New York State Education Department

Renewal Site Visit Report
2018-2019

Vertus Charter School

Visit Date: November 7-8, 2018
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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

Charter School Summary[1]

Name of Charter School	Vertus Charter School
Board Chair	Bryan Hickman
District of location	Rochester City School District
Opening Date	Fall 2014
Charter Terms	7/01/2014 - 6/30/2019
Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment	Grades 9-12/ 384 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	*To develop leaders of character for the community and the workplace.*
Key Design Elements	• Strong Relationships • Personalized Year-Round Academics • Character Development • Career Preparation:
Requested Revisions	**The school seeks to set its maximum enrollment at 340 (from 384) due to space constraints. Neither the proposed budget nor the program will be affected.**

Noteworthy: Vertus Charter School enrolls male students, many of whom are under-credited and at high risk for dropping out. The high staff student ratio allows students and staff to establish the strong relationships that support the academic and character development of the young men the school serves.

Renewal Outcomes

Pursuant to the Board of Regents Renewal Policy, the following renewal outcomes are possible:

- **Full-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for the maximum term of five years. For a school to be eligible for a full-term renewal, during the current charter term the school must have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or exceeding Benchmark 1, and at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. As discussed above, the Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal**,** which is consistent with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the

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

quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short-term renewal, a school must either:
(a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1, but at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework which will likely result in the school's being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short-term renewal permits, **or**

(b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1; but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.

- **Non-Renewal:** A school's charter will not be renewed if the school does not apply for renewal or the school fails to meet the criteria for either full-term or short-term renewal. In the case of non-renewal, a school's charter will be terminated upon its expiration and the school will be required to comply with the Charter School Office's Closing Procedures to ensure an orderly closure by the end of the school year.

Please Note: The Regents may include additional terms, conditions, and/or requirements in a school's Full-Term or Short-Term Renewal charter to address specific situations or areas of concern. For example, a school may meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal with regard to its educational success, but may be required to address organizational deficiencies that need to be corrected but do not prevent the Regents from making the required legal findings for renewal. A school may also meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal of only a portion of its educational program (e.g., for the elementary school program, but not the middle school program). Such additional terms and/or requirements may include, but are not limited to, restrictions on the number of students and grades to be served by the school, additional student performance metrics, heightened reporting requirements, or specific corrective action.

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2014 to 2015	**Year 2 2015 to 2016**	**Year 3 2016 to 2017**	**Year 4 2017 to 2018**	**Year 5 2018 to 2019**
Grade Configuration	Grade 9	Grades 9 -10	Grades 9 -11	Grades 9 -12	Grades 9 -12
Total Approved Enrollment	96	192	288	384	384

***Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment Requested by the School**

	Year 1 2019 to 2020	Year 2 2020 to 2021	Year 3 2021 to 2022	Year 4 2022 to 2023	Year 5 2023 to 2024
Grade Configuration	Grades 9 -12	Grades 9 -12	Grades 9 -12	Grades 9 -12	Grades 9 -12
Total Approved Enrollment	340	340	340	340	340

*The proposed chart was submitted by Vertus Charter School in its renewal application. It is subject to change pending the final renewal recommendation and approval by the Board of Regents.

METHODOLOGY

A one and one-half day renewal site visit was conducted at Vertus Charter School ("Vertus") on November 7-8, 2018. The New York State Education Department's Charter School Office (CSO) team conducted interviews with the board of trustees, the school leadership team, the student support team, and students. In cooperation with school leadership, the CSO administered an anonymous online survey to teachers.

The team conducted fifteen classroom observations in Grades 9-12. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with the principal, instructional coach, and the director of blended learning.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included the following:

- **Renewal Application**
- **Academic data**
- **Renewal Site Visit Workbook**
- **Current organizational chart**
- **A master school schedule**
- **Map of school with room numbers and teacher names**
- **Board materials (roster, minutes, and strategic plan**
- **Board self-evaluation processes and documents**
- **Student/family handbook**
- **Staff handbook and personnel policies**
- **A list of major assessments**
- **Teacher and administrator evaluation processes**
- **Interventions offered at the school**
- **School-or CSO-conducted surveys of teachers, staff, parents, and or students**
- **Professional development plans and schedules**
- **Efforts towards achieving enrollment and retention targets**
- **School submitted Annual Reports**

- **NYSED CSO mid-term and check-in visit reports**

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The 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 Performance Framework benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below, although not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit. A brief summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; however, the report narrative will highlight those indicators not fully met by the school.

