



New York State Education Department

2023-2024 Renewal Site Visit Report for Board of Regents-Authorized Charter Schools under the 2019 Charter School Performance Framework

Vertus Charter School

Renewal Site Visit Dates: November 14-15, 2023
Date of Final Draft Site Visit Report: April 18, 2024
Date of Final Site Visit Report: April 26, 2024

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Table of Contents

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION 3

METHODOLOGY 4

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS 5

 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....7

 BENCHMARK 1: STUDENT PERFORMANCE.....8

 BENCHMARK 2: TEACHING AND LEARNING.....9

 BENCHMARK 3: CULTURE, CLIMATE, AND STUDENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT14

 BENCHMARK 4: FINANCIAL CONDITION.....20

 BENCHMARK 5: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....21

 BENCHMARK 6: BOARD OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE22

 BENCHMARK 7: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY.....25

 BENCHMARK 8: MISSION AND KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS.....29

 BENCHMARK 9: ENROLLMENT, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION31

 BENCHMARK 10: LEGAL COMPLIANCE33

ATTACHMENT 1: 2024 NYSED CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION DASHBOARD

ATTACHMENT 2: 2023 CHARTER SCHOOL FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY SUMMARY DASHBOARD

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary¹

Name of Charter School	Vertus Charter School
Board Chair	Victoria Van Voorhis
District of Location	Rochester City School District
Initial Commencement of Instruction	Fall 2014
Charter Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Charter: September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019 • First Renewal: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021 • Second Renewal: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	Grades 9-12 / 340 students
Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment	Grades 9-12 / 340 students
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	None
Facilities	21 Humboldt Street, Rochester, New York 14609 - Private Space
Mission Statement	<i>Vertus Charter School prepares leaders of character for the community and the workplace.</i>
Key Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Relationships • Personalized Year-Round Academics • Character Education • Career Preparation
Requested Revisions (Revisions are not approved unless approved by the Board of Regents.)	None

Innovative and Noteworthy Programs: Vertus Charter School (Vertus) provides staff, known as preceptors, who serve as role models and mentors for students and liaisons with families to help students grow academically and build the character traits essential to student success in the community and the workplace.

Renewal Outcomes: Reference the [Board of Regents Renewal Policy](#).

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

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2021 to 2022	Year 2 2022 to 2023	Year 3 2023 to 2024
Grade Configuration	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12	Grades 9 - 12
Total Approved Enrollment	340	340	340

Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Proposed Enrollment Requested by the School²

	Year 1 2024 to 2025	Year 2 2025 to 2026	Year 3 2026 to 2027	Year 4 2027 to 2028	Year 5 2028 to 2029
Grade Configuration	Grades 9 – 12	Grades 9 – 12	Grades 9 – 12	Grades 9 – 12	Grades 9 – 12
Total Proposed Enrollment	340	340	340	340	340

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Renewal Report

The primary purpose of the renewal site visit to Board of Regents-authorized charter schools is to supplement and validate the information collected over the charter term by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Charter School Office (CSO). This information is used to inform the action taken by the Board of Regents to approve, modify, or disapprove the charter school’s request for renewal. In advance of action by the Board of Regents, the CSO prepares a renewal recommendation that is based on the school’s performance in three broad areas:

1. The school’s **academic success** and ability to operate in an educationally sound manner;
2. The school’s **organizational viability** and ability to operate in a fiscally sound manner; and
3. The school’s faithfulness to the terms of its charter and **adherence to applicable laws and regulations**.

In addition, NYSED, on behalf of the New York State Board of Regents, is a community-based authorizer committed to principles of equity and access for all students across New York State. Community-based authorizing is based on the principle that community stakeholder voice, and response to community need,

² This proposed chart was submitted by the Vertus Charter School in its renewal application. It is subject to change pending the final renewal recommendation and approval by the Board of Regents. This chart should not be used to determine the final approved grade levels or enrollment of the school in the subsequent renewal term.

is an integral component of charter school decision making at all levels. During the renewal visit, the CSO will look for evidence of community voice across the school from governance to the educational program, as well as a commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in the school’s policies and practices.

A two-day renewal site visit was conducted at Vertus Charter School on November 14-15, 2023. The New York State Education Department’s Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, executive school leadership team, student support team, academic support team, and students.

The team conducted sixteen classroom observations in Grades 9-12. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the chief education officer (CEO), chief operating officer (COO), and the instructional coach. NYSED utilizes the CSO’s Classroom Observation Worksheet as a lens for classroom observations. It is shared with the school prior to the site visit, and can be found in the 2023-2024 [Renewal SV Protocol](#).

To draft this report, the CSO site visit team reviewed school-specific documents and data such as the school’s 2023-2024 renewal application, 2022-2023 annual report, surveys, data and fiscal dashboards, CSO site visit reports and memos, complaints, and corrective action plans.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The 2019 Performance Framework, which is part of the Oversight Plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school, outlines 10 Performance Framework benchmarks in three key areas of charter school performance:

- Educational Success
- Organizational Soundness
- Faithfulness to Charter and Law

Observational findings from the review of the renewal application, supporting data, and the site visit will be presented in alignment with the 2019 Performance Framework benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below. A brief summary of the school’s strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; and the report narrative will provide evidence-based information relative to each indicator.

Level	Description
Meets	The school generally meets or exceeds the performance benchmark; few concerns are noted. May be a potential exemplar, if noted.
Approaches	The school does not meet the performance benchmark; a number of concerns are noted.
Falls Far Below	The school falls far below the performance benchmark; significant concerns are noted.

**New York State Education Department
2019 Charter School Performance Framework Rating³**

2019 Performance Benchmark		Level
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.	Meets
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students’ well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to New York State Learning Standards 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.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe, and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Meets
	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.	Meets
	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.	Meets
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	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.	Meets
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

³ Charter schools authorized or renewed beginning in the 2019-2020 school year and thereafter use the [2019 Charter School Performance Framework](#), and all other charter schools use the [2015 Charter School Performance Framework](#) until renewal. Refer to the appropriate framework for the applicable benchmark standards.

Summary of Findings

- Vertus Charter School is in year nine of operation and serves students in Grades 9-12. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: meeting nine benchmarks and approaching one benchmark. A summary of those ratings is provided below.
- **Summary of Areas of Growth and Strengths:** Vertus continues to fulfill the commitments in its mission by recruiting, training, and retaining staff to support not only students' academic needs but also to help them build the character traits needed for success in college, the workplace, and the community. The school's blended learning approach accommodates students who perform well in the online learning environment along with those who learn best in teacher-led classes. The board of trustees has defined strategic goals to build board membership and recruit and retain high quality staff who reflect the school's core mission and values. The school has maintained a sound financial condition and demonstrates appropriate fiscal management. Vertus continues to prioritize the implementation of its key design elements to best serve the needs of the students.
- **Summary of Challenges:** Despite a variety of outreach strategies, Vertus enrolls fewer English language learner(s) (ELL) and economically disadvantaged (ED) students than the Rochester City School District (RCSD). Based on the latest available data, Vertus retains students at a lower rate than RCSD. In addition, school leaders reported persistently high rates of chronic absenteeism that have been challenging to remedy regardless of continuing and varied efforts.

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic proficiency, trends toward proficiency, similar schools, college and career readiness, and high school graduation, if applicable. Proficiency at the elementary/middle school level shall be defined as achieving a performance level of 3 or higher on Grade 3-8 state assessments in ELA, math, and science. At the high school level, passing shall be defined as obtaining a Regents exam score of 65 or higher.

Finding: Meets

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has improved from an Approaches to a Meets due to student performance continuing to meet or exceed state and district assessment results.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional academic information.

Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school implements research-based practices and has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSL) 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 current New York State learning standards.b. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.c. The curriculum and corresponding materials are differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts, including students with disabilities, English language learners/multi-lingual learners, economically disadvantaged students, and other subgroups.d. The curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.
2. Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school staff has a shared understanding of high-quality instruction that supports all learners and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.c. The school differentiates instruction to ensure equity and access for all students.d. The school provides staff with professional development opportunities that promote best practices and improves all students' success, including sub-groups.
3. Assessment and Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school uses a 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 for both individual students as well as subgroups.d. The school uses multiple measures to assess student progress toward State learning standards.
4. Supports for Diverse Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The school follows the NYSED approved identification process for students with disabilities and English language learners/multi-lingual learners.b. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students including, but not limited to: students with disabilities; English language

Element

Indicators

learners/multi-lingual learners; and economically disadvantaged students.
c. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and to facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.

Academic Program for High School:

- HS:
 - *Edgenuity* courses in English, math, social studies, and science aligned with the NYSLS according to the program developer.
 - Teacher-created curriculum in teacher-led classes in English, math, social studies, and science, adapted from the *New Visions for New Schools* open-source curriculum materials.

Academic Program for Students with Disabilities (SWD) and English Language Learners:

- SWD:
 - *Edgenuity* (online) courses in English, math, science, and social studies with built-in language and annotation tools complemented by additional support in teacher-led classes from special educators.
- ELL:
 - *Edgenuity* (online) courses in English, math, science, and social studies with built-in language supports and audio translation tools, supplemented by in-person sessions with English as a New Language (ENL) teacher.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

1. Element: ***Curriculum:***

- **Indicator a:** According to renewal documents and focus group interviews, Vertus uses a blended learning model, with students engaged in online lessons using the *Edgenuity* courseware and in teacher-led classes designed by Vertus teachers adapted from the *New Visions for New Schools* open-source curricula. School leaders reported that both *Edgenuity* and *New Visions* are aligned with the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS). School leaders explained that teachers review data provided by the *Edgenuity* program and past Regent’s test results to identify individual student and classroom specific topics and skills that need reinforcement and reteaching in the teacher-led classes.
- **Indicator b:** According to the master school schedule, most high school courses are designed to address a unique set of learning standards that build on previous skills and concepts but are not directly aligned with courses that precede them. In the focus group, school leaders explained that teachers meet in subject area department groupings during common planning time and over the summer to map the curriculum to ensure students have adequate opportunities and access to content to meet state standards across the courses within their subject area.

