



New York State Education Department

Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School

Visit Date: October 25-26, 2017
Date of Report: June 13, 2018

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary

Name of Charter School	Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School
Board Chair	Brooks Tanner
District of Location	NYCSD 15
Opening Date	08/26/2013
Charter Terms	Initial
Authorized Grades/Maximum	Grades 6-8, 200 students
Management Company	None
Educational Partner	None
Facilities	500 19 th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215
Mission Statement	The mission of BUGS is to provide a banding, interdisciplinary education to young adolescents of all abilities and backgrounds, with a focus on real world problem solving and the exploration of environmental sustainability. BUGS students will excel in the core academic subjects and be engaged, motivated, and members who are critical thinkers, prepared to achieve excellence in high school and beyond.
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry-Based Study of the Science of Sustainability • Extended Time for Learning • A Positive and Inclusive School Climate • A Professional Learning Community • Authentic Assessments and Formative Assessment • Use of Technology
Request for Revisions	None

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 its current term, the school must have compiled a strong track record of positive results on the state assessment during the time of the renewal analysis. It must also demonstrate that it has met or exceeded benchmarks in the Framework.
- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically one to three years. As discussed above, the Regents will not renew a charter school if the school's performance for school years preceding its renewal second or subsequent renewal year is not with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the

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

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BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The Performance Framework, which is part of the oversight and accountability system, sets the standards for each school and outlines four main areas of measurable benchmarks in three key areas of charter school performance:

- Educational Success
- Organizational Soundness
- Faithful and Responsible Stewardship

Observational findings from the review of data and application of the Performance Framework will be presented in alignment with the Performance Framework benchmarks and indicators according to the rating scale below, with the highest rating being the highest. A summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. A detailed narrative will follow, however, the report narrative will highlight areas of concern that may be addressed by the school.

Level	Description
Exceeds	The school meets the performance benchmarks for excellence in this area.
Meets	The school generally meets the performance benchmarks for good performance in this area.
Approaches	The school does not meet the performance benchmarks in this area.
Falls Far Below	The school falls far below the performance benchmark. Significant concerns are noted.

For the site visit conducted on October 2, 2017 to October 7, 2017 at BURS, see the [Performance Framework Benchmark and Dismissal Discussion](#).

New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Rating

Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving performance level 3 or higher (high school Regents standard minimum score of 65 or higher).	Approaches
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to ensure the school shares appropriate high expectations and they lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers employ evidence-based strategies and practices geared to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of rigorous thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social-emotional well-being and positive learning environment. Families, community organizations, and other stakeholders share responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families are active and students are engaged in the management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound financial condition with evidence of appropriate financial management.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets, sound financial policies, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and applicable regulations.	Meets
	Benchmark 6: Board of Trustees 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, and the school's success and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has a clear 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 plans.	Meets
	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Elements: The school has fully implemented and implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting its annual progress toward meeting the enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students demonstrating high potential. The school has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain students.	Approaches
Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws and regulations and the provisions of its charter.	Meets	

The CSO renewal site visit team found that BUGS performance meets most of the Benchmarks of the Performance Framework for the current charter term.



fell from 48% to 16%, respectively, a 32 percentage point drop. In math, with there has been a slight decline year-over-year, the percentage of students at the proficient level increased from 20% in 2014-2015 to 24% in 2015-2016 to 35% in 2016-2017, for a 15 percentage point increase.

The school's renewal application shows a positive trend for students in the top two bands for both ELA and math. In ELA from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017, there was an overall increase of 14 percentage points in the highest two bands from 30% to 44% each school year to the 2015-2016 school year where proficiency went from 37% to 45%. Scores then climbed a one percentage point increase in the next year with the percent trending toward a proficiency of 49% in 2016-2017. In math, scores were generally positive, moving from 20% in 2014-2015 to 24% in 2015-2016 to 35% in 2016-2017.

The ELL students' subgroup, as reported in the school's renewal application, while exhibiting positive trends in both ELA and math from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 where ELA scores improved by 10 percentage points and math scores improved by 15 percentage points, exhibits a decline in proficiency from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017. In both subjects, the school's performance is below the district's performance. In 2016-2017, the percentage points in ELA and 20 percentage points in math.

2.b.i. Proficiency - Aggregating Data by Student Group: All Students See Table 1 below...

BUGS enrolled students in Grades 6 and 7 in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years, as they transitioned to its full middle school grade span.

