounds the instruction, content, knowledge, and skills necessary to produce strong academic performance.

ASSESSMENT

Capital Prep Harlem's assessment system includes structures that support ELA instruction but the mathematics program does not effectively leverage student data to improve teaching and learning. The school administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to state performance standards across grade levels. School leaders make assessment data accessible through the PowerSchool platform. During weekly professional development sessions, teachers analyze data with academic leaders, set goals, plan small group instruction, and identify students for intervention. The school also uses a standards-based grading system designed to ensure consistency in grading practices and to help students understand their current performance and areas for growth.

In ELA, teachers use assessment data to effectively address student learning gaps. However, the school does not implement equivalent practices in mathematics. Across the middle and high school mathematics programs, some teachers lack adequate preparation to respond effectively to student performance trends, with the high school program demonstrating greater deficiencies in this area. Instructional leaders have not ensured that mathematics teachers consistently address student misconceptions or close learning gaps based on assessment findings. Leaders recognize the need to increase the amount of support mathematics teachers receive for data driven planning, and the school recently established additional meeting structures to guide teachers with addressing student misconceptions within tier 1 instruction.

CURRICULUM

Capital Prep Harlem provides curricula that support teachers with instructional planning, but the school has yet to ensure mathematics teachers receive all supports necessary to deliver instruction that raises student achievement. The school provides all teachers with a standards-aligned curricular framework that includes supporting tools to ensure that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. Curriculum leaders at the network level provide scope and sequence documents and standards-aligned assessments for all ELA and mathematics courses. Teachers work closely with network curriculum directors and the school's academic dean to refine pacing calendars, develop weekly learning objectives, and internalize lesson content. However, despite the existence of these curricular planning tools and collaborative lesson planning structures, mathematics teachers do not receive the level of coaching needed to deliver high quality instruction. In mathematics, students do not receive the same level of support with internalizing expectations for problem solving and producing grade level work as they do within their ELA coursework. The school acknowledges a need to build mathematics teachers' content area expertise, but leaders do not provide them with adequate coaching or professional development to address this area of need.

4. An extensive body of research, including a [report from Harvard](#) and a [report from the United States General Accounting Office](#), identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

Due to budgetary constraints, the school does not provide building-level instructional coaches with mathematics specialization, and teachers only receive intermittent one-to-one coaching from curriculum directors that serve other campuses within the network. In addition, although teachers within the Capital Prep Schools network apply the Pawker framework to instill students with a strong foundation in reading comprehension and writing at each grade level, the school has yet to incorporate the framework into a cohesive, schoolwide literacy strategy that ensures consistent implementation and impact across classrooms.

PEDAGOGY

High quality instruction is not evident across most classrooms at Capital Prep Harlem. Teachers do not consistently deliver purposeful instruction. While instructional planning is well structured and collaborative, classroom practices often do not demonstrate the level of engagement needed to meet the school's curriculum standards. Most teachers include posted objectives, do now activities to gauge prior knowledge, academic vocabulary, and prompts for higher-order thinking in their lessons. However, these planned elements seldom translate into purposeful instruction. Teachers infrequently use checks for understanding to gauge student learning. When teachers do make attempts to check for understanding, they rarely use the information to make meaningful adjustments to instruction. In most classrooms, teachers do not deliver rigorous instruction that effectively pushes students to demonstrate higher order thinking or problem solving skills. In most observed lessons, teachers relied on procedural questioning and did not employ strategies to develop students' depth of understanding.