- **Indicator c:** In both renewal documents and focus group interviews, the school reported that the *Edgenuity* courseware and teacher-created curriculum maps are differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master state standards. *Edgenuity* allows variable pacing, translation and audio tools, as well as review and reteach options, so students can advance at a pace suitable to their needs. School leaders explained that, while teachers prepare a curriculum map before the start of the school year, the map is adjusted throughout the year based on *Edgenuity* scores and in-class assessments. Classroom teachers, special educators, and the ENL teacher modify course materials throughout the school year to address gaps in foundational skills as identified in formative and diagnostic assessments.
- **Indicator d:** As noted in the previous paragraph, school leaders reported that the curriculum at Vertus is continually reviewed and revised based on data from classroom assessments, *Edgenuity*, and observations by teachers, preceptors, and academic interventions specialists (AIS). In the focus group, members of the instructional leadership team noted that they work with teachers over the summer to develop the curriculum maps for each course with an understanding of the strengths and needs of the incoming students. In the renewal application, the school reported that the online courseware is updated twice each year by the blended learning coordinator to ensure curricular expectations specific to the NYSLS are incorporated. In the focus group, instructional leaders explained that teachers can adjust the individual learning plan in the online program if they want to reinforce or reteach certain concepts or strengthen specific skills for individual students.

2. Element: **Instruction:**

- **Indicator a:** In the renewal application, Vertus refers to its “four pillars” as the foundation for the high-quality instructional practices in use across the school. In the focus group, school leaders emphasized the flexibility of both the online courseware and teacher-led classes so that students receive a personalized education, one of the pillars. Because of the school’s midterm testing schedule, the renewal site visit team’s ability to observe typical instruction in the two forms of the academic program to validate the use of other instructional practices such as co-teaching and culturally responsive instruction as described in the renewal application and in focus groups was limited.
- **Indicator b:** Student engagement varied across the 16 classes observed by the site visit team. In the seven elective classes, students were engaged in the tasks assigned by the teachers. In the seven core academic classes, students were attentive, followed established classroom routines, and completed the lesson assignments as instructed. Most lessons were teacher-directed whole-class format and the team observed few instances where students were interacting with others or initiating discussion or questions, which mostly occurred in higher-level courses, such as Participation in Government and English Language Arts (ELA) 3. In the focus group, some of the students commented that they like working in “lab” although the team was unable to observe the online classes (“lab”) because of the midterm testing schedule.
- **Indicator c:** As noted above, both the renewal documents and focus group comments detail the differentiation of course content by the online courseware and teachers’ customization of the curriculum maps for their subjects. According to school leaders, special educators work with teachers to modify materials and pacing to suit students’ needs. Special educators, academic intervention staff, and preceptors monitor students as they work through the online courseware and help them access the tools available in the *Edgenuity* system.
- **Indicator d:** In focus group interviews, school leaders confirmed that all staff participate in professional development over the summer and throughout the school year. The renewal

application cites eight days over the summer and four half-days and 14 full days for professional development during the year. Each week, a one hour “collaboration” meeting provides opportunities for academic support staff to meet with classroom teachers to review student progress and identify action steps needed to improve student success.

3. Element: ***Assessment and Program Evaluation:***

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application, Vertus administers diagnostic assessments and uses formative and summative measures to gauge student strengths and monitor academic progress. The application notes that first- and second-year students take the NWEA-MAP assessments to provide a measure of growth over time on core academic concepts and skills. In the focus group interviews, school leaders confirmed that teachers are expected to use exit tickets with each lesson as a formative measure of student understanding of the lesson’s learning objectives. School leaders reiterated that the online courseware regularly tracks student completion and assesses student understanding. Preceptors, teachers, and academic support staff access the array of data stored in a database to adjust the student’s learning pathway in the online courseware and to define support strategies for teacher-led classes.
- **Indicator b:** In the focus group interviews, school leaders confirmed that staff use both quantitative as well as qualitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes. Quantitative data from classroom and online assessments is complemented with qualitative data from observations by preceptors, academic support staff, and teachers. The student support staff maintain attendance and behavior data and intervene when needed to redirect and refocus students on expected behavioral and academic goals.
- **Indicator c:** In the renewal application and focus group interviews, school leaders described how they use both quantitative and observational data to assess whether the academic program is meeting student needs. Lesson and course completion data is documented by the online courseware and complemented with observations of student engagement by the preceptors and teachers. School leaders explained that data on student progress is examined at the individual level to personalize the student’s learning pathway, as well as in the aggregate to determine if either the online program or teacher-led class curriculum maps need to be revised.
- **Indicator d:** In the focus group interviews, school leaders reported using multiple measures including classroom assessments and *Edgenuity* data to monitor student progress toward the state standards. School leaders explained they changed their midterm testing process to simulate the Regents exams by using released items from past exams and allocating more time for test completion in order to prepare the students for the actual Regents format. School leaders also indicated that they allow students to take Regent’s exams multiple times, in part to help students build their stamina for the rigorous testing process.

4. Element: ***Supports for Diverse Learners:***

- **Indicator a:** While school leaders explained that most SWD and ELL are identified prior to enrollment at the high school, the Vertus specialized services coordinator follows a defined process when staff notice a student with previously unidentified needs. Vertus refers students for further evaluation to the RCSD Committee on Special Education (CSE) after undertaking the required interventions and collecting academic and behavioral data that details the students’ challenges. The school administers the NYSESLAT to track English acquisition among ELL.
- **Indicator b:** In both renewal documents and focus group interviews, Vertus describes a “personalized” academic program that includes programs, materials, and staffing to support the academic needs of all students. School leaders noted that the flexibility of the online courseware

and ongoing review and revision of the curriculum maps is aimed at individualizing the pace, format, and instructional practices to ensure student success. According to school leaders and the staff roster, Vertus employs five special educators and six academic support staff who support designated students with the online program and, starting this charter term, in core academic teacher-led classes.

- **Indicator c:** According to focus group interviews, communication between classroom teachers and academic support staff occurs regularly at the Wednesday “collaboration” meetings as well as informally throughout the year. In addition to face-to-face meetings, all staff have access to student performance, attendance, and behavior data in the online database. Professional development sessions include teachers, academic support staff, special educators, and preceptors to ensure widespread understanding of student needs and the tools available to support those needs.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student and Family Engagement

The school has systems in place to support students’ social and emotional health and to provide for a positive, safe and respectful learning environment that prepares all students for college and career. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school’s academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.

Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Measures of Culture, Climate, and Student Engagement</i>	<p>a. The school has processes and procedures in place to address chronic absenteeism for all students and sub-groups such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the educational program. Given the increased autonomy to engage students, chronic absenteeism rates are expected to be equal to or less than those of the district of location. In New York City, the district of location is the community school district. Charter schools that have a mission or key design element to serve students in a particular school district will also be compared to that school district. In addition, charter schools with more than 40% of enrolled students residing in districts other than the district of location, or the school district they are mandated to serve, will also be compared to the next highest district where students reside. ⁴</p> <p>b. The school has processes and procedures in place to address out of school suspension rates for all students and sub-groups such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the educational program. Given the increased autonomy to engage students, out of school suspension rates are expected to be equal to or less than those of the district of location. In New York City, the district of location is the community school district. Charter schools that have a mission or key design element to serve students in a particular school district will also be compared to that school district. In addition, charter schools with more than 40% of enrolled students residing in districts other than the district of location, or the school district they are mandated to serve, will also be compared to the next highest district where students reside. ⁵</p> <p>c. The school has an NYSED approved process in place to measure and evaluate school climate and culture.</p>
	<p>a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy that is applicable to all students, includes a policy that addresses</p>

⁴ See <https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/P-12%20New%20York%20State%20Safe%20Schools%20Task%20Force%20Recommendations%20Status%20Update%20.pdf>.

⁵ Student Suspension rate is determined by dividing the number of students who were suspended from school (not including in-school suspensions) for one full day or longer anytime during the school year by the Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) day enrollments for that school year. A student is counted only once, regardless of whether the student was suspended one or more times during the school year. Data Source: L2RPT Report SIRS-351: Student Attendance Summary Report - http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/level2reports/documents/SIRS_351-360-361-370AttndnceAbsenceandDayCalRprtGuiderev3.6.18.pdf.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
2. <i>Behavior Management and Safety</i>	<p>a school’s stance toward in and out of school suspensions, and is implemented throughout the school by all school staff with fidelity.</p> <p>b. The school uses a tiered approach to behavioral interventions that support student social-emotional development.</p> <p>c. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.</p> <p>d. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination in accordance with the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA). The school has a DASA Coordinator that staff can identify.</p> <p>e. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.</p>
3. <i>Family Engagement and Communication</i>	<p>a. The school communicates with families in their preferred language to discuss students’ strengths, progress, and needs and engages them as part of the school community.</p> <p>b. The school uses multiple methods of family engagement for all communication with all parents, in their preferred language, regardless of the disability status or language ability of their children.</p> <p>c. The school assesses family satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions.</p> <p>d. The school has a systematic and transparent process for responding to family or community concerns.</p> <p>e. The school shares NYSED school report card data with parents and the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability.</p> <p>f. The school shares its New York State exam participation rate compared to the district of location.</p>
4. <i>Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports</i>	<p>a. The school has systems, programs, and curriculum in place to support the social-emotional and mental health needs of all students.</p> <p>b. School leaders collect and use data to track the social-emotional needs of all students, including students in subgroups.</p> <p>c. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support the social and emotional health of all students.</p> <p>d. The school provides staff with professional development opportunities to support the social-emotional and mental health of students in a culturally responsive manner.</p> <p>e. The school has processes and procedures in place to address the learning and social-emotional needs of McKinney-Vento eligible students such that all students are fully engaged within the school community and have access to the</p>

educational program. The school has a McKinney-Vento Coordinator that staff can identify.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

1. Element: ***Measures of Culture, Climate, and Student Engagement:***

- **Indicator a:** According to renewal documents and focus group interviews, Vertus uses multiple methods and strategies to address chronic absenteeism among its students. In the focus groups, school leaders and staff acknowledged that chronic absenteeism rates are higher than desirable and are a key factor when students do not make academic progress. Members of the student support team, including the deans, attendance officer, and lead preceptor begin calling families of absent students early in the morning to determine the cause of the absence. School staff will pick up students in the school’s vehicle if warranted. The student support team monitors attendance daily and engages with families or students themselves to determine suitable incentives to encourage improved attendance. Monthly school-wide celebrations include rewards for the groups demonstrating the highest attendance rates for the period. Tickets for quarterly raffles for desirable prizes are earned for meeting attendance targets. An 85 percent attendance rate is required to participate on Vertus sports teams, a strong incentive for many students.
- **Indicator b:** In the renewal application and focus group interviews, Vertus described several methods to limit out of school suspensions so that students can maintain a relationship with the school community. School leaders examine data on the type, timing, and conditions around discipline infractions and develop strategies to intervene before situations escalate. School leaders highlighted the role of preceptors as the staff who are most aware of students’ social-emotional status. Preceptors meet students at the beginning of the day, work with them throughout the day on their academic coursework, present the character seminars mid-day, and serve as liaisons to families to help students learn ways to manage their social-emotional well-being. Deans are positioned around the building to monitor hallways and common areas and intervene as needed. Deans also staff a reflection room where students can discuss their misbehavior with the counselor and continue their classwork until they are ready to return to the regular classroom. In addition, this reflection room is available for students who need a short period of time to adjust their mindset.
- **Indicator c:** In focus group interviews, the site visit team confirmed that the school collects data across multiple variables and from multiple sources to assess the climate and culture at Vertus. In addition to attendance and behavior data, the student support team surveys families, staff, and students to gauge whether the character education program and discipline policies and practices are contributing to positive outcomes.