When compared to the state, BUGS has essentially matched proficiency rates in ELA in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years, but is below the state in math. Aggregating proficiency at the district level has been below the district of education in both ELA and math for the past three years, and though there has been an increase in proficiency over the past two years, the district's students still do not perform as well as their district of education. NYC's 19th NYC CDS is a high performing school where proficiency rates are expected to be above the state average in both ELA and math.

Table 1: Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes for All Students by School, District & NYC Level

All Students	ELA				Math			
	BUGS	NYC CDS 19	Variances NYC CDS 19	NYC State	BUGS	NYC CDS 19	Variances NYC CDS 19	NYC State
2014-2015	28%	23%	-5%	30%	22%	48%	+26%	37%
2015-2016	36%	40%	+4%	37%	22%	45%	+23%	34%
2016-2017	40%	43%	+3%	40%	24%	45%	+21%	34%

* State and District data are specific to grades 6-8 for 2014-2015 and grades 6-8 for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017.

2.b.ii. Proficiency – Subgroup School Level Proficiency: Tables 2-4 below.

Subgroup proficiency, **table 2**, shows that the majority of SWD students are equal to or above the district or location and is exceeding the state.

For the ELL population subgroup, ELA proficiency rates have consistently been at 0% for the last three years of 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 term, which is below both the district or location and the state. No ELL students have achieved proficiency in ELA in the past three years. In math, ELL students have had been above both the district or location and the state in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, but have never the proficiency rate fell to 0% in 2016-2017.

For the LD student population subgroup, students in ELA have experienced increasing levels of proficiency over the past three academic years. In 2016-2017, the majority of students are above the state in math performance has been generally flat, with the students performing below both the district or location and the state in the past three academic years.

Table 2: Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup –
SWDs: School, District & NYC Level Aggregate

SWDs	ELA					Math				
	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS
2014-2015	10%	10%	0	4%	+6	18%	15%	+3	8%	+10
2015-2016	21%	15%	+6	7%	+14	17%	14%	+3	7%	+10
2016-2017	16%	16%	0	8%	+8	15%	15%	0	7%	+8

* State and district data are general for the state and district.

Table 3: Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup – ELLs: State, District & NYS Level Aggregates

ELLs	BUGS	ELA				Math				
		NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS
2014-2015	0%	1%	-1	2%	-2	14%	12%	+2	10%	+4
2015-2016	0%	2%	-2	2%	-2	11%	10%	+1	8%	+3
2016-2017	0%	2%	-2	2%	-2	10%	10%	0	7%	+3

* State and district data are grade specific: Grades 6-7 for 2014-2015 and Grades 6-8 for 2015-2017

Table 4: Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by Subgroup – ED Students: State, District & NYS Level Aggregates

EDs	BUGS	ELA				Math				
		NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS
2014-2015	21%	25%	-4	20%	+4	16%	33%	-17	23%	-7
2015-2016	26%	32%	-6	27%	-1	18%	29%	-11	24%	-6
2016-2017	23%	35%	-12	20%	+3	16%	30%	-14	24%	-8

* State and district data are grade specific: Grades 6-7 for 2014-2015 and Grades 6-8 for 2015-2017

2.b.iii. Proficiency in Grade Level Proficiency: Students 5-7 below

Grade level proficiency at BUGS in ELA has consistently been below the district and state level aggregates across all levels over the past three academic years. The results when compared to the state have been mixed, depending on the grade level and year. Mid-grade level proficiency has been below the state for all grade levels and for all of the previous three academic years.

Table 5: Grade 6-7

Year	BUGS	ELA				Math...			
		NYC CSI 15	Variance to NYC CSI 15	NYS	Variance to NYS	NYC CSI 15	Variance to NYC CSI 15	NYS	Variance to NYS
2014-2015									
Grade 6	10%	14%	-5	31%	-12	31%	12	10%	31%
Grade 7	30%	13%	17	23%	-13	43%	20	33%	23%

Table 6: Grade 6-7

Year	BUGS	ELA				Math...			
		NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS	NYC CSD 15	Variance to NYC CSD 15	NYS	Variance to NYS
2015-2016									
Grade 6	30%	17%	13	34%	+5	35%	52%	16	34%
Grade 7	19%	55%	-36	35%	-16	25%	53%	-28	36%
Grade 8	17%	48%	-31	41%	-4	27%	49%	-22	41%