Teachers do not maximize learning time or deliver instruction with sufficient urgency. In many classrooms, teachers do not provide students with clear instructions to ensure smooth transitions during lessons. This typically results in fragmented lessons and disrupted pacing. In many examples, minor behavioral disruptions that require frequent redirection impede the smooth delivery of academic content. These issues are particularly present in classrooms where teachers manage students alone. Although teachers respond to students respectfully, they do not consistently and clearly address incidents of student-to-student disruptions or reinforce classroom norms in ways that maintain a safe and respectful environment.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Capital Prep Harlem is developing effective instructional leadership. Over the charter term, the school faced significant challenges to its culture, including behavior concerns and high staff member turnover, which compromised instructional consistency. Since starting at the school, the current principal has served as a stabilizing force, leading efforts to reset school culture and strengthen expectations. Leaders acknowledge that this work is ongoing and the school is increasing efforts to establish consistently high expectations for students. Following a period of leadership transitions, high staff turnover, and shifting expectations, school leaders work to rebuild foundational systems for instructional oversight and teacher development. In response to these challenges, the school has re-established routines including weekly intellectual preparation sessions, Friday professional development, and biweekly scope and sequence meetings aligned to network-developed curricular frameworks. These structures allow leaders to provide guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

instruction within content areas. However, instructional execution across classrooms remains uneven. The inconsistency in the quality of instruction indicates leaders have not yet built effective systems to ensure there is a culture of high expectations across the school.

The academic dean and principal provide ongoing coaching and feedback with support from the assistant superintendent and network academic team. While observation and feedback structures exist, the quality and consistency of coaching cycles vary. Leaders are still developing the academic expertise and instructional management skills required to meaningfully support teachers. The school does not currently have in house coaching capacity to ensure the school's planning systems translate into high quality instruction. School leaders recognize the need to deepen consistent coaching support, particularly in mathematics, and are adjusting their approach following a recent change in regional superintendent leadership.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

Capital Prep Harlem has compliant programs in place to meet the needs of its at-risk students. The school has clear systems to identify and support at-risk students including students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students struggling academically. The network executive director of special populations oversees special education and ELL programming at the school. The school's at-risk programs include clear roles for staff members, a structured response to intervention ("RTI") system, and regular collaboration between general education, inclusion, and ELL teachers.

The school has a clearly defined RTI process. The school delineates clear and specific interventions at each of the three tiered levels with increased personalization and individualized support at tier 3. The school supplements instruction using online platforms, including Reading Plus and MAP Accelerator for mathematics at the middle school level, and IXL for ELA and mathematics at the high school level. The student assistance team ("SAT") meets regularly to monitor students and adjust interventions accordingly. Grade teams review academic data to identify students for support and refer students to the SAT for more intensive tiered support. Students struggling academically also receive support through teacher office hours that occur after school and on Saturday. The school refers students whose needs are not met by tier 3 support for special education evaluation. Inclusion and ELL teachers co-plan with general education teachers weekly and modify lesson plans to meet students' needs. The school provides at-risk program providers with professional development sessions, monthly network virtual sessions, and opportunities to engage with external partners such as the Collaborative for Inclusive Education and Vector Solutions.

The school provides adequate support for students with disabilities. It offers integrated co-teaching ("ICT") and a social worker provides mandated counseling services. The school contracts with the district for all other related services. However, due to citywide shortages in related service providers, the school received related service authorizations for families to obtain services independently with costs covered by the district. While the district offered compensatory related services during the summer of the 2023-24 school year, Capital Prep Harlem had not received any communication by the time of the Institute's visit to confirm such an option for the current school year.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

Capital Prep Harlem is effectively developing its ELL program to meet the changing needs of its students, including students with interrupted formal education (“SIFE”). The ELL provider offers push-in and pull-out support aligned to student proficiency levels as identified by New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (“NYSITELL”) or the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”) results. The school adapts the Future Level 1 curriculum for ELLs with beginner language proficiency and uses technology-based tools such as scanning translator pens and web-based platforms including Gamma to support translation, text leveling, and visual scaffolding. The ELL provider collaborates regularly with general education and inclusion teachers to modify lessons for accessibility.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Capital Prep Harlem’s organization works effectively to deliver core operational functions, though staffing limitations, enrollment instability, and the absence of a long-term strategic vision constrain the school’s ability to sustain program improvements. The school establishes core systems with clear roles to successfully implement stable day-to-day operations. The school maintains an administrative framework with clear lines of responsibility among the principal, academic dean, director of operations, and network support staff members. Leaders collaborate to align logistics with instructional goals including scheduling, student services, and professional development. The school delivers daily operations with fidelity and supports staff members with instructional tools, data platforms, and dedicated planning time.