Level	Description
Exceeds	The school meets the performance benchmark; potential exemplar in this area.
Meets	The school generally meets the performance benchmark; few concerns are 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.

For the site visit conducted from November 7-8, 2018 at Vertus Charter School, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework Rating

	Performance Benchmark	Level
Educational Success	**Benchmark 1: Student Performance:** The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Falls Far Below
	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 has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Meets
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. 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.	Approaches
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets

Summary of Findings

- The Vertus Charter School is in its fifth year of operation and serves students in Grades 9-12. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: exceeding 0 benchmarks; meeting 8 benchmarks; approaching 1 benchmark; and falling far below 1 benchmark.

- **Areas of Strengths**: Through carefully designed organizational structures and consistently implemented educational practices, Vertus Charter School has established a culture of shared responsibility and accountability that promotes positive outcomes for all students. A personalized academic program supported by experienced educators creates the opportunity for acceleration or remediation suited to each student, including those with special educational needs and language challenges. The character education component of the educational program enables students to acquire the essential non-academic skills needed for success in college and career. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities and frequent, regular professional growth opportunities allow each staff member to promote the school's mission. A supportive professional climate and pathways for advancement contribute to staff satisfaction and retention. Vertus is governed by a knowledgeable board which actively monitors organizational effectiveness and tracks progress toward measurable goals across all aspects of the organization.

- **Areas in Need of Improvement**: Academic results are currently not meeting standards; however, in light of the severe deficits with which these students enter Vertus, another year of study is expected to mark a significant increase in scores and graduation rate. Over the course of the charter term, Vertus has enrolled fewer students than the chartered maximum and is in the process of reducing its maximum enrollment due to limitations of its facility and increasing competition from other educational options across the region. While Vertus has been successful enrolling students with disabilities at a rate similar to the district of location, it enrolls fewer English language learners (ELLs)/multi-lingual learners (MLLs) than Rochester City School District.

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).

Finding: Falls Far Below

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

- The use of on-line course work allows students entry at a level of complexity that meets their individual needs, in each academic area.
- Plans for instruction are designed around learning gaps for each student.
- Small classes and a high staff to student ratio help to meet the needs of all students.
- The laboratory setting provides individual access to teachers, preceptors, special education and ELL/MLL staff, and teaching fellows.
- Special education staff meet regularly with classroom teachers, preceptors and administrators to plan and monitor student progress.
- Special education staff meet weekly with each house team to focus on individual student progress and as a department.

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS/MUTI-LINGUAL LEARNERS:

- The use of on-line course work allows students entry at a level of complexity that meets their individual needs, in each academic area.
- Plans for instruction are designed around learning gaps for each student.
- Small classes and a high staff to student ratio help to meet the needs of all students.
- The laboratory setting provides individual access to teachers, preceptors, special education and ELL/MLL staff, and teaching fellows.
- Spanish speaking preceptors are available for translation/communication with ELL/MLL students, as are bi-lingual student "buddies."
- ELL/MLL students attend separate classes to master the English language.
- The school offers an intensive summer tutoring program carried out by graduate students studying for Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TSOL) credentials at a nearby college.

See Attachment 1 for data tables and additional 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 has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.

Finding: Meets

Element	*Indicators*
1. Curriculum	a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSLS. b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content. c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades. d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.
2. Instruction	a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding. b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.
3. Assessment and Program Evaluation	a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments. b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes. c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, and modifies the program accordingly.
4. Supports for Diverse Learners	a. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to: students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students. b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

1. Element: ***Curriculum***:
    - Vertus implements a documented curriculum that offers a blend of online and classroom-based instruction. Curriculum standards presented in both the classroom setting and the online system align with the NYSLS, focusing on the prerequisite skills and knowledge required for success in Regents courses. Administrators noted that the curriculum maps and pacing charts are modified as needed but are monitored to ensure they align with the rigor and content of Regents coursework.