Table 7: Grade Level Proficiency for All Students, 2015-2017

Year	ELA					Math				
	BUGS	NYC	Variance	NYC	Variance	BUGS	NYC	Variance	NYC	Variance
2016-2017										
Grade 6	27%	45%	+18%	10%	37%	6%	30%	+24%	26%	40%
Grade 7	51%	58%	+7%	7%	13%	33%	35%	+2%	20%	30%
Grade 8	41%	58%	+17%	17%	45%	17%	22%	+5%	15%	22%

Indicator 3:

3.a.i. Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate All Student Outcomes: See Table 8

Eighth graders at BUGS outperformed the state in the aggregate and across all subgroups in 2015-2016 on both the Common Core Algebra I Regents exam and the Living Environment Regents exam. In 2017, BUGS outperformed the state in the aggregate and across all subgroups for the same exams, with only one exception: BUGS matched the state in the ...

Table 8: Annual Regents Outcomes – Aggregate

	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	BUGS	NYC	Variance	BUGS	NYC	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	100%	77%	+23%	100%	77%	+23%
Living Environment (level >65)	100%	78%	+22%	74%	74%	0%

3.a.ii. Regents Testing Outcomes – Subgroup English Outcomes: See Table 9

In 2016 and 2017, BUGS outperformed the state in both Algebra I and Living Environment, in each of the student subgroups.

Table 9: Annual Regents Outcomes – SWDs

	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	BUGS	NYC	Variance	BUGS	NYC	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	*	11%	+89%	*	15%	+85%
Living Environment (level >65)	*	48%	+52%	50%	44%	+6%

*Data suppressed in accordance with the business rules at data.nysed.gov.

Table 10: Annual Regents Outcomes

	2015-2016		2016-2017	
	BUGS	Variance	BUGS	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core Levels 2 & 4)	N/A	21%	N/A	26%
Living Environment (6-8)	100%	0%	100%	0%

N/A no students sat for

*Data suppressed in accordance with the business rules of data

Table 11: Annual Regents

	2015-2016		2016-2017	
	BUGS	Variance	BUGS	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core)	100%	0%	100%	0%
Living Environment (6-8)	100%	0%	100%	0%

Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

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

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSL. 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSL. The curriculum is revised on a monthly basis during department meetings and annually, by the assistant principals and department chairs who ensure there is both vertical and horizontal alignment. The school reported that they have a Curriculum Development Week in August led by department chairs, and that teachers are trained on changes to curriculum in their areas of focus for the upcoming year.

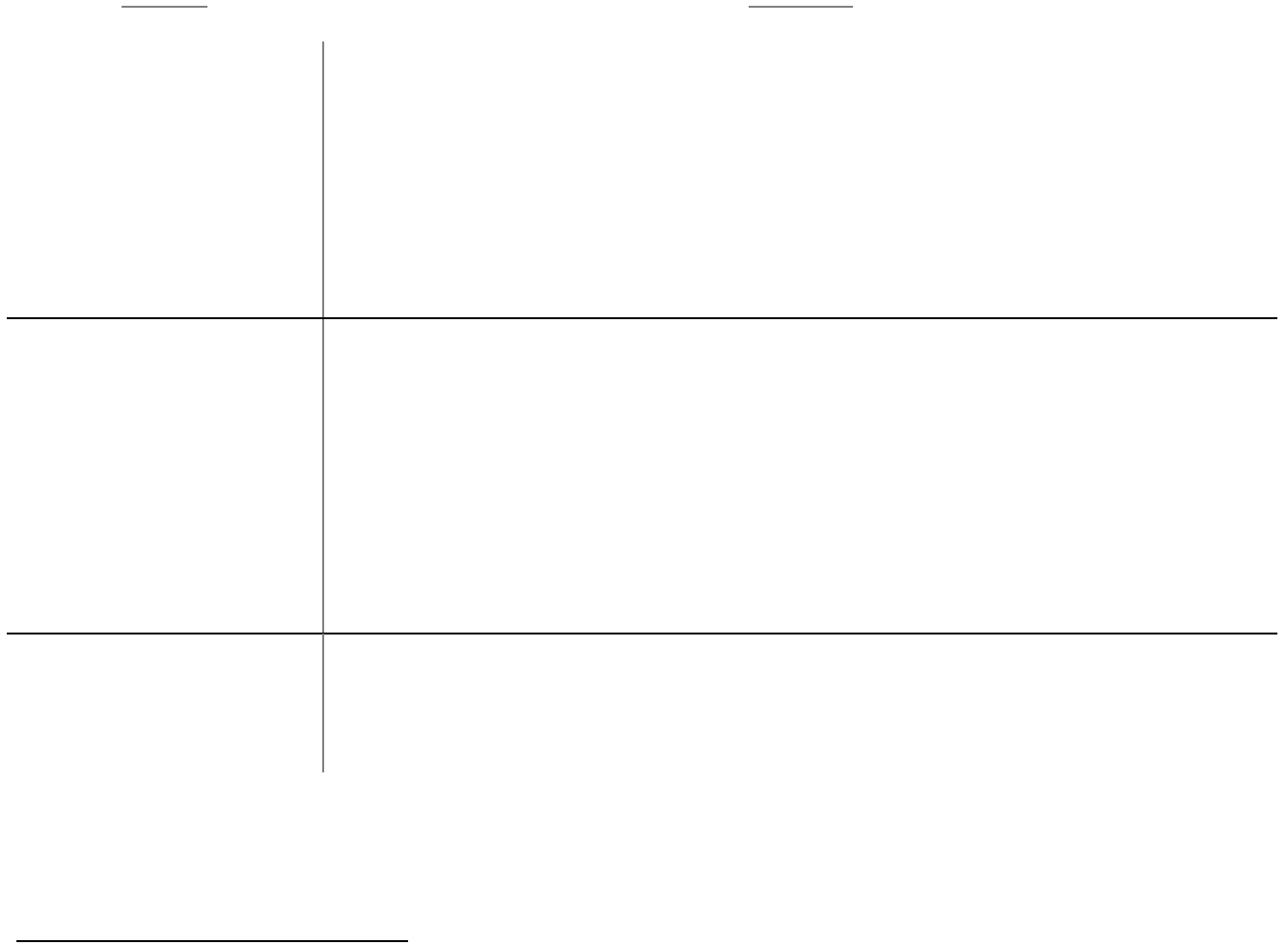
The school reported that key changes made over the charter term to

