



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, 300 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, responsible community 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 charter term, the school must have compiled a strong record of performance during the term 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 period of time, for a shorter period of years. As discussed above, the Regents will not renew a charter for a shorter period of time if the school's performance for the previous year is not in the second or subsequent renewal window, which starts 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 are presented in alignment with the Performance Framework benchmarks and indicators according to the rating scale below. A narrative summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. A detailed summary of related observations, however, will be provided in the report narrative with pertinent data and indicators that apply to 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 from October 2015 to October 2017 at BURG, 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 (NYSL) 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' well-being, positive learning environment, families' comprehensive 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, consistent to a budget, 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
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a sound 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 Core Elements: The school has fully implemented and is implementing 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 such students.	Approaches
		Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable law 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 or above grade proficiency from 30% in 2014-2015 to 24% in 2015-2016 to 24% in 2016-2017.

The school's renewal application shows a positive trend for students in the top quartile for both ELA and math. In ELA from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017, there was an overall increase of 14 percentage points, the highest jump in proficiency from the 2014-2015 school year to the 2015-2016 school year where proficiency went from 57% to 71%. Scores then climbed a one percentage point increase from that year, with the percent trending toward a proficiency of 71% in 2016-2017. In math, scores were generally positive, moving from 20% in 2014-2015 to 20% 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 2015-2016 where ELA scores improved by 10 percentage points and math scores improved by 15 percentage points, experienced significant declines from 2016-2017 to 2016-2017. In both subjects, the scores of students were significantly lower in 2016-2017, a 20 percentage point drop in ELA and 29 percentage points in math.

2.b.i. Proficiency - Aggregate Data for All Students See Table 1 below...

BUGS enrolled students in Grades 6 and 7 in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years 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. Aggregate proficiency 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 year, the scores of students in the district are still lower than their district of education. NYC SD 19, NYC CSD 19 is a high performing district where proficiency rates are expected to be higher in both ELA and math.

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

All Students	ELA				Math			
	BUGS	NYC CSD 19	Variances NYC CSD 19	NY CSD 19	BUGS	NYC CSD 19	Variances NYC CSD 19	NY CSD 19
2014-2015	28%	43%	-15	30%	22%	48%	-26	33%
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**, NYC CSD, in both ELA and math, is **table 2** above the state and is exceeding the state.

For the EL 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 of location and the state. No EL students have achieved proficiency in ELA in the past three years. In math, EL students have been above both the district of location and the state in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, but have never the proficiency rate fell to 0% in 2016-2017.

For the ES student population subgroup, students in ELA have experienced increasing levels of proficiency over the past three academic years. In 2016-2017, the district of location has performed two percentage points above the state. In math, EL performance has been generally flat, with the students performing below both the district of 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%	10%	+6	8%	+8	15%	15%	0	7%	+8

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

Table 3: Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes by subgroup – ELLs: State, District & NYC 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 & NYC 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%	-5
2015-2016	26%	32%	-6	27%	-1	18%	29%	-11	24%	-6
2016-2017	23%	35%	-12	20%	+3	16%	20%	-4	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 grade level proficiency levels over the past three academic years. The results for when compared to the state have been mixed depending on the grade level and year. In all 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

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		
Grade 6	10%	14%	-5	31%	-12	31%	12%	10%	31%	-25	35%
Grade 7	30%	15%	15	25%	-5	25%	45%	20%	55%	20	20%

Table 6: Grade 6

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		
Grade 6	30%	17%	13	34%	+5	35%	22%	16%	70%	-5	70%
Grade 7	19%	55%	-36	35%	-16	25%	53%	-28	36%	-71	20%
Grade 8	15%	48%	-33	41%	-14	31%	49%	18	49%	12	24%

Table 7: Grade Level Proficiency for All Students, 2016-2017

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: Student Learning Outcomes

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 and the Living Environment Regents exam. In 2016 and 2017, BUGS outperformed the state in the aggregate and across all subgroups for the same exams; the only exception being BUGS matched the state in the aggregate for the Living Environment exam in 2017.

Table 8: Annual Regents Outcomes – Aggregate

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

3.a.ii. Regents Testing Outcomes – Subgroup Annual Regents 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

Exam	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	BUGS	NYS	Variance	BUGS	NYS	Variance
Algebra I (Common Core) (levels 3, 4 & 5)	*	11%	+89%	*	15%	+85%
Living Environment (level 3)	*	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	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 (>65%)	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.