2. Element: ***Behavior Management and Safety:***

- **Indicator a:** Vertus posts a comprehensive student discipline code on its website and the renewal application describes multiple methods for addressing behavior infractions. In the focus groups, school leaders and student support staff referred to the key design element, strong relationships, as the foundation of its approach to discipline. The school promotes positive relationships between students and staff and incorporates responsive practices in dealing with misbehavior.

According to the student support team, disciplinary consequences can range from apologies to loss of privileges to time in the reflection room before enacting more serious consequences such as suspension.

- **Indicator b:** As described in the renewal application and focus groups, Vertus staff rely on positive relationships and restorative practices to every extent possible to ensure student behavior aligns with the school's character expectations. Preceptors maintain close contact with their assigned students from the start of the day and monitor not only behavior but their social-emotional well-being. In the focus group, the student support team cited the Vertus key design element, character education, as a foundational practice to prepare students for success in the community and the workplace. Students in the focus group cited instances in which their preceptor helped them to learn strategies to get through stressful situations.
- **Indicator c:** Vertus maintains a safe environment through staffing and structured procedures that are consistently applied. The renewal site visit team observed students entering the school, handing over their electronic devices to be stored until dismissal, and undergoing inspection by the deans and the school resource officer. Entry to the building is monitored and visitors are required to sign in and display approved credentials when in the building. Classroom doors are locked, and the four deans monitor hallways and check students who are outside their rooms. On the spring 2023 school administered student survey, over 90 percent of students disagreed with the statement, "I sometimes stay home because I do not feel safe inside our school." On the 2023 Vertus family survey, a similar percentage of parents (93 percent) agreed that their student is safe at the school.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application and focus group interviews, Vertus ensures that the school environment is free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination through the close relationships between students and staff and among students. The school's CEO is the designated DASA coordinator. The high staff to student ratio at Vertus creates a culture in which all students have an adult they can speak with to address concerns. On the spring 2023 Vertus student survey, 80 percent of students said they had one or more adults at the school they could talk with if they were upset. In the focus group, students agreed that instances of bullying are infrequent and are promptly dealt with by the staff.
- **Indicator e:** Across the 16 classrooms observed by the site visit team, all were conducive to learning and free from disruption. In the seven elective classes observed by the team, class sizes ranged from five to eight students, and all were attentive and engaged in their assigned tasks.

3. Element: ***Family Engagement and Communication:***

- **Indicator a:** Vertus communicates with families through a variety of vehicles and provides Spanish translation for documents on its website. In the focus group, school leaders explained that a primary role of the preceptor is to serve as liaison with families. To ensure they can best serve in that role, school leaders assign students from Spanish speaking families to a preceptor who speaks Spanish. On the spring 2023 Vertus family survey, 72 percent of parents said they get information about Vertus from their son's preceptor, 59 percent from their student, and 30 percent from the website. Parents also listed Facebook (15 percent) and the newsletter (11 percent) as sources for information about the school. According to the renewal application, preceptors are required to communicate with each student's family at least once every two weeks, and, on the survey, families confirmed that they receive regular communication from their child's preceptor. School leaders noted that they have recently enrolled students from families who speak languages other than English and Spanish; and they hire translators to communicate with those families.

- **Indicator b:** According to the renewal application and focus group interviews with student support staff and school leaders, Vertus engages with families through regular preceptor contact as well as family nights throughout the year. Vertus distributes progress reports five times each year and preceptors hand deliver the reports to families unable to attend the school to receive the information. Special education staff and the specialized services coordinator meet with parents of SWD regularly to review student progress toward graduation. The school sponsors community events and workshops open to the wider Rochester community in addition to family nights. School leaders reported that attendance at family nights has been high and community events have served as a successful recruiting tool for new applicants.
- **Indicator c:** According to the renewal application and focus group interviews, Vertus assesses family satisfaction through annual surveys and frequent communication between preceptors and parents. The school shared the results of the 2023 family survey administered at the spring family night showing strong approval of the school’s academic and character education programs. In the focus group, school leaders reported that preceptors forward family comments to the student support team for prompt responses as needed. Feedback received on the annual surveys is reviewed by school leaders to decide if practices or procedures need to be revised.
- **Indicator d:** In the focus group, school leaders described a progression of steps to respond to family concerns. As the primary point of contact with families, preceptors resolve minor concerns and report to the student support team leaders when issues need more attention. The student family handbook on the website details the school’s complaint policy and sequence of steps to be followed when a complaint is received. School leaders reported that no formal complaints have been submitted during this charter term.
- **Indicator e:** According to the renewal application, the school shares its NYSED report card data, NWEA, and Regents results in the quarterly family newsletter. However, the most recent issue of the school newsletter was not available on the website at the time of the visit. On the Vertus website, the “Fast Facts” tab enrollment data does not appear to be for the current school year and the NWEA test results and Regents passing results are from 2018-2019. The most recent annual report posted on the website is for 2021-2022.
- **Indicator f:** Although school leaders reported that they share their NYS exam participation rate, the renewal site visit team could not locate the participation rate compared with RCSD on the Vertus website.

4. Element: ***Social-Emotional and Mental Health Supports:***

- **Indicator a:** In the focus group interviews, school leaders described the systems and programs the school provides to support students’ social-emotional and mental health needs. The school is staffed by preceptors selected and trained as role models for the young men who enroll at Vertus. Preceptors provide encouragement and support for students as they complete their online coursework in the labs, maintain contact with the families of their assigned students, and deliver the character education curriculum developed by the school. Preceptors, along with the deans and other staff, lead the students in reciting the Vertus Creed at the start of each day to focus attention on the character traits of courage, responsibility, and leadership. By maintaining close connections with their students, preceptors can note any changes in students’ social-emotional wellbeing and alert members of the behavior intervention staff if indicated. Members of the student support team added that they refer students and families to services from community agencies when situations dictate.
- **Indicator b:** In the focus group interviews, school leaders and student support staff shared examples of the behavioral data collected to track the social-emotional needs of students.

Observations by preceptors, teachers, and support staff complement data on discipline referrals to identify students in need of targeted support and intervention. According to school leaders, school administered surveys of students and families include questions about social-emotional and mental health needs. School leaders review survey responses to spot overall trends and patterns that might require further action.

- **Indicator c:** In the student support focus group, team members described their use of attendance, behavior, and survey data to assess the usefulness of their character education curriculum and behavior intervention strategies. School leaders reported they meet weekly and look for patterns in referrals and attendance that could indicate a need to revise or revisit their character curriculum or intervention approaches. Student support staff explained that the curriculum is regularly revised and updated with new seminar topics often at the suggestion of preceptors who become aware of student concerns.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application and focus group interviews, Vertus provides professional development in the summer and during the school year to support the social-emotional and mental health of students. According to the professional development calendar shared by school leaders, sessions are offered in culturally responsive teaching practices for instructional staff as well as preceptors and academic intervention specialists. Staff have participated in trauma-informed teaching workshops as well. School leaders indicated that the agenda and topics for the weekly collaboration meetings are flexible and are aligned with conditions and issues noted within the school. This flexibility offers an opportunity to address student social-emotional well-being.
- **Indicator e:** In the student support focus group, members reported that Vertus makes every effort to provide homeless students with the assistance needed to remain engaged with the school. The principal is the McKinney-Vento coordinator and reported that approximately 30 percent of Vertus students are considered homeless. The student support team explained that the causes of homelessness for their students vary, some due to family dysfunction, divorce, or financial difficulties. In some instances, students are estranged from their families, but the school provides transportation and maintains the student's enrollment while referring to social service agencies to help restore stability in the student's life.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

See the school’s fiscal dashboard attached to the end of this report (Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary). The fiscal dashboard provides detailed information regarding the school’s compliance with Benchmark 4 of the Charter School Performance Framework. Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school’s annual independently audited financial statements which can be found on the NYSED website at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/csdirectory/CSLaunchPage.html>.

- Financial Composite Score
- Working Capital
- Debt to Asset
- Cash Position
- Total Margin

Financial Condition

Vertus Charter School appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school’s independently audited financial statements.

Overall Financial Outlook

A financial composite score is an overall measure of financial health based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.50 and 3.00 is generally considered to be in good financial health. Vertus Charter School’s 2022-2023 composite score is 3.00.

**Composite Scores
2018-2019 to 2022-2023**

Year	Composite Score
2018-2019	(0.92)
2019-2020	1.14
2020-2021	1.33
2021-2022	2.93
2022-2023	3.00

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.

Finding: Meets

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

Renewal is based on evidence that the following indicators are generally present:

1. The school has financial professionals assigned to manage school finances.
2. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
3. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget, including detailed assumptions within the budget, in relation to those objectives.
4. The school has allocated budget surpluses in a manner that is fiscally sound and directly attends to the social and academic needs of the students attending the school.
5. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
6. The school has complied with State and federal financial reporting requirements.
7. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
8. The school has procedures in place to ensure that programmatic and independent fiscal audits occur at least once annually, with such audits being comparable in scope to those required of other public schools. Audits will be undertaken by auditing firms with experience working with New York State charter schools and are peer reviewed.
9. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:

NYSED CSO reviewed Vertus Charter School's 2022-2023 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

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.