Supports for Diverse Learners

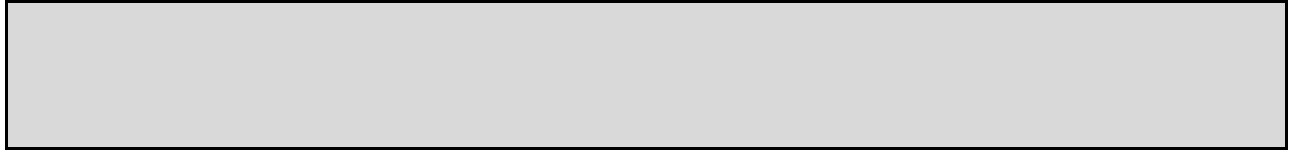
BUGS employs an ICT classroom model, an inclusion coordinator, an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher, and two guidance counselors to meet the needs of diverse learners. The ICT classrooms are the primary support for SWDs. Grade-
Individualized Education Program (IEP) and interventionists meet with grade-level teams at least once a semester to ensure alignment.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement

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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

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. School Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 opportunities. 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 <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider. b. The school ensures that all management company 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

The school has a defined leadership team, with each member having clear roles and responsibilities. The executive director is the sole leader who reports directly to the board, with the principal and director of operations reporting to the executive director. The executive director also oversees the financial consultant, ASNY, and is responsible for oversight for the instructional and operational functions of the

