



# New York State Education Department

*Renewal Site Visit Report  
2016-2017*

Northside Charter High School

Visit Date: 11/08/2016  
Date of Report: 2/28/2017





School Characteristics  
Enrollment

School Year	Grades Served	Maximum Authorized Enrollment	Actual Enrollment
2016-2017	9 – 12	400	405
2015-2016	9 – 12	400	380
2014-2015	9 – 12	400	380

**METHODOLOGY**

A one day renewal site visit was conducted at Northside Charter High School (NCHS) on November 8, 2016. The CSO team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, school leadership team, instructional leaders, and parents. In cooperation with school leadership, the team also administered an anonymous online survey

## BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The Performance Framework, which is part of the oversight plan included in the Charter Agreement for



## Summary of Findings

Northside Charter High School (NCHS) meets all the performance benchmarks for the current charter term.

The school's distributed leadership model has been refined over the charter term to continually increase the leaders' ability to observe teachers and provide them with targeted feedback. The board actively supported the school in the hiring of the new executive director and assistant principal to increase the school's leadership capacity.

Across subjects and subgroups, NCHS' Regents performance is comparable to the state average. The school aims to incorporate more baseline assessments and targeted Regents preparation to increase these scores further.

The school demonstrated its ability to respond to student needs to create programmatic changes, as needed. For example, more math and science sections are being offered than in years past and the school can provide more individualized instruction through a reduction in the average class size to 22 students.

### 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: See Appendix A for further information.











#### Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

#### Financial Condition

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

NYSED CSO 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 in strong financial health. Northside Charter High School's composite score for 2015-2016 is 3.00. The table below shows the school's composite scores from 2012-2013 through 2015-2016.

Northside Charter High School's Composite Scores  
2012-2013 to 2014-2015

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2015-2016	3.00
2014-2015	3.00

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, NCHS had a current ratio of 11.2.

*Unrestricted cash* measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Schools typically strive to maintain at least 90 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2015-2016, NCHS operated with 268 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. NCHS's enrollment stability for 2015-2016 was 98 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, NCHS' debt to asset ratio was 0.1.

*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 operating 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, NCHS' total margin was 14 percent.

### 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.*







## 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.*

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.

*Table 3: Student Demographics Northside Charter High School Compared to District of Location*



## Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Legal Compliance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li><li>b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.</li><li>c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.</li></ul>