Finding: Meets

Element

Indicators

1. *Board Oversight and Governance*

- a. The board utilizes an annual written performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself, and providers.
- b. The board recruits and selects board members with a diverse set of skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school and represent the community in which the school serves.
- c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school’s management, comprehensive service provider(s), if applicable, fiscal operations, and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals through written evaluation processes.
- d. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school’s mission and charter.
- e. The board regularly updates school policies when needed and receives NYSED approval prior to applicable policy implementation.
- f. The board engages in ongoing professional development.
- g. The board demonstrates full awareness of its governance role, its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders, and requirements of the school’s charter.
- h. The board is familiar with NYSED Charter School Performance Framework standards and has a plan to ensure that the school meets these standards.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

1. Element: **Board Oversight and Governance:**

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application and the board focus group, Vertus uses the Board on Track self-evaluation as a measure of board performance. In the focus group, members reported that the self-evaluation is completed by each member at the time of the annual retreat. Board members noted that this is the second year they have used the Board on Track tool.

Members of the governance committee review the responses and recommend actions to address any gaps or areas of concern. The board also stated that they use the Board on Track tool to evaluate the performance of the CEO. The board confers with school leaders to develop school performance goals as well as board strategic goals.

- **Indicator b:** In the focus group, board members confirmed that they are actively recruiting new board members with diverse skills and expertise to complement the existing board roster. According to the renewal application, the board hopes to build out to 11 or 12 members by the end of 2024. Board members reported they have two candidates awaiting approval. The board uses the skills matrix developed by Board on Track to identify which skills are needed among prospective candidates.
- **Indicator c:** The Vertus board demonstrates active oversight of the school's operations by examining comprehensive data reports from school leaders at monthly board and committee meetings. In the focus group, board members confirmed that each of the four committees is responsible for reviewing and reporting on information provided by school leaders according to a defined schedule across the year. On the website, board agendas include links to the school activity summaries ("month at a glance"), enrollment, attendance, credit and course completion and discipline data, as well as financial reports. As needed, board officers and members confer with school leaders to ask questions to better understand the implications of the data. Board members stated they are careful to maintain a clear distinction between their governance role and the management roles of school leaders.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application, the board finalized its current strategic plan at the September 2023 annual meeting. Board members shared a copy of the plan with the renewal site visit team. The plan lists four key goals: build up the board of trustees, improve fundraising and development, ensure renewal and growth planning, and align strategic documents. In addition to these board goals, board members referred to goals developed by school leaders for the academic program which include improving the graduation rate and raising aspirations toward excellence in educational outcomes. Board members noted that their primary goal is a full five-year renewal to demonstrate the stability of Vertus to the community and potential donors. By aligning goals across multiple strategic documents, board members hope to better focus efforts at all levels of the organization toward the commitments stated in the school's mission and key design elements.
- **Indicator e:** The board agendas and minutes posted on the website describe periodic review and updates to school policies. In the focus group, board members said they rely on the board attorney and school leaders to monitor changes in regulations that impact the school's policies.
- **Indicator f:** According to the renewal report, the Vertus board engages in professional development across a range of topics. In the focus group, board members noted that they use the resources available on the Board on Track tools on an ad-hoc basis. Governance training each month is provided by the board attorney. School staff and leaders present information about the academic and support programs as part of the monthly board agenda.
- **Indicator g:** In the focus group and renewal documents, board members demonstrated their awareness of the distinction between their governance roles and the management roles of school leaders. The board attorney provides guidance on the board's legal obligations to stakeholders. In addition to the contracted attorney, a new member with legal expertise has joined the board and offers additional insight on legal and regulatory matters.
- **Indicator h:** The Vertus board demonstrates its familiarity with the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework in its alignment of the work of its committees with the specific benchmarks in the Performance Framework. In the focus group and board documents, members

indicated that the finance committee reports to the full board are linked with Benchmarks 4 and 5 and the committee is expected to address the standard stated in the benchmark. Similarly, members set the expectation that the academic and governance committees examine the data received in the monthly reports to ensure the school is meeting not only the benchmark standard but the board’s strategic and school-based goals.

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

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>School Leadership</i>	a. The school has an effective school leadership team that communicates a clearly defined mission and set of goals to staff and the school community. b. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place to ensure effective communication across the school. c. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel that meets the needs of all students and subgroups, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members. d. School leadership is familiar with NYSED Charter School Performance Framework standards and has a plan to ensure that the school meets these standards.
2. <i>Professional Climate</i>	a. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and the board of trustees are clearly defined and adhered to. b. The school ensures that staff has the requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet all students’ needs, including students in subgroups. c. The school is fully staffed with personnel who are able to meet all operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communications. d. The school has established procedures for effective collaboration among teachers. e. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality through a formal evaluation process for teacher and other staff. f. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher and staff feedback and to gauge their satisfaction.
	a. Changes in the school’s charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.

Element

Indicators

3. *Contractual Relationships (if applicable)*

b. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners and has established an effective working relationship.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

1. Element: ***School Leadership:***

- **Indicator a:** According to the renewal application and observations by the site visit team, Vertus leaders and staff communicate the school’s mission and character education goals in numerous ways. Students, staff, and school leaders begin their day at a school-wide meeting where announcements, celebrations, and games or performances help focus students on the work of the day, concluding with the recitation of the Vertus Creed expressing commitment to the school’s character education goals. The executive leadership team meets daily, both formally and informally, to share information and observations of school climate. In the focus group, members explained that a broader school leadership team including executive leaders, student support leaders, and academic support coordinators meets weekly to discuss academic, attendance, and behavior data and plan the weekly faculty meetings.
- **Indicator b:** In the renewal application, Vertus lists a variety of communication systems that ensure all are informed about school operations, both academic and behavioral. Academic data is stored in the online databases and in the *Edgenuity* courseware that all staff can access. Student support staff document attendance and discipline information and preceptors log their communication with families. Special educators record student progress toward academic goals weekly in addition to sharing at weekly faculty meetings with the general education and intervention staff. In the focus group, the school leaders explained that academic departments meet weekly during common planning time and review student achievement data to consider revisions to the curriculum maps for their subject areas.
- **Indicator c:** In the focus group, board members reported that the school is fully staffed with key personnel for the current year. In their focus group, school leaders confirmed that staff turnover has been much lower this year than in previous years. They explained that, in response to feedback from staff surveys, they modified the summer schedule to allocate a longer break and adjusted the daily school schedule to allow departments to have common planning time during the day. Board members noted that they aim to provide competitive salaries and a retirement plan as an alternative to the NYS teacher retirement system to help retain experienced staff.
- **Indicator d:** According to the renewal application, school leaders demonstrate familiarity with the NYSED Charter School Performance Framework by aligning the school’s corrective action plan with the framework’s standards. In addition, the school completed an action plan in 2023 in response to the 2022-2023 Midterm Site Visit Report that describes the school’s intended strategies to maintain or achieve a “Meets” rating on each of the Performance Framework benchmarks.

2. Element: **Professional Climate:**

- **Indicator a:** In the renewal application, Vertus presents an extensive list of the staff roles and responsibilities including leadership positions. While on site, renewal site visit team members learned of a change in one leadership title, renaming the director of student success as the principal. The community relations coordinator mentioned in the renewal application does not match any position on the organizational chart provided with the renewal application. The organizational chart also notes the possible addition of a director of academics to the leadership team but, in the focus group, board members indicated they are not actively recruiting for that role.
- **Indicator b:** According to the renewal application, Vertus approaches professional development as an ongoing process for all staff, offering training sessions in the summer as well as during the school year. In the focus group, school leaders confirmed that staff participate in 15 days of professional learning over the summer, reviewing and revising curriculum maps based on student performance data and developing lesson plans for the upcoming semester. During the school year, school leaders explained they use the weekly collaboration meetings to address instructional practices, behavior interventions, and school climate topics based on evidence from classroom observations and school culture measures. The school provided a professional development calendar listing topics to be covered in the half-day and full day professional development sessions during the year. The school employs five special educators and six academic interventions specialists who participate in each of the training sessions including those in the summer. The Vertus special educators hold the required certification while the academic intervention specialists are not necessarily certified teachers.
- **Indicator c:** According to the renewal application and focus group interviews, Vertus is fully staffed with personnel to meet all operational needs. On the organizational chart, the COO oversees athletics, facilities, and personnel. Board members reported they have paused their efforts to recruit a director of academics. Vertus contracts with an accounting firm to manage school finances. In the focus group, school leaders said they communicate with families through the website and a quarterly newsletter. At the time of the renewal site visit, several posts on the website were out of date, including the family newsletter and links to the current annual report. In the focus group, school leaders indicated that the CEO and COO are jointly responsible for maintaining the accuracy and timeliness of the website.
- **Indicator d:** In the renewal application and focus group interviews, school leaders reported they use the weekly faculty meetings to provide time for staff collaboration. In addition, subject area departments have common planning time in the school day to work together. School leaders also noted that they allocate time for teacher collaboration during the half-day professional development sessions. Special educators serve as co-teachers in teacher-led classes and also work with their students in the lab, alongside the academic intervention specialists, providing regular and frequent opportunities for collaboration among staff.
- **Indicator e:** According to renewal documents and focus group interviews, Vertus uses formal evaluation and regular classroom observations to maintain instructional quality. School leaders reported that preceptors and other non-teaching staff are evaluated twice yearly against the responsibilities assigned to their role, adherence to organizational values, and benchmark goals. In the renewal application, the school reported that it uses Bambrick's *Leveraging Leadership* as the foundation for evaluating teaching. The instructional coach visits classes regularly and leads instructional practice sessions during professional development days. School leaders confirmed that they have designated two mentor teachers, Vertus veterans, who provide guidance and non-evaluative advice to teachers new to Vertus to complement the more formal evaluation process. In addition, school leaders pointed out that, since special educators, academic intervention

specialists, and classroom teachers work together frequently in the lab or in classrooms, they have opportunities to observe each other and share best practices as colleagues.

