BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Renewal Report
Tunbridge Public Charter School (373)

Baltimore City Public Schools
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REPORT INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Report

The renewal report is a summary of findings and a resulting recommendation regarding renewal of the charter or contract for an operator-run school. To inform this recommendation, Baltimore City Public Schools collects and analyzes documentation including the school's renewal application, and an evaluation of the school's performance based on the renewal rubric, the School Effectiveness Review (SER) performed on site at each school and consideration of all other relevant information.

City Schools' renewal criteria are based on state law (§ 9-101, *et seq.*, MD. CODE ANN., EDUC.) and Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners' policy IHBJ and associated administrative regulations (IHBJ-RA and JFA-RA). The Board's policy requires that schools up for renewal be evaluated on multiple measures including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Student achievement**, constituting at least 50 percent of the renewal score and including measures such as schoolwide performance on state assessments, College and Career Readiness (for schools with high school grades), academic programming for special student populations, and a school's fidelity to its charter
- **School climate** (chronic absence, suspensions, enrollment trends, school choice data, and school survey results from parents, teachers, and students)
- **Financial management and governance** (annual audits, school budget submissions, grants management, board documentation; compliance/adherence with federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations)
- An overall finding of not effective in any of the key areas (Student Achievement, School Climate, or Financial Management/Governance) may be the basis of a non-renewal decision.

The renewal process is a component of City Schools' annual review of its school portfolio, designed to ensure that students and families across the district have access to school options that meet their interests and needs. In 2011, City Schools formed the Renewal Stakeholders Working Group (composed of school operators from a range of school types, Supporting Public Schools of Choice, and the Maryland Charter School Network) to develop a methodology for evaluating the performance of operator-run schools. The result: a fair, transparent, and rigorous renewal framework that reflects schools' unique nature and innovative contributions to student achievement, used for the first time in the 2012-13 school year, and a process for reviewing and updating the framework each year.

At the conclusion of each year's renewal cycle, staff engages operators and other key stakeholders in a review of the process to identify areas for improvement that could be addressed while still maintaining a level of predictability for schools up for renewal in the following year. Key changes made to the framework as a result of this most recent review include the following:

- For the PARCC Growth measure, schools' growth was determined by using the state growth percentile. In previous years, the Baltimore City's growth percentile was used to determine growth rates. For rating purposes, schools' growth rates continue to be compared only to other Baltimore City schools with the same tested grade bands.

- A new measure, Effective Programming for All Student Racial/Ethnic Groups, was added to the renewal rubric for schools with sufficient diversity in their student bodies for a meaningful comparison. The measure considers whether schools are providing quality programming for students in different student groups by examining instructional approaches and processes in place, schools' use of data to identify differences in achievement among student groups, and the success of schools in addressing these differences. Previously, these factors were considered as part of the Fidelity to Charter/Overall Application measure.
- Parent satisfaction survey ratings are based on an absolute scale. In previous years, schools were ranked against other schools in their grade band to determine parent satisfaction ratings.
- Selective high schools that use PARCC scores as part of their entrance criteria are not included in comparison groups for the PARCC Absolute rubric measure.

The Process

The review process has the following components:

- Renewal rubric (includes data from standardized assessments and school surveys)
- Application for renewal
- Data tables prepared by City Schools
- School Effectiveness Review

The process starts with a review by the Charter and Operator-led Advisory Board, whose members represent foundations, nonprofit organizations, school choice advocates, school operators, and district representatives; and whose function is to provide advice to the CEO on renewal and other issues as they relate to operator-led schools. In performing its review, the Advisory Board looks at all data and information, both quantitative and qualitative, to make sound recommendations to the CEO. After its review of the components above, the Advisory Board makes recommendations to City Schools' CEO on whether charters or contracts should be renewed. The CEO considers the recommendations and the quantitative and qualitative review, and then makes her own recommendation to the Board. In some instances, the nature or severity of an issue raised during the renewal process is serious enough to give it extra weight in formulating the renewal recommendation and, ultimately, the renewal decision, especially in instances where the issue affects the wellbeing of students, staff, or the district as a whole. For the Financial Management/Governance section, a rating of not effective in any one of the three elements that make up that section results in a rating of not effective for the entire section.

According to Board policy, City Schools may determine that a public charter school is eligible for an eight-year contract term, five-year contract term, three-year contract term, or nonrenewal. The eight-year renewal term is an option based on the updated Public Charter School Policy IHBJ, adopted by the Board in September 2019. The policy allows the Board to consider an eight-year term for schools that have "two or more consecutive full renewals, including demonstrating quality programming for all student groups" and that have met the standard for a five-year renewal in the year of the latest review. The ultimate decision on all operator renewals rests with the Board, which considers the recommendations and rationale of the CEO, the operator renewal report, testimony

given at public Board meetings and work sessions, the contents of the official record and the factors listed in policy IHBJ and administrative regulation IHBJ-RA for charter schools, and policy FCA and administrative regulation FCA-RA for non-charter schools.