- Unit and lesson plans for the online courses from Edgenuity introduce material at varying levels of complexity. According to Vertus administrators, unit and lesson plans implemented for the classroom sessions are structured around gaps in learning identified through the online tool and biweekly classroom assessments constructed using Regents items. Classroom lesson plans reviewed by the site visit team align with Regents-level content, and many students were observed to be working on foundational skills and concepts in the lab (online) classes. In the focus group, students explained they have been able to take courses beyond the required minimum and have accumulated credits allowing them to graduate early.
- Instructional leaders at Vertus ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum by focusing on the standards defined for each Regents examination. The online curriculum is aligned with NYSLS and students take courses in a sequence based on their individual learning needs rather than a common prescribed order. According to Vertus administrators, the specific set of curriculum topics addressed through classroom instruction is adjusted by lead teachers in each content area based on assessment feedback from in-class and online tests and quizzes. Students are grouped by achievement level rather than grade level for ELA and math classes.
- The Vertus curriculum is differentiated for each student according to their needs. As described in interviews and school documents, administrators, teachers and student mentors (preceptors) design a course of study for each student with the objective of accelerating content mastery and credit accumulation. Administrators and teachers define a course of study for students with disabilities (SWD) and English language learners (ELLs)/multi-lingual learners (MLLs) designed to strengthen core skills and advance to Regents expectations as students demonstrate readiness. The site visit team observed the impact of the high staff-student ratio which allowed students to receive one-on-one support both in classrooms and in lab sessions. On the June 2018 NYSED teacher survey, almost all teachers agreed that the school has a strong program for both SWD and ELL/MLL students largely due to the personalized, individualized academic program designed for each student.

2. Element*:* ***Instruction***:
    - A common understanding of instructional expectations is defined in the school's *Vertus Way* handbook and cited by teachers in the NYSED survey to include a posted agenda, do-now and exit tickets, and a combination of direct instruction and independent practice. Teachers and administrators reported that instructional management strategies adopted from *Teach Like a Champion* such as cold calling ensure that students stay focused on the lesson. In the lab classes in which students are working with online courses, the Edgenuity tool provides real-time tracking of student progress through each lesson and preceptors, teaching fellows, and teachers circulate to provide one-on-one instruction when students struggle with the material.
    - Student engagement varied between classroom and online modes of instruction. In the majority of classes, students were attentive and participating in the lesson, responding to teachers' questions. Class sizes ranged from 5 to 13 students, with an average of 10 across the classes observed, and teachers interacted with almost every student during the class session. An average of 30 students were observed in the lab sessions, with an average of 5 instructors circulating to provide assistance and encouragement. Site team members noted that some students working on the online lessons were less engaged in the work, staring off or waiting for an instructor to come by to answer a question. Several students appeared to be selecting every answer in sequence on the screen until they found the correct one. While

lab sessions were identified as focused on science, math or social studies on the day of the site visit, the range of content areas students were engaged with was considerable, with students in one lab class working on earth science, geometry, algebra, parts of speech, genetics, chemistry, physics and world religions. With such a wide range of topics, instructors face the challenge of providing knowledgeable assistance of complex concepts when students are confused or unable to complete the work.