school. In addition, the executive director

Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

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

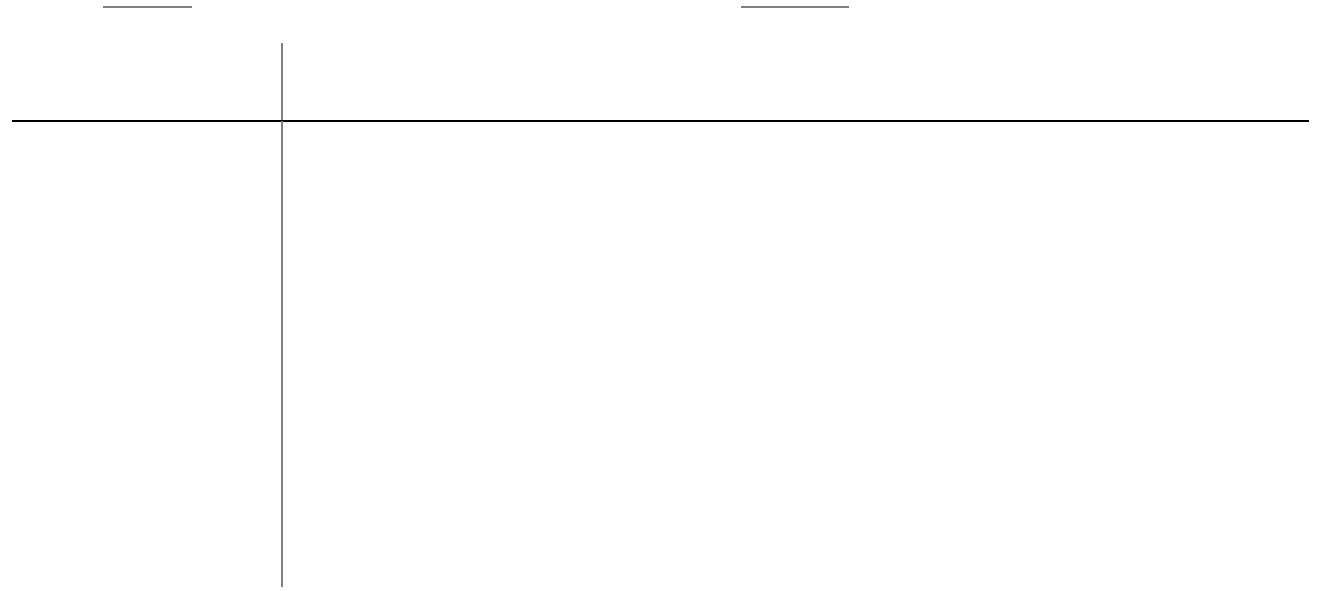
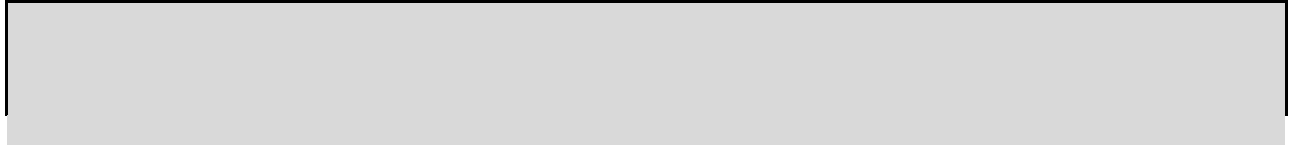
Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Mission and Key Design Elements	a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the mission and key design elements. 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:

As observed during the site visit, and by the NYSED CSO team, the board, school leaders, and staff share a common and consistent understanding of the mission and key design elements. The school provides a hands-on, interdisciplinary education to young adolescents of all abilities and backgrounds, with a focus on real-world problem solving and the exploration of environmental sustainability. BUGS students will excel in the core academic subjects and become engaged community members who are critical thinkers prepared to achieve excellence in high school and beyond. The school reported in the renewal application that the mission is communicated to students and families from initial contact during recruitment and carried out through school-community events, and evident in their stated educational outcomes.

The school implements the key design elements outlined in the charter. In focus groups during the CSO site visit and in the renewal application, the school stakeholders discussed all key design elements and their integration throughout the school. The most prominent key design elements that were observed on the site visit included extended time for learning and a positive, inclusive school climate.



- Translating recruitment flyers and brochures/cards in multiple languages, including Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic, and holding information sessions in Spanish.
- Engaging existing bilingual parents.
- Hiring full-time, part-time, parent, community, and tutor support staff and invest in the neighborhood by connecting the school to the neighborhood.
- Attending the district's middle school charter, private school open house, and parent and community forums.
- Ongoing relationship building with elementary schools that have a very similar population comparable to the district.

Table 12. Student Demographic Comparison: Urban Garden Charter School Chapter Sub-school Compared to District

	Location	2015-2016		2016-2017		
		BUGS	NYC CSD 15 Variance	BUGS	NYC CSD 15 Variance	
SWDs		23%	23%	27%	29%	+2
ELLs		6%	15%	5%	11%	-6
EDs		36%	58%	51%	54%	+8

BUGS' overall student population in 2015-2016 from 2016-2017 was 80%. The school outperformed its district for its student population in 2016-2017. The school's student population is particularly high in EDs, which retained 51% of its population.

Table 13 Student Retention 2015

	2015-2016		Variance
	2015	2016	
All Students	80%	79%	+1
SWDs	86%	80%	+6
ELLs	82%	76%	+6
ED	80%	78%	+2