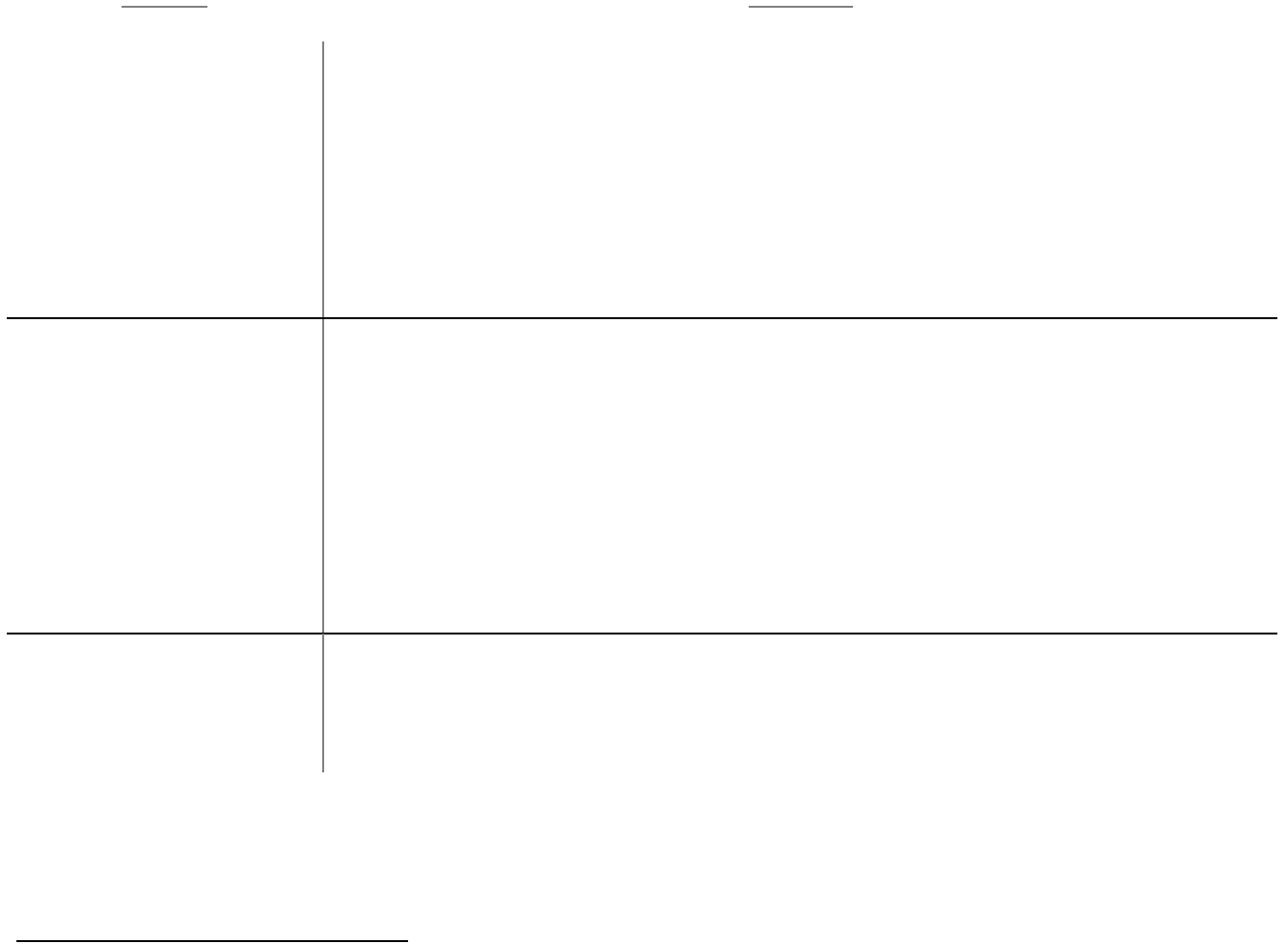
The school reported that key changes made over the charter term to

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 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. 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.