Despite these systems, the school continues to experience persistent challenges. Staffing constraints, particularly in specialized roles, require instructional leaders to provide coverage. As a result, leaders lack capacity to deliver sufficient coaching and instructional support for teachers. Capital Prep Harlem’s student enrollment has declined steadily over the charter term with the school currently serving 186 students, which is significantly below its targeted enrollment. While the principal has expanded family engagement efforts, these have not yet yielded consistent gains in enrollment. The school struggles to retain high quality teachers, and leaders work to reinforce existing instructional leadership systems to better support teaching staff in high-need roles. Although leaders make data-informed adjustments to programming, the school has not articulated a coherent long-term strategic plan to improve student outcomes.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

The Capital Prep Schools NY board does not adapt its oversight and governance skills specifically for the challenges and needs of Capital Prep Harlem. While the board fulfills core legal and operational responsibilities, it has not developed systems that effectively monitor academic performance or hold leadership accountable for student outcomes at Capital Prep Harlem.

Board members maintain consistent engagement with school and network leadership. They receive updates on day-to-day operations, compliance, and school culture, and review financial reports aligned to the broader Capital Prep Schools NY goals. The board supports school leadership’s cultural vision and affirms the mission-aligned direction of the school. However, the board does not proactively interrogate academic data or use achievement benchmarks to develop its priorities. The board has not established clearly-defined evaluative

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

criteria to assess the quality of instruction, student outcomes, or the performance of school leaders and the network. While the board receives general academic updates, it does not consistently use these updates to identify specific academic priorities or drive necessary improvement efforts at Capital Prep Harlem. Although the board is committed and aligned to the school's mission, its current practices do not reflect the level of academic oversight necessary to ensure accountability for student achievement and progress.

Capital Prep Harlem

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APPENDICES

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SCHOOL
OVERVIEW
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CAPITAL PREP CHARTER SCHOOLS NY BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Tarik Brooks	Baye Adofo-Wilson
TREASURER	Derek Ferguson
Danique Day	Rochelle Brown
SECRETARY	Dr. David Holder
Dr. Stephen Perry	

CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	400	402	101%	6-12
2021-22	588	422	72%	6-12
2022-23	651	309	47%	6-12
2023-24	700	214	31%	6-12
2024-25	700	186	27%	6-12

1. Source: The Institute's board records at the time of the visit.

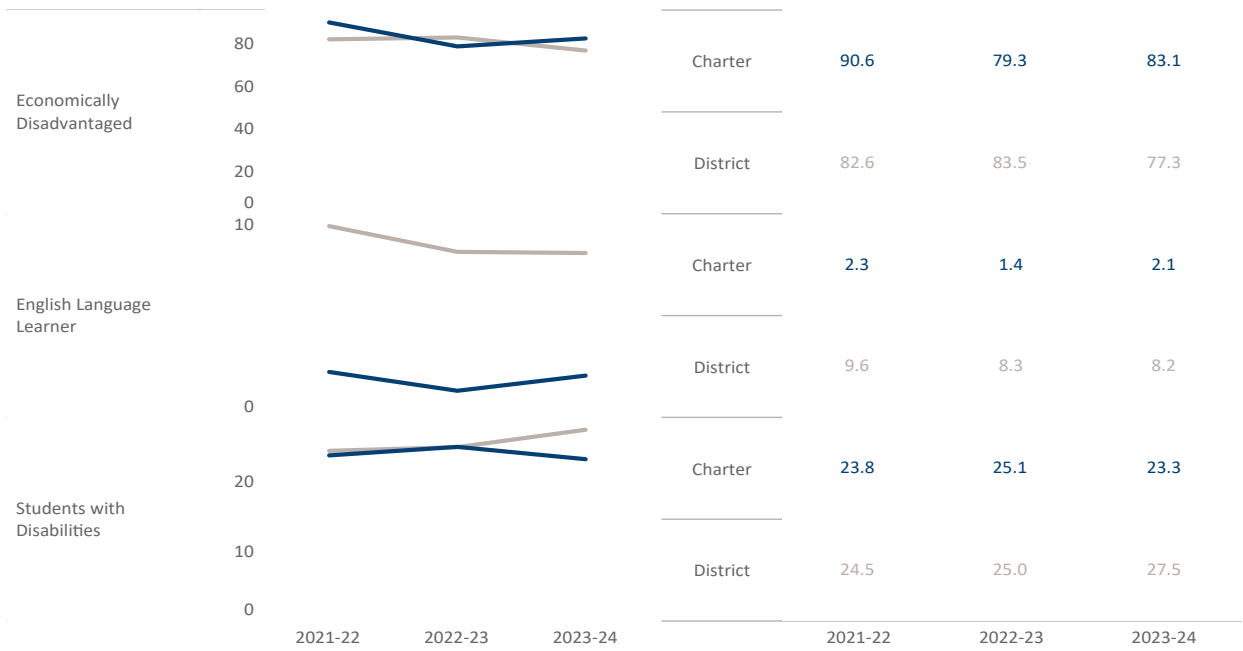
2. Source: Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)



Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School

Manhattan CSD 4

Student Demographics: Sub populations



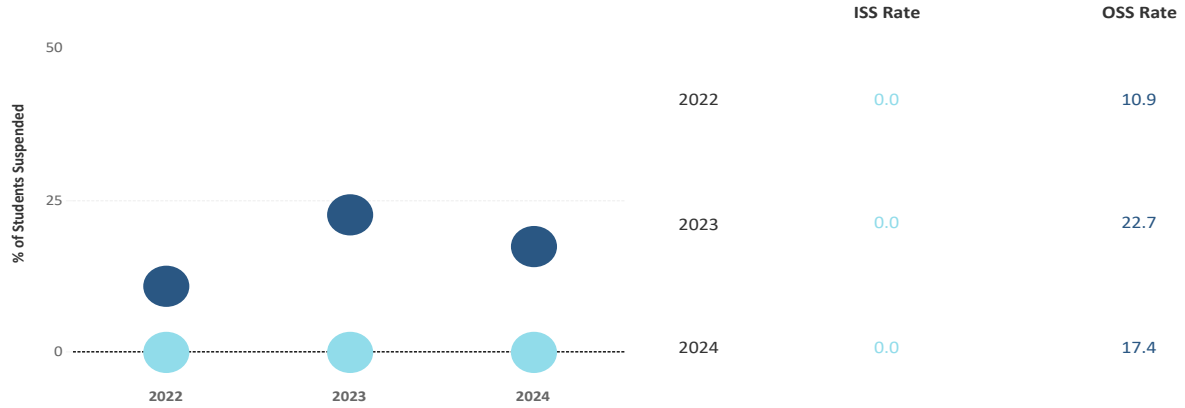
Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED.



Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School



Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

Persistence in Enrollment: The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return

Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the charter each year

Year	Persistence in Enrollment (%)	Expulsions (2022)	Expulsions (2023)	Expulsions (2024)
2021-22	76.3			
2022-23	56.1	8	3	1
2023-24	45.4			

Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2023-24

Category	Sub-category	Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	81.7	83.0
	English language learners	11.4	2.1
	students with disabilities	22.3	23.4
retention	economically disadvantaged	84.8	44.2
	English language learners	87.7	80.0
	students with disabilities	81.2	34.6

Discipline data above reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute. Enrollment and retention data reflect available BEDS day information as reported by the NYSED.



CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2019-20	Evaluation Visit	March 10 – 11,2020
2020-21	Initial Renewal Review	November 2 – 5, 2020
2022-23	Evaluation Visit	March 30, 2023
2024-25	Evaluation Visit	May 14, 2025

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
May 14, 2025	Desree Cabrall-Njenga	School Evaluator
	Dr. Kathleen Haywood	School Evaluator
	Ciani Jones	Senior Analyst

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	TERM YEAR	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
2 nd	Fourth year of a five-year charter term	Fall 2025