3. Element: ***Assessment and Program Evaluation***:
   - Vertus has a balanced, comprehensive system of assessments including standardized measures to diagnose student achievement, monitor individual student growth and track progress toward mastery of Regents content and skills. School documents indicated that the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is used to identify students' reading and math levels which is then used to define a course of study through the online tool. Classroom tests and quizzes as well as measures embedded in the Edgenuity system track progress toward specific learning standards and Regents practice assessments identify readiness for the state tests.
   - Vertus administrators, teachers, and preceptors monitor academic results and modify the instructional program to address persistent or emergent gaps in student learning. In interviews, administrators and lead teachers explained that they adjust curriculum maps and pacing guides when students demonstrate difficulty with particular concepts or skills in the online courses. In addition to adjustments based on common challenges, the school described daily use of individual student data to identify when a course of study might need to be modified for a particular student.
   - Vertus administrators regularly review assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program and periodically adjust the format, sequencing, or instructional strategy to address weaknesses. In the focus group, administrators reported that they examine assessment results from multiple sources to identify which concepts and skills are being presented adequately through the Edgenuity system and which are better presented through teacher-led classroom instruction. School leaders noted that classroom instruction is best suited to more challenging content and they determined from experiences in the early years of the school that student writing is one area where the classroom setting is a more appropriate setting for writing instruction. In addition to academic data, administrators review behavior and attendance data to identify students who may need non-academic intervention. The student support staff develops intervention plans for individual students and monitors changes in behavior to assess the effectiveness of their strategies.

4. Element*:* ***Supports for Diverse Learners:***
   - The high staff to student ratio at Vertus allows the school to provide a variety of academic and behavioral supports to all students, including SWDs and ELL/MLL students. The school cites its "culture of second chances" as the basis for offering students multiple layers of assistance to help them succeed. For example, the Edgenuity online courses allow lessons to be played back, offers language translation and an embedded dictionary. Site team members observed students in the lab classes using headphones to listen to the online instructor, a support particularly helpful for students with weak reading skills. Special educators, teaching fellows, preceptors and content area teachers were observed sitting with individual students during lab classes to provide needed help with the online coursework.

- A regular schedule of meetings of classroom teachers, special educators, preceptors and administrators facilitates communication across the school to monitor students' needs and revise support plans as necessary. Special educators meet weekly as a department to discuss the impact of their support strategies, and also meet weekly with each house team to track individual student progress. In addition to a separate class, ELL/MLL students are assigned a Spanish speaking preceptor or student "buddy" to provide personal support. ELLs/MLLs receive intensive summer tutoring from graduate students from a nearby college seeking their TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) credentials.

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement

The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. 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

Element	*Indicators*
1. *Behavior Management and Safety*	a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy. b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment. c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination. d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.
2. *Family Engagement and Communication*	a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students' strengths and needs. b. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions. c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns. d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.
3. *Social-Emotional Supports*	a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students. b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

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

- Vertus clearly defines its approach to behavior management in the *Vertus Way* document, a combined parent, student, and staff handbook and policy guide. In interviews, administrators described the daily morning meeting as a practice intended to remind students of the goals and expectations for their behavior. The curriculum for the seminar classes led by the preceptors focuses on character traits needed for success and provides small group opportunities for the development of personal relationships central to the school's mission.
- Deans, student support specialists, preceptors and teachers share responsibility for ensuring that Vertus is a safe school community. On the NYSED survey, 17 of 18 teachers agreed that the schoolwide discipline policy is consistently applied. Students interviewed by the site visit team explained that, while some students never accept the school's structure and behavior expectations, the large majority come to appreciate its value and understand its purpose. On the student survey administered by Vertus in spring 2018, one-third of the students expressed concern about violence and threats inside the school while two-thirds disagreed that violence is a concern. On the 2017 parent survey administered by Vertus, 90% agreed or strongly agreed that their student is safe at school. Strategies to ensure a safe environment include daily recitation of the Vertus creed at morning meeting, regular assemblies to recognize and celebrate academic and character successes, and consistent application of *Vertus Way* expectations by all staff.
- Vertus administrators acknowledge that, while the school is generally free from harassment and discrimination, students bring neighborhood interactions to school with them. By deploying staff in hallways and common areas and by consistently implementing clear expectations, misconduct is addressed promptly. Results from the Vertus student survey are more critical of student-to-student interactions, with half the students agreeing that students are bullied at the school and half disagreeing. On the NYSED survey, 15 of 18 teachers agreed that the school is generally free from bullying and discrimination, while 3 disagreed. Site visit team members observed attentive staff addressing inappropriate behavior in hallways and common areas, including at a school-wide assembly.
- Classrooms at Vertus observed by the site visit team are orderly and productive, fostered by small class sizes and appropriately paced lessons. Preceptors and teaching fellows were responsible for maintaining an orderly and productive environment in the lab sessions. On the NYSED survey, teachers agreed that the school has uniform expectations for classroom management and that teacher-student interactions are respectful, confirmed by the site visit team during their observations.