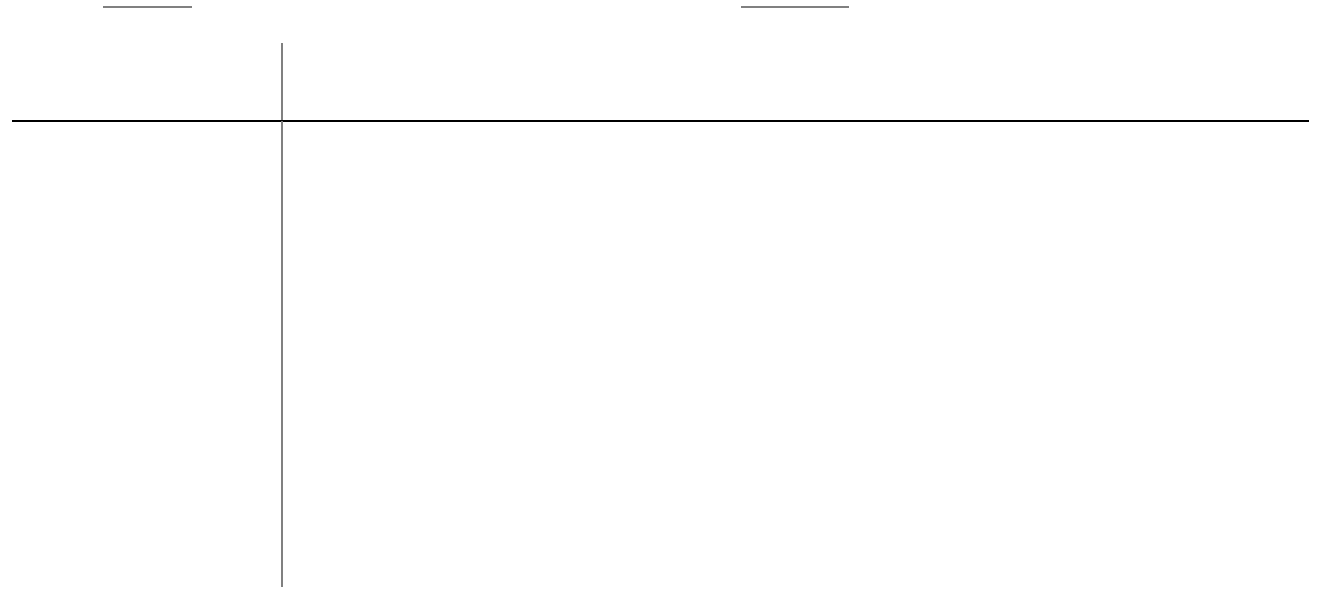
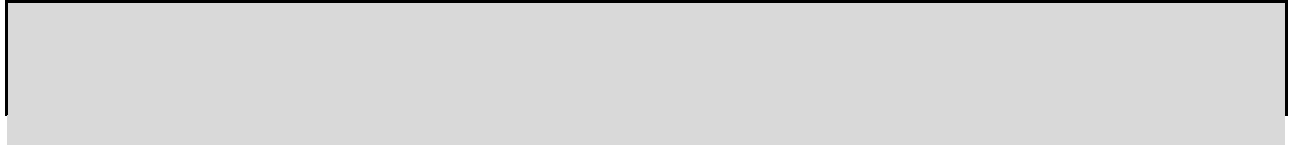
Finding: Meets

<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 in bilingual parent outreach.
- 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					
	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance	BUGS	NYC CSD 15	Variance
SWDs	23%	23%	0%	27%	29%	+2%
ELLs	6%	15%	-9	5%	11%	-6
EDs	36%	58%	-22	51%	59%	+8

BUGS' overall student population in 2015-2016 from 2015-2016 to 2016-2017 school year was 80%. The outperformed its district of 15% for students with disabilities. The district's population is 23%, but BUGS' population is 23%. The district's population is 6%, but BUGS' population is 36%. The district's population is 58%, but BUGS' population is 36%.

Table 13 Student Retention 2015-2016

	school)		
	2015-2016		2016-2017
	BUGS	NYC CS 15	Variation
All Students	80% 80%	79% 70%	+1 +1
SWDs	86% ¹¹	80%	+6
ELLs	82%	76%	+6
ED - LUS	80% 81%	70% 78%	+10 +7