- **Indicator f:** In the renewal application, Vertus states that it gauges staff satisfaction with twice yearly surveys. In addition, in the focus group, both school leaders and teachers noted that staff feedback is solicited in the daily staff email “suggestion box.” School leaders reported that the responses on staff surveys and exit interviews led them to adjust the summer schedule to allow more consecutive days off and schedule common planning time within the school day for members of the content area departments. One of the school’s goals is to have less than six percent attrition and school leaders reported they met that target for the 2023-2024 school year.

3. Element: ***Contractual Relationships:***

- **Indicator a:** n/a
Indicator b: n/a

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

<i>Element</i>	<i>Indicators</i>
1. <i>Mission and Key Design Elements</i>	<p>a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school’s mission and key design elements outlined in the charter, including in public-facing materials.</p> <p>b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.</p>

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as a Meets.

1. Element: **Mission and Key Design Elements:**

- **Indicator a:** The Vertus mission – *to develop leaders of character for the community and the workplace* – is communicated to staff, families, and students in the school’s daily practices and is implemented through its programs and staffing. The character education curriculum presented by the preceptors, regular recitation of the Vertus Creed, and references on the website to the program elements that distinguish Vertus from other schools reiterates the school’s commitment to the goals stated in its mission. The school’s addition of elective classes linked to both student interests and workplace opportunities prepares students for potential employment.
- **Indicator b:** In the renewal documents and focus group interviews, Vertus staff and students describe a variety of ways in which the school implements its key design elements. School leaders stated that the school’s “four pillars,” namely the key design elements of strong relationships, personalized academics, character development, and career preparation, provide the foundation for the design of the educational program and the systems aimed at promoting a positive and supportive culture. The school implements the strong relationships pillar through the recruitment, hiring, and training of preceptors and deans who serve as role models and mentors for the students. Personalized academics are the product of the school’s use of a blended academic program incorporating online coursework with teacher-led classes that are adjusted regularly to accommodate students’ needs. Since its beginning, Vertus has continued its academic program through the summer to allow its students, many of whom are over-age and under-credited, to remain on track to graduate. In the focus group, student support staff reported that 100 percent of Vertus students participate in the summer sessions, with an average of 60-65% attendance over the summer months. Several students in the focus group interviewed by the site visit team reported that the online courseware and summer sessions have enabled them to accelerate their progress toward graduation. As noted in other sections of this report, Vertus preceptors teach daily seminars using the character education curriculum adopted and updated

by student support leaders. In the spring 2023 school-administered family survey, 87 percent of respondents agreed that their child had grown in character since arriving at Vertus. The school has added elective options to its academic program that provide students with an introduction to possible career pathways. Students have opportunities to learn about careers in barbering, music production, emerging technologies (programming), and robotics. In the focus group, student support staff mentioned that guest speakers and field trips give students exposure to additional possible career options. The school employs a college counselor and career program manager who serve as part of the student support team and identifies and facilitates workplace opportunities for students.

Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. High schools are meeting persistence rates commensurate with the NYSED target.

Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Targets are met</i>	a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter.
2. <i>Targets are not met</i>	<p>a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets.</p> <p>b. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include, but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding 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.</p> <p>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.</p>

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has remained as an Approaches due to continued under-enrollment of ELL students.

1. Element: **Targets are met:**

- **Indicator a:** Vertus’ overall enrollment is sufficient to satisfy their contractual obligation and is currently, 2022-2023, at 92 percent of their contracted enrollment, an increase from the 2021-2022 enrollment of 78%. The school also enrolls SWD at a rate exceeding the DOL, currently +3 percentage points, and ED student enrollment approaches the DOL at -4 points. The overall, ELL, and ED student retention rates either approach or exceed the DOL and the differentials are currently -5, +12, and -5 percentage points, respectively.

2. Element: **Targets are not met:**

- **Indicator a:** Vertus enrolls fewer ELL students than the DOL and is currently -9 percentage points below. The most recent data shows SWD students retained at a lower rate than the DOL, -21 percentage points below. ED enrollment has shown an increase from a low of -19 in the 2021-2022 school year to -4 in the 2022-2023 school year.

- **Indicator b:** In the renewal application and the 2022-2023 Action Plan, Vertus lists a number of strategies they employ to attract and retain ED, SWD, and ELL students including print and radio advertising, participating in community activities, and hosting community events to attract visitors to tour the school and meet the staff. According to school leaders, Vertus now offers an ENL class for Spanish speaking students and plans to recruit additional ENL teachers to accommodate a larger population of students in the region for whom English is not their first language. In the focus group, one student described how the ENL teacher enlisted her students to partner with other Vertus students to teach Spanish while they build their English proficiency. Over this charter term, school leaders explained that special educators now work with students both in the lab setting as well as in the teacher-led classes, increasing the targeted support for SWD.
- **Indicator c:** In the focus group, school leaders and student support staff reported that they review measures of interest such as number of school tours and inquiries after each recruitment activity to gauge the effectiveness of the effort. Measures of interest on social media and the website are included in the assessment of outreach activities.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional information.

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

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

Finding: Meets

Element

Indicators

1. *Legal Compliance*

- a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations 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; addressing complaints; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health, safety, civil rights, and student assessment requirements.
- b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when required, and/or as requested by the Board of Regents and/or the NYSED Charter School Office and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.
- c. The school has a plan to ensure that teachers are certified in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
- d. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or the NYSED Charter School Office approval for material and non-material revisions.
- e. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet the expectations detailed in the enrollment plan outlined in the charter and within the parameters set forth in the charter agreement.
- f. The school seeks guidance from its legal counsel when updating documents and handling issues that arise.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

Over this charter term, the trajectory for this benchmark has improved from an Approaches to a Meets due to consistent tracking of and adherence to CSO compliance requirements.

1. Element: **Legal Compliance:**

- **Indicator a:** Vertus has compiled a record of substantial compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and the provisions of its charter. According to the renewal application, the CEO and COO follow a calendar listing reporting due dates. The school contracts with specialized providers for legal, human resources, insurance, and accounting services. School leaders reported they participate in NYSED CSO webinars and regular conference calls with their CSO liaison. Board members said they review the charter at their annual retreat and reference Performance Framework benchmarks as part of their committee reporting calendar. On the school’s website,

the board lists the dates and locations of its monthly meetings as required by the Open Meetings Law (OML). However, the site visit team was unable to find notification of the times and locations of committee meetings or instructions for remote participation as required by OML and mentioned in the revised board by-laws.

- **Indicator b:** According to CSO records, over this charter term, the school has taken appropriate corrective action to resolve issues related to fingerprint clearances and enrollment deficiencies.
- **Indicator c:** On the most recent staff roster provided by the school, teachers are certified or meet the exclusion conditions defined in the charter school law. As noted previously, the academic intervention specialists are not certified teachers and serve primarily as tutors in supporting students as they work on their online coursework. In the focus group, school leaders explained that teachers of the elective courses are Vertus staff members and hold appropriate licenses for their field and have received background clearances as required for all staff.
- **Indicator d:** According to CSO records, the school has requested no material revisions to its charter during this charter term. With the renewal application, the board submitted a non-material request to revise board by-laws to reduce superfluous language and align with current practices. A request to approve two new board members has been submitted and is pending CSO approval.
- **Indicator e:** As noted under Benchmark 9, Vertus' overall enrollment is 92 percent of its chartered maximum.
- **Indicator f:** In the focus groups, board members and school leaders reported they seek guidance from a contracted attorney when updating documents and handling issues that arise. In addition, one new member of the board is an attorney and is closely familiar with the school's practices, policies, and procedures.

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Overview

Charter School Selection

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

BEDS Code

261600861069

2022-2023 Enrollment

313

ESEA Accountability Designation (2023-2024):

This school is designated as a school in need of **Local Support and Improvement** under current New York State criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Charter School Information

School District of Location:	ROCHESTER CSD
Total Public School Enrollment of Resident Students attending Charter Schools:	25%
Additional School District: (if applicable)*	-
Total Public School Enrollment of Resident Students attending Charter Schools:	-
Grades Served:	9-12
Address:	21 HUMBOLDT ST, ROCHESTER, NY, 14609
Website:	www.vertusschool.org
RIC:	MONROE/M.A.A.R.S.
Regents Region:	CENTRAL
Regent:	Adrian I. Hale
Active Date:	7/1/2014
Authorizer:	REGENTS
CEO:	MS. JULIE LOCEY
CEO Phone:	585-747-8911
CEO Email:	jlocey@vertusschool.org
BOT President:	MS. VICTORIA VANVOORHIS
BOT President Phone:	585-747-8911
BOT President Email:	tory@secondavenuelearning.com
Institution ID:	800000082490

*An additional district may be used for comparison if a school is chartered to serve a school district other than the one in which they are located or if 40% of their students are residents of a district other than the district in which they are located.

BoR Charter School Office Information

Regional Liaison:	Susan Gibbons
Performance Framework:	2019
Current Term:	07/01/21 - 06/30/24
2019-2020	Midterm
2020-2021	Renewal
2021-2022	Midterm
2022-2023	Check-in
2023-2024	Renewal

Benchmark Rating

Year of Rating

BM1	
BM2	
BM3	
BM4	
BM5	
BM6	
BM7	
BM8	
BM9	
BM10	

CSO Survey Results

Confidence Interval	Response Rate	Survey Population	Total Responses
Parent Survey	N/A	N/A	N/A
Student Survey (Grades 9-12)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Teacher Survey	N/A	N/A	N/A

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 1: Similar Schools Comparison