Actions	Timeline
Schools submit renewal applications	September 5, 2019
Charter and Operator-led Advisory Board reviews renewal applications and makes recommendations to the CEO	September to October 2019
District presents recommendations to Board at public meeting	November 12, 2019
Opportunity for operator to provide oral testimony to Board in a meeting open to the public	December 5, 2019
Board votes on renewal recommendations	January 14, 2020

Tunbridge Public Charter School (#373)

> *Operator*: Afya Baltimore, Inc.
> *Configuration*: Elementary/Middle
> *Type*: Charter
> *Enrollment*: 448[1]

Recommendation

5-year renewal

Renewal summary

Category	Finding
Is the school an academic success? (min. 50% weight)	Effective
Does the school have a strong school climate?	Highly Effective
Has the school followed sufficient financial management practices? [2]	Meets Expectations
Has the school followed sufficient governance practices?	Effective

Discussion

On January 14, 2020, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners voted to renew the contract with Afya Baltimore, Inc. to operate Tunbridge Public Charter School for a five-year term running from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2025.

The school was rated effective in Academics, highly effective in Climate and meets expectations/effective in Financial Management/Governance.

In PARCC achievement growth, a measure which assesses changes in individual student growth over time compared to other students who started with a similar scale score, the school was rated highly effective in ELA 6-8 (91st percentile overall) and in math 6-8 (99th percentile overall), developing in ELA 3-5 (53rd percentile overall) and effective in math 3-5 (73rd percentile overall). This measure has the most weight of the PARCC measures in the renewal rubric. For PARCC absolute performance, schools are compared to a Poverty Index (PI) group, made up of schools with similar levels of annual household income within the same grade band because absolute performance is highly correlated with household income. The school was rated highly effective in PARCC absolute performance in math 6-8 (86th percentile in its PI group, with a mean scale score of 735), in ELA 6-8 (86th percentile in its PI group, with a mean scale score of 750), and in math 3-5

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[1] Total enrollment counts reflect the MSDE official enrollment file for grades k-12, which includes students enrolled on September 30 each year. This file is verified by MSDE prior to becoming the official enrollment count for the year.
[2] Financial management considers a review of the operator's audits over the contract term. "Meets expectations" is the highest rating available, followed by "Developing" and "Does not meet expectations".

(84th percentile in its PI group, with a mean scale score of 741), and rated effective in ELA 3-5 (76th percentile in its PI group, with a mean scale score of 742).

The school was rated effective in Effective Programming for All Student Racial/Ethnic Groups, a new measure added to the renewal rubric in 2019-20 which used to be considered as part of the Fidelity to Charter/Overall Application measure. This measure considers whether a school has "provided high-quality programming for students in all racial groups and is aware of its performance data for all groups. The school has a myriad of instructional approaches, processes and practices in place that seek to ensure that all student groups achieve and to prevent gaps between student groups from appearing. If gaps are present for student groups of 10 or more, the gaps are minimal, and the school has implemented effective strategies that have kept the lower performing groups' performance high, being in the 80th percentile or higher in the district." Evidence shows that the school is aware of its data and the differences in achievement among its student groups. The school is beginning to implement approaches to address large differences between White and Black students evident in that data, including changes to curriculum, instructional approach and assessments, as well as teacher development practices, to provide on-grade-level content for all student groups. The school has "kept the lower performing group's performance between the 65th and 80th percentile in the district" for tested grade bands. However, large differences in student achievement are still evident between racial/ethnic groups and in order to continue to be considered effective in this new measure in the future, the school must focus on further development of strategies and practices to raise the achievement of Black students, including ensuring students are engaging in rigorous, on-grade-level content, that the school is engaging in self-reflection on barriers and biases that lead to gaps in performance, and that reducing gaps in performance is embedded in school culture and accountability plans.

In the Climate section of the rubric, the school was rated highly effective in cohort retention, which measures the percentage of students who stay at the school at least two years after their initial entry over-time. The school was also rated highly effective in student, parent and staff satisfaction. The school was rated highly effective in Student Attendance: Chronic Absence. This measure considers not only a school's chronic absence data, but also its practices and interventions implemented in response to those data. The school was rated highly effective in Suspensions which, like Chronic Absence, looks at a school's data, practices and interventions in the area of student behavior. The school was rated developing in programming for students with disabilities, indicating it "is working towards a trajectory of growth" for students with disabilities, "but in some instances has struggled to take measures that are appropriate and sufficient." This is an area where the school must work to improve practice.