Charter School

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

2023 3-8 Assessments; 2022 4 Year Graduations

Vertus CS		ELA Differential	Math Differential	Science Differential	Graduation Rate Differential		
High School	+/- 5	Academy for Software Engineering	.	.	.	-20	
		August Martin HS	.	.	.	-22	
		Brooklyn Community HS for Excellence and Equity	.	.	.	-7	
		Cambria Heights Academy	.	.	.	-14	
		HS for Innovation In Advertising and Media	.	.	.	-5	
		HS of Computers and Technology	.	.	.	-10	
		Harvest Collegiate HS	.	.	.	-18	
		Hs for Law Enforcement and Public Safety	.	.	.	-15	
		Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis HS	.	.	.	-10	
		John Jay School for Law	.	.	.	-12	
		Kingston HS	.	.	.	-10	
		Lewis J Bennett HS of Innovative Technolgy	.	.	.	-16	
		Northside CHS	.	.	.	-21	
		Pace HS	.	.	.	-2	
		Pelham Preparatory Academy	.	.	.	-20	
	Renaissance HS for Musical Theater and the Arts	.	.	.	-12		
	Urban Assembly School for Emergency Management (U)	.	.	.	-20		
	Vanguard HS	.	.	.	+5		
		Mean	.	.	.	-13	
		+/- 7.5	Abraham Lincoln HS	.	.	.	-13
			Academy for Conservation and the Environment	.	.	.	-25
			Brooklyn Academy of Science and the Environment	.	.	.	-10
			Brooklyn Community Arts and Media HS (Bcam)	.	.	.	-14
			Brooklyn School for Music & Theater	.	.	.	-8
			Buffalo School of Culinary Arts and Hospitality Manage	.	.	.	-14
			Celia Cruz Bronx HS of Music (The)	.	.	.	-27
			Central Park East HS	.	.	.	-26
	Chelsea Career and Technical Education HS		.	.	.	-16	
	City Polytechnic HS of Engineering, Architecture and T		.	.	.	-23	
	Clara Barton HS		.	.	.	-3	
	Collegiate Institute for Math and Science		.	.	.	-14	
	Curtis HS	.	.	.	-2		
	Digital Arts and Cinema Technology HS	.	.	.	-24		
	Earl Monroe New Renaissance Basketball Academy CS	.	.	.	+73		
	East New York Arts and Civics HS (The)	.	.	.	-9		
	Epic HS-South	.	.	.	-19		
	Facing History School (The)	.	.	.	-9		
	Food and Finance HS	.	.	.	-8		
	Fordham HS for the Arts	.	.	.	-23		
	Gramercy Arts HS	.	.	.	-22		
	HS for Climate Justice (The)	.	.	.	-11		
	HS for Environmental Studies	.	.	.	-20		
	HS for Language and Diplomacy (The)	.	.	.	-9		
	HS for Service and Learning At Erasmus	.	.	.	-10		
	HS of Fashion Industries (The)	.	.	.	-22		
	Harry S Truman HS	.	.	.	-7		
	Herbert H Lehman HS	.	.	.	-7		
	Hillside Arts & Letters Academy	.	.	.	-23		
	Humanities Preparatory Academy	.	.	.	-21		
	Lower Manhattan Arts Academy	.	.	.	-7		
	Middle College HS At Laguardia Community College	.	.	.	-16		
	Millenium Art Academy	.	.	.	-6		
	Mount Vernon HS	.	.	.	+8		
	New Visions CHS for the Humanities IV	.	.	.	-21		
	Orchard Collegiate Academy	.	.	.	-21		
	Park East HS	.	.	.	-27		
	Pelham Lab HS	.	.	.	-3		
	Port Richmond HS	.	.	.	-10		
	Poughkeepsie HS	.	.	.	+12		

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 1: Similar Schools Comparison

	Queens Preparatory Academy	.	.	.	-13
	Richard R Green HS of Teaching	.	.	.	-15
	Schenectady HS	.	.	.	-7
	South Park HS	.	.	.	-7
	Urban Assembly Maker Academy	.	.	.	-22
	Urban Assembly School for Law and Justice (The)	.	.	.	-20
	Urban Assembly School for Music and Art	.	.	.	-10
	Williamsburg HS for Architecture and Design	.	.	.	-25
	Williamsburg HS of Art and Technology (The)	.	.	.	-22
	Williamsburg Preparatory School	.	.	.	-26
	Mean	.	.	.	-12
+/- 10	Academy for Careers In Television and Film	.	.	.	-27
	Academy for Health Careers	.	.	.	-16
	Academy of Innovative Technology	.	.	.	-18
	American Sign Language & English Secondary School	.	.	.	-21
	Amsterdam HS	.	.	.	-13
	Astor Collegiate Academy	.	.	.	-7
	Aviation Career and Technical Education HS	.	.	.	-25
	Bayside HS	.	.	.	-26
	Benjamin Banneker Academy	.	.	.	-23
	Benjamin Franklin HS for Finance and Information Tec	.	.	.	-19
	Benjamin N Cardozo HS	.	.	.	-20
	Binghamton HS	.	.	.	-4
	Bronx Academy for Software Engineering (Base)	.	.	.	-8
	Bronx Aerospace HS	.	.	.	-5
	Bronx HS for Writing and Communication Arts	.	.	.	0
	Bronx HS for the Visual Arts	.	.	.	-8
	Bronx Health Sciences HS	.	.	.	-25
	Bronx River HS	.	.	.	-10
	Bronxwood Preparatory Academy (The)	.	.	.	-12
	Brooklyn College Academy	.	.	.	-24
	Brooklyn Collegiate: A College Board School	.	.	.	-16
	Brooklyn Emerging Leaders Academy CS	.	.	.	-23
	Brooklyn HS for Law and Technology	.	.	.	-10
	Brooklyn HS of the Arts	.	.	.	-21
	Brooklyn Institute for Liberal Arts	.	.	.	-19
	Brooklyn Preparatory HS	.	.	.	-21
	Broome Street Academy CHS	.	.	.	+13
	Burgard HS	.	.	.	+6
	Business of Sports School	.	.	.	-14
	Cheektowaga HS	.	.	.	-13
	Civic Leadership Academy	.	.	.	-21
	Cobble Hill School of American Studies	.	.	.	-10
	Corcoran HS	.	.	.	-10
	Cultural Academy for the Arts and Sciences	.	.	.	-16
	East Upper HS	.	.	.	-12
	Edward R Murrow HS	.	.	.	-13
	Energy Tech HS	.	.	.	-22
	Epic HS - North	.	.	.	-20
	Essex Street Academy	.	.	.	-25
	Excelsior Preparatory HS	.	.	.	-11
	Forest Hills HS	.	.	.	-19
	Frank Mccourt HS	.	.	.	-24
	George Washington Carver HS for the Sciences	.	.	.	-12
	George Westinghouse Career and Technical Ed HS	.	.	.	-18
	Global Learning Collaborative (The)	.	.	.	-16
	Gotham Professional Arts Academy	.	.	.	-18
	HS for Civil Rights	.	.	.	-1
	HS for Community Leadership	.	.	.	-23
	HS for Enterprise, Business & Technology (The)	.	.	.	-12
	HS for Health Professions & Human Services	.	.	.	-23
	HS for Medical Professions	.	.	.	-17
	HS for Public Service-Heroes of Tomorrow	.	.	.	-20
	HS of Economics & Finance	.	.	.	-19
	HS of Telecommunication Arts and Technology	.	.	.	-24
	HS-Construction, Trades, Engineering & Architecture	.	.	.	-26
	Hudson HS	.	.	.	-12

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 1: Similar Schools Comparison

Hudson HS of Learning Technologies	.	.	.	-13
Information Technology HS	.	.	.	-15
Institute of Technology At Syracuse Central	.	.	.	-20
It Takes A Village Academy	.	.	.	-9
Jamaica Gateway To the Sciences	.	.	.	-20
James Madison HS	.	.	.	-19
Jamestown HS	.	.	.	-6
Judith S Kaye School (The)	.	.	.	+40
Lackawanna HS	.	.	.	-4
Landmark HS	.	.	.	-12
Lansingburgh Senior HS	.	.	.	-8
Leaders HS	.	.	.	-20
Leonardo Da Vinci HS	.	.	.	-23
Liberty HS	.	.	.	-8
Manhattan Center for Science & Mathematics	.	.	.	-24
Manhattan Early College School for Advertising	.	.	.	-19
Manhattan Village Academy	.	.	.	-27
Manhattan/Hunter Science HS	.	.	.	-24
Martin Van Buren HS	.	.	.	-14
Maspeth HS	.	.	.	-26
Math, Engineering and Science Academy CHS	.	.	.	-21
Mckinley Vocational HS	.	.	.	-14
Middle Early College HS	.	.	.	-15
Middletown HS	.	.	.	-17
Mount Vernon Steam Academy	.	.	.	-14
Murray Hill Academy	.	.	.	-11
New Design HS	.	.	.	-14
New Visions CHS for Advanced Math and Science IV	.	.	.	-23
New Visions CHS for the Humanities II	.	.	.	-11
Niagara Falls HS	.	.	.	-4
Pathways In Technology Early College HS (P-Tech)	.	.	.	-8
Queens HS for Information, Research and Technology	.	.	.	-16
Queens Technical HS	.	.	.	-11
Robert F Kennedy Community HS	.	.	.	-15
Robert H Goddard HS for Communication Arts & Tech	.	.	.	-26
Rockaway Collegiate HS	.	.	.	-6
Saunders Trades & Technical HS	.	.	.	-23
Stephen T Mather Building Arts and Craftmanship HS	.	.	.	-15
Thomas R Proctor HS	.	.	.	-13
Union Square Academy for Health Sciences	.	.	.	-15
University Heights Secondary School-Bronx Communit	.	.	.	-26
Urban Assembly Gateway School for Technology	.	.	.	-26
Urban Assembly School for Media Studies	.	.	.	-16
Urban Assembly School of Design and Construction	.	.	.	-11
Walter G O'connell Copiague HS	.	.	.	-20
Westchester Square Academy	.	.	.	-15
World Academy for Total Community Health HS	.	.	.	+2
Mean	.	.	.	-15
Mean	.	.	.	-14

*See NOTES (1) and (11).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Regents Outcomes

Charter School

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Annual Regents Outcomes:

Annual Regents Outcomes

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Total Charter Tested	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Total Charter Tested	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS
Algebra I (Common Core)	2018-2019	85	68%	66%	+2	23	48%	43%	+5	5	100%	50%	+50	85	68%	59%	+9
	2019-2020	120	98%	93%	+5	37	100%	90%	+10	9	100%	90%	+10	97	99%	92%	+7
	2020-2021	56	100%	97%	+3	14	100%	96%	+4	.	.	.	.	23	100%	97%	+3
	2021-2022	40	93%	63%	+30	6	83%	42%	+41	.	.	.	.	23	100%	56%	+44
	2022-2023	9	67%	57%	+10	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	83%	50%	+33
Algebra II (Common Core)	2019-2020	15	93%	99%	-6	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12	92%	99%	-7
	2020-2021	5	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	2021-2022	7	100%	68%	+32	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	2022-2023	8	38%	64%	-26	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	50%	48%	+2
English Language Arts (Common Core)	2018-2019	110	65%	84%	-19	22	23%	61%	-38	.	.	.	.	110	65%	78%	-13
	2019-2020	121	97%	96%	+1	29	100%	91%	+9	10	90%	89%	+1	99	96%	94%	+2
	2020-2021	54	100%	99%	+1	18	100%	98%	+2	5	100%	98%	+2	42	100%	99%	+1
	2021-2022	44	89%	84%	+5	6	100%	63%	+37	.	.	.	.	29	86%	78%	+8
	2022-2023	44	61%	77%	-16	11	36%	52%	-16	.	.	.	.	35	63%	69%	-6
Geometry (Common Core)	2018-2019	19	84%	70%	+14	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	19	84%	57%	+27
	2019-2020	24	100%	98%	+2	6	100%	97%	+3	.	.	.	.	19	100%	97%	+3
	2020-2021	42	100%	100%	0	8	100%	100%	0	5	100%	100%	0	32	100%	100%	0
	2021-2022	58	90%	57%	+33	9	78%	31%	+47	.	.	.	.	42	93%	44%	+49
	2022-2023	29	17%	53%	-36	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	22	14%	39%	-25
Global History	2019-2020	44	100%	98%	+2	15	100%	95%	+5	.	.	.	.	40	100%	97%	+3
	2020-2021	21	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	12	100%	100%	0
	2021-2022	34	100%	81%	+19	9	100%	57%	+43	.	.	.	.	26	100%	74%	+26
	2022-2023	9	78%	74%	+4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	71%	64%	+7
Global History Transition	2018-2019	94	76%	62%	+14	24	63%	34%	+29	6	100%	36%	+64	94	76%	51%	+25
	2019-2020	45	73%	84%	-11	8	38%	76%	-38	.	.	.	.	37	70%	80%	-10
Living Environment	2018-2019	72	60%	71%	-11	19	53%	45%	+8	.	.	.	.	72	60%	61%	-1
	2019-2020	93	95%	96%	-1	29	90%	93%	-3	9	89%	94%	-5	84	94%	95%	-1
	2020-2021	58	100%	98%	+2	18	100%	97%	+3	.	.	.	.	29	100%	98%	+2
	2021-2022	65	82%	76%	+6	20	80%	53%	+27	9	89%	51%	+38	51	80%	67%	+13
	2022-2023	61	41%	63%	-22	11	27%	36%	-9	8	13%	35%	-22	53	40%	52%	-12
Physical Setting / Chemistry	2019-2020	8	100%	98%	+2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	100%	98%	+2
	2020-2021	8	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5	100%	100%	0
	2021-2022	8	100%	62%	+38	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5	100%	49%	+51
Physical Setting / Earth Science	2018-2019	66	47%	64%	-17	8	50%	39%	+11	.	.	.	.	66	47%	53%	-6
	2019-2020	104	99%	97%	+2	26	100%	95%	+5	9	89%	96%	-7	84	100%	96%	+4
	2020-2021	52	100%	98%	+2	17	100%	98%	+2	.	.	.	.	30	100%	98%	+2
	2021-2022	35	100%	61%	+39	5	100%	38%	+62	.	.	.	.	25	100%	50%	+50
	2022-2023	17	24%	60%	-36	7	29%	37%	-8	.	.	.	.	15	27%	49%	-22
Physical Setting / Physics	2019-2020	20	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	17	100%	100%	0
	2020-2021	7	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	6	100%	100%	0
US History and Government	2018-2019	65	92%	77%	+15	14	79%	51%	+28	.	.	.	.	65	92%	67%	+25
	2019-2020	134	99%	97%	+2	35	100%	93%	+7	14	100%	92%	+8	107	99%	95%	+4
	2020-2021	92	100%	100%	0	26	100%	100%	0	.	.	.	.	59	100%	100%	0
	2021-2022	99	100%	100%	0	24	100%	100%	0	14	100%	100%	0	71	100%	100%	0
	2022-2023	112	100%	82%	+18	24	100%	60%	+40	9	100%	60%	+40	99	100%	74%	+26

*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), (4), and (7).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

Charter School

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

3.a.i. and 3.a.ii. High School Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes:

Aggregate and Subgroup 4-Year Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS
ELA	2015	64	61%	84%	-23	13	23%	55%	-32	.	.	.	.	62	61%	79%	-18
	2016	72	86%	88%	-2	19	79%	66%	+13	6	83%	69%	+14	59	85%	84%	+1
	2017	79	91%	89%	+2	14	79%	69%	+10	.	.	.	.	59	88%	86%	+2
	2018	62	73%	87%	-14	17	71%	71%	0	7	86%	68%	+18	52	73%	83%	-10
	2019	70	79%	81%	-2	16	75%	56%	+19	.	.	.	.	56	77%	75%	+2
Global History	2015	64	73%	78%	-5	13	62%	43%	+19	.	.	.	.	62	74%	70%	+4
	2016	72	88%	84%	+4	19	79%	60%	+19	6	100%	63%	+37	59	86%	80%	+6
	2017	79	86%	87%	-1	14	79%	66%	+13	.	.	.	.	59	85%	84%	+1
	2018	62	56%	86%	-30	17	65%	72%	-7	7	29%	68%	-39	52	54%	83%	-29
	2019	70	40%	82%	-42	16	31%	68%	-37	.	.	.	.	56	34%	79%	-45
Math	2015	64	75%	84%	-9	13	46%	51%	-5	.	.	.	.	62	76%	78%	-2
	2016	72	86%	88%	-2	19	74%	64%	+10	6	83%	72%	+11	59	85%	85%	0
	2017	79	95%	90%	+5	14	93%	69%	+24	.	.	.	.	59	93%	88%	+5
	2018	62	95%	91%	+4	17	100%	76%	+24	7	100%	78%	+22	52	96%	89%	+7
	2019	70	93%	90%	+3	16	88%	74%	+14	.	.	.	.	56	91%	87%	+4
Science	2015	64	75%	83%	-8	13	62%	51%	+11	.	.	.	.	62	76%	76%	0
	2016	72	92%	87%	+5	19	84%	64%	+20	6	83%	66%	+17	59	92%	83%	+9
	2017	79	91%	90%	+1	14	93%	70%	+23	.	.	.	.	59	92%	87%	+5
	2018	62	94%	91%	+3	17	94%	77%	+17	7	100%	73%	+27	52	94%	88%	+6
	2019	70	96%	90%	+6	16	100%	77%	+23	.	.	.	.	56	95%	88%	+7
US History	2015	64	58%	79%	-21	13	38%	48%	-10	.	.	.	.	62	58%	71%	-13
	2016	72	76%	84%	-8	19	79%	61%	+18	6	83%	61%	+22	59	73%	79%	-6
	2017	79	85%	85%	0	14	79%	66%	+13	.	.	.	.	59	81%	81%	0
	2018	62	92%	84%	+8	17	94%	69%	+25	7	100%	67%	+33	52	94%	80%	+14
	2019	70	94%	80%	+14	16	94%	64%	+30	.	.	.	.	56	93%	76%	+17

*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), (4), and (7).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 1 - Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

3.b.i. and 3.b.ii. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Cohort Graduation Rates:

High School Graduation Rates by Cohort

		All Students				SWD				ELL				ED			
		Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS	Charter Total Cohort	Vertus CS	NYS	Differential to NYS
2015 Cohort	4 Year	64	66%	83%	-17	13	62%	62%	0	.	.	.	.	62	66%	77%	-11
	5 Year	66	82%	87%	-5	12	67%	67%	0	.	.	.	.	58	84%	82%	+2
	6 Year	67	85%	88%	-3	12	75%	70%	+5	.	.	.	.	58	86%	84%	+2
2016 Cohort	4 Year	72	82%	85%	-3	19	79%	63%	+16	6	83%	63%	+20	59	80%	80%	0
	5 Year	71	85%	88%	-3	19	79%	69%	+10	6	83%	70%	+13	57	82%	83%	-1
	6 Year	70	86%	89%	-3	19	79%	72%	+7	6	83%	71%	+12	56	84%	85%	-1
2017 Cohort	4 Year	79	73%	86%	-13	14	64%	65%	-1	.	.	.	.	59	71%	81%	-10
	5 Year	76	89%	89%	0	13	92%	72%	+20	.	.	.	.	56	88%	85%	+3
	6 Year	76	92%	90%	+2	13	100%	73%	+27	.	.	.	.	55	96%	86%	+10
2018 Cohort	4 Year	62	69%	87%	-18	17	71%	69%	+2	7	71%	70%	+1	52	69%	82%	-13
	5 Year	63	71%	89%	-18	16	75%	74%	+1	7	71%	74%	-3	44	86%	85%	+1
2019 Cohort	4 Year	70	86%	86%	0	16	81%	69%	+12	.	.	.	.	56	82%	82%	0

*See NOTES (2) and (3).

3.b.iii. and 3.b.iv. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Cohort On-Track to Graduate:

Third Year On-Track to Graduate – Target = 75%

Vertus CS	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Charter Total Cohort	Total On-Track	On-Track	Charter Total Cohort	Total On-Track	On-Track	Charter Total Cohort	Total On-Track	On-Track	Charter Total Cohort	Total On-Track	On-Track
2016	77	42	55%	17	8	47%	5	5	100%	77	42	55%
2017	79	69	87%	15	13	87%	.	.	.	60	52	87%
2018	69	51	74%	21	16	76%	11	8	73%	60	50	83%
2019	73	64	88%	20	17	85%	.	.	.	53	47	89%
2020	63	40	63%	15	6	40%	.	.	.	50	31	62%

*See NOTES (2), (3), and (9).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 9 - Indicator 1: Enrollment and Retention

Charter School

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

1.a.i. Aggregate Enrollment:

Aggregate Enrollment: Reported vs Contracted - Target = 100%

Vertus CS	Contracted Enrollment	Reported Enrollment	Percent of Contracted Enrollment
2018-2019	384	281	73%
2019-2020	340	281	83%
2020-2021	340	253	74%
2021-2022	340	264	78%
2022-2023	340	313	92%

1.a.ii. Subgroup Enrollment:

Subgroup Enrollment: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged

	SWD			ELL			ED		
	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differentia I to District	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differentia I to District	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differentia I to District
2018-2019	22%	20%	+2	7%	19%	-12	100%	87%	+13
2019-2020	25%	21%	+4	8%	19%	-11	82%	87%	-5
2020-2021	25%	23%	+2	8%	19%	-11	68%	87%	-19
2021-2022	26%	24%	+2	12%	18%	-6	76%	88%	-12
2022-2023	27%	24%	+3	8%	17%	-9	85%	89%	-4

*See NOTES (2) and (6).