In the Financial Management/Governance section of the rubric, the school was rated effective in Operator Capacity, indicating that "overall, during the charter or contract term, the school has operated effectively and the operator has met all state and federal reporting requirements, critical district or federal obligations, [and] has appropriately managed grants."

Findings (elementary/middle school rubric)

Category 1, Academics: Is the school an academic success?

Sub-Category	Renewal Metric	City Schools Rating
1.1 Absolute Student Achievement	Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 3-5)	**Highly Effective**
	Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 3-5)	**Effective**
	Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 6-8)	**Highly Effective**
	Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 6-8)	**Highly Effective**
1.2 Student Achievement Trend	Trend in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 3-5)	**Highly Effective**
	Trend in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 3-5)	**Developing**
	Trend in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 6-8)	**Highly Effective**
	Trend in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 6-8)	**Developing**
1.3 Student Achievement Growth	Growth in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 3-5)	**Effective**
	Growth in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 3-5)	**Developing**
	Growth in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC Math (grades 6-8)	**Highly Effective**
	Growth in Average Mean Scale Score PARCC ELA (grades 6-8)	**Highly Effective**
1.4 Fidelity to Charter/Application Overall	The extent to which the school has fully implemented the mission expressed in its charter application and this mission is clear to all stakeholders. The extent to which the school has delivered high quality programming for all student subgroups. The extent to which the school is gathering data to assess its efficacy and has effectively addressed any challenges evident in the data, particularly in the areas of subgroup performance, enrollment, student attendance, dropout rates, attrition and student choice data/school demand.	**Highly Effective**

1.5 Effective Programming for All Student Racial/Ethnic Groups	The extent to which the school has provided high quality programming for students in all racial/ethnic groups. The extent to which the school has instructional approaches, processes and practices in place that seek to ensure students in all groups achieve and to address gaps in achievement between student groups.	Effective
Academics Overall Rating		**Effective**

Category 2, Climate: Does the school have a strong climate?

Sub-Category	Renewal Metric	City Schools Rating
2.1 SER, Highly Effective Instruction	School Effectiveness Review Score - Highly Effective Instruction	**Highly Effective**
2.2 SER, Talented People	School Effectiveness Review Score - Talented People	**Effective**
2.3 SER, Vision and Engagement	School Effectiveness Review Score - Vision and Engagement	**Highly Effective**
2.4 Parent, Staff and Student Satisfaction	Staff: School Survey Staff Rating	**Highly Effective**
	Students: School Survey Student Rating	**Highly Effective**
	Parents: School Survey Parent Rating	**Highly Effective**
2.5 Cohort Retention	Cohort Retention Rating	**Highly Effective**
2.6 Student Attendance, Chronic Absence	The extent to which the school is aware of its chronic absence data, has strong processes in place to identify root causes and provide supports to families, and has implemented effective strategies that have kept chronic absence low over the course of the contract or have made significant reductions in chronic absence rates over time.	**Highly Effective**
2.7 Suspensions	The extent to which the school is aware of its suspension data, has positive behavior interventions in place, and has implemented effective strategies that have kept suspensions low over the course of the contract or have resulted in significant decreases over time.	**Highly Effective**

2.8 Effective Programming for Students with Disabilities	The extent to which the school has a demonstrated a strong trajectory of growth, is aware of its data and responsibilities to students with disabilities, does not have any gaps or has decreased gaps in the data as it relates to performance and climate metrics for students with disabilities over time, and has effectively and consistently implemented processes, interventions and strategies to support student outcomes over the course of the contract.	Developing
Climate Overall Rating		**Highly Effective**

Category 3, Finance and Governance: Has the school followed sufficient financial management and governance practices?

Sub-Category	Renewal Metric	City Schools Rating
3.1 Audit Content, Internal Controls	The extent to which the school's Independent Auditor's Reports offer unqualified opinions and no management points in each of the years of the charter term. The extent to which statements of cash flow and ratio of assets to liabilities indicate that the operator has strong performance on their short-term liquidity measure.	**Meets Expectations**
Financial Management Overall Rating		**Meets Expectations**
3.2 Operator Capacity	The extent to which the school has operated effectively, and the operator has consistently met all state, federal reporting requirements critical District or federal obligations and has not received any Notices of Concern or Notices of Reprimand during the contract period. (Evidence that may be considered include compliance with critical District, state or federal reporting requirements, timely audit and budget submissions, monitoring reports, quarterly reports; whether school has been able to meet financial obligations or needed loans/advances from the district to meet obligations, and the relative number, frequency and severity of Notices of Concern or Notices of Reprimand.)	**Effective**
3.3 SER, Strategic Leadership/Governance	School Effectiveness Review Score - Strategic Leadership	**Effective**
Governance Overall Rating		**Effective**