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Benchmark 9 - Indicator 1: Enrollment and Retention

1.b.i. and 1.b.ii. Retention:

Retention - Aggregate and Subgroups

	All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District	Vertus CS	Rochester CSD	Differential to District
2018-2019	80%	83%	-3	85%	78%	+7	74%	79%	-5	87%	83%	4
2019-2020	78%	84%	-6	73%	80%	-7	90%	82%	+8	78%	84%	-6
2020-2021	88%	86%	+2	100%	84%	+16	92%	85%	+7	92%	86%	+6
2021-2022	80%	84%	-4	74%	85%	-11	87%	82%	+5	77%	83%	-6
2022-2023	59%	78%	-19	55%	76%	-21	52%	77%	-25	59%	77%	-18

*See NOTES (2) and (6) below.

1.c.i. and 1.c.ii. High School Persistence:

Aggregate and Subgroup 4-, 5-, and 6-year Cohort Persistence Rates – Target = 85%

Vertus CS		All Students			SWD			ELL			ED		
		Original Cohort	Persistent	4-Year Persistence	Original Cohort	Persistent	4-Year Persistence	Original Cohort	Persistent	4-Year Persistence	Original Cohort	Persistent	4-Year Persistence
2015 Cohort	4-Year	59	26	44%	14	3	21%	.	.	.	59	26	44%
	5-Year	59	28	47%	14	3	21%	.	.	.	59	28	47%
	6-Year	59	28	47%	14	3	21%	.	.	.	59	28	47%
2016 Cohort	4-Year	99	46	46%	21	10	48%	6	5	83%	98	45	46%
	5-Year	99	47	47%	21	10	48%	6	5	83%	98	46	47%
	6-Year	99	47	47%	21	10	48%	6	5	83%	98	46	47%
2017 Cohort	4-Year	69	43	62%	10	5	50%	10	5	50%	62	38	61%
	5-Year	69	46	67%	10	6	60%	10	5	50%	62	41	66%
	6-Year	69	46	67%	10	6	60%	10	5	50%	62	41	66%
2018 Cohort	4-Year	49	30	61%	10	5	50%	8	5	63%	49	30	61%
	5-Year	49	30	61%	10	5	50%	8	5	63%	49	30	61%
2019 Cohort	4-Year	61	41	67%	16	10	63%	.	.	.	37	26	70%

*See NOTES (2), (3), and (10) below.

2024 NYSED Charter School Information Dashboard

Notes

- (1) Data in the table above represents tested students who scored proficiently on the NYSTP ELA, math, or science assessments or on the Regents math or science exams.*
- (2) For the students with disabilities and the English language learners subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.*
- (3) Pursuant to NYSED business rules, the data was suppressed for subgroups containing <5 students and the subgroup category may not be included for the metric.*
- (4) Data in the table above represents students who passed the Annual Regents or equivalents (score of 65 or better).*
- (5) The 4- and 5-year graduation rates reported are as of August. The 6-year graduation rates are as of June.*
- (6) Data in the table above represents a comparison between those grades served in the charter school to only those same grades in the district.*
- (7) A "." in any table indicates that the data was suppressed, no student sat for the exam, or the exam was not given.*
- (8) Data in the table above represents tested students who either maintained a proficient score from one year to the next or students whose proficiency level increased from one year to the next (a proficient score is level 3 or 4).*
- (9) Data in the table above represents students within their respective subgroups who have passed three out of the five Annual Regents and Regents Common Core Examinations (score of 65 or better) or equivalents.*
- (10) Data in the table above represents the percentage of students from the original 9th grade cohort who persisted within the same school to a 4-year graduation (includes August graduates).*
- (11) Data in the table above is a comparison of the differentials of the 3-8 assessments and the 4-year graduation rate for the school and other schools with the same grade structure and similar subgroup enrollment pattern. The notation +/- 5, indicates the highest level of similarity.*
- (12) Data in the table above represents students who passed their Regents ELA exam with a score equal to or higher than 75 and also passed at least one of their Regents math exams with a score equal to or higher than 80.*
- (13) Schools are considered 'similar' for the purpose of this comparison when they serve the same grade band as the school in question. The degree of similarity is determined by comparison of the percentage of each subgroup's enrollment (students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students). An assignment of +/- 5 (7.5, or 10) indicates that the schools' subgroup enrollments are within 5 (7.5, or 10) percentage points for each subgroup.*

Charter School Fiscal Accountability Summary

VERTUS CHARTER SCHOOL

Grades Served	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Maximum Chartered Grades Served	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Chartered Enrollment	384	340	340	340	340
Maximum Chartered Enrollment	340	340	340	340	340
Actual Enrollment	281	281	253	264	313

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	-	920,691	859,448	1,329,921	2,584,886
Grants and Contracts Receivable	34,727	71,238	138,245	218,828	356,775
Prepaid Expenses	256	2,135	38,681	96,325	113,993
Other Current Assets	-	-	32,924	37,513	-
Total Current Assets	34,983	994,064	1,069,298	1,682,587	3,055,654

Non-Current Assets

Property, Building and Equipment, net	537,251	430,548	364,720	386,356	479,865
Restricted Cash	75,000	75,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Security Deposits	-	-	-	-	-
Other Non-Current Assets	-	-	-	-	1,411,212
Total Non - Current Assets	612,251	505,548	464,720	486,356	1,991,077
Total Assets	647,234	1,499,612	1,534,018	2,168,943	5,046,731

LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	102,425	203,929	206,226	188,721	534,698
Accrued Payroll and Payroll Taxes	121,314	143,268	136,274	43,718	69,363
Due to Related Parties	125,000	-	-	-	-
Refundable Advances	-	-	-	-	-
Other Current Liabilities	252,086	384,682	3,009	61,167	510,466
Total Current Liabilities	600,825	731,879	345,509	293,606	1,114,527

Long-Term Liabilities

Deferred Rent	213,560	219,897	225,817	185,737	-
Other Long-Term Liabilities	54,605	324,080	583,730	-	1,052,725
Total Long-Term Liabilities	268,165	543,977	809,547	185,737	1,052,725
Total Liabilities	868,990	1,275,856	1,155,056	479,343	2,167,252

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	(250,676)	222,155	341,205	1,626,890	2,679,273
Restricted	28,920	1,601	37,757	62,710	200,206
Total Net Assets	(221,756)	223,756	378,962	1,689,600	2,879,479
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	647,234	1,499,612	1,534,018	2,168,943	5,046,731

OPERATING REVENUE

State and Local Per Pupil Revenue - Reg. Ed	4,408,089	5,016,457	4,496,241	3,701,548	4,465,899
State and Local Per Pupil Revenue - SPED	-	-	-	1,110,462	1,401,657
State and Local Per Pupil Facilities Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Federal Grants	269,237	287,130	429,813	1,042,939	880,633
State and City Grants	-	-	-	-	-
Other Operating Income	-	4,637	-	729,642	-
Total Operating Revenue	4,677,326	5,308,224	4,926,054	6,584,591	6,748,189

EXPENSES

Program Services

Regular Education	3,518,481	3,288,582	2,997,650	3,160,940	3,411,090
Special Education	1,358,410	1,233,651	1,462,296	1,457,343	1,402,222
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Services	4,876,891	4,522,233	4,459,946	4,618,283	4,813,312

Supporting Services

524,336	464,997	515,502	642,869	1,078,797	
13,247	4,501	7,267	12,801	139,407	
Total Support Services	537,583	469,498	522,769	655,670	1,218,204
Total Expenses	5,414,474	4,991,731	4,982,715	5,273,953	6,031,516
Surplus/Deficit from Operations	(737,148)	316,493	(56,661)	1,310,638	716,673

SUPPORT AND OTHER REVENUE

-	-	-	-	60,769	
240,756	78,690	211,867	-	260,389	
18,666	25,829	-	-	66,790	
-	24,500	-	-	85,258	
Total Support and Other Revenue	259,422	129,019	211,867	-	473,206
Change in Net Assets	(477,726)	445,512	155,206	1,310,638	1,189,879
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	255,970	(221,756)	223,756	378,962	1,689,600
Net Assets - End of Year	(221,756)	223,756	378,962	1,689,600	2,879,479

REVENUE & EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

Revenue - Per Pupil					
16,645	18,890	19,471	24,942	21,560	
923	459	837	-	1,512	
Total Revenue	17,568	19,350	20,308	24,942	23,072
Expenses - Per Pupil					
17,355	16,093	17,628	17,493	15,378	
1,913	1,671	2,066	2,484	3,892	
Total Expenses	19,268	17,764	19,694	19,977	19,270
90.1%	90.6%	89.5%	87.6%	79.8%	
9.9%	9.4%	10.5%	12.4%	20.2%	
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses	8.8%	8.9%	3.1%	24.9%	19.7%

FINANCIAL COMPOSITE SCORE

Composite Score	(0.92)	1.14	1.33	2.93	3.00
BENCHMARK and FINDING:	Needs Monitoring	Adequate	Adequate	Strong	Strong
Strong: 1.5 - 3.0 / Adequate: 1.0 - 1.4 / Needs Monitoring: -1.0 - 0.9					
	(565,842)	262,185	723,789	1,388,981	1,941,127
0.1	1.4	3.1	5.7	2.7	
BENCHMARK and FINDING:	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
Ratio should be equal to or greater than 1.2					
Debt to Asset Ratio	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.2	0.4
BENCHMARK and FINDING:	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
Ratio should be equal to or less than 1.0					
Days of Cash	-	67.3	63.0	92.0	156.4
BENCHMARK and FINDING:	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
Ratio should be equal to or greater than 60 days					
Total Margin Ratio	(0.1)	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2
BENCHMARK and FINDING:	Does Not Meet Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard
Ratio should be equal to or greater than 0.0					