2. Element: ***Family Engagement and Communication***:
   - At Vertus, preceptors are expected to regularly communicate with parents to discuss student progress. Preceptors begin developing a relationship with parents before school begins and are expected to communicate at least once every two weeks. While 77% of parents answering the 2017 Vertus survey agreed that preceptors communicate every two weeks about their child's progress, 23% disagreed or weren't sure. According to school documents, teachers meet with parents to discuss student progress on three parent nights across the year, plus provide written reports at the end of each five-week grading period. On the NYSED survey, almost all teachers agreed that they communicate with parents regularly about their students' academic progress.

- Vertus assesses family satisfaction through an annual family survey, family nights during the year, and invitations to attend monthly and quarterly achievement celebrations. Several parents attended the "tie ceremony" recognizing students' academic and character success during the biweekly whole school assembly observed by the site visit team. Student satisfaction is assessed formally through a twice-yearly survey and informally through daily contact with the preceptors at morning meeting, during lab classes, and in seminar classes. Results are discussed at faculty meetings and responses are devised to address student concerns.
- During their regular communication with families, preceptors gather insight into family concerns and report them to Vertus administrators who take steps to resolve issues directly. A formal complaint policy is included in *The Vertus Way* handbook and is posted on the school's website. The school reports no formal complaints received during the charter term.
- Vertus publishes school-level academic data in its newsletter and in postings around the building, alongside other posters showing incentives earned by each team. Vertus aims to build strong personal relationships by grouping students into teams led by a preceptor. The team structure is a vehicle through which the school encourages students to take individual and group responsibility for positive behavior and academic success. Recognition for both individual and team achievement is celebrated at whole-school assemblies, and students in the focus group expressed pride in their academic growth and in their progress toward becoming "Vertus men" of character as defined in their creed.

3. Element: ***Social-Emotional Supports:***
    - Vertus collects data on student social and emotional needs through the preceptors and yearly student surveys. Behavior incident reports are documented in Power School and regularly reviewed by the student support team. Preceptors teach seminar sessions every other day following a planned curriculum differentiated for students based on their years of enrollment at the school. Preceptors lead "circle" meetings with their students to discuss interpersonal and character issues within and beyond the building. Preceptors and their supervisors meet weekly at a minimum to share student concerns and develop plans to address problems.
    - Vertus administrators collect data around behavior infractions and are piloting a new measure to monitor the components of its character development program. In the focus group, administrators explained that students will assess themselves across Vertus character traits on the "character cards" and compare their self-assessments with the preceptor's perspective. Administrators indicated they will use this data to make adjustments in the character education curriculum presented at morning meeting and during team seminar classes. One initiative, "Brother's Keeper" recognizes students who demonstrate the school's academic and character qualities and identifies them with special badges worn proudly by students interviewed on the site visit. Students achieving Brothers Keeper status receive training and are given responsibilities to run the school store, to assist in running morning meeting, and to build supportive relationships with their "brothers" (peers). Most of the students in the focus group related stories of challenging family experiences and attributed their success at Vertus to the social and emotional supports provided by the school.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

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

Finding: Meets

Important Notes:

- The key financial indicators used to evaluate this benchmark will be presented within a separate fiscal dashboard instrument that will provide context for the school's performance on each of the metrics, outline the specific targets for each metric, and also provide additional subsidiary detail on each calculation.
- Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school's annual independently audited financial statements.

1. Near-Term Indicators:	
1a.	Current Ratio
1b.	Unrestricted Days Cash
1c.	Enrollment Variance
1d.	Composite Score
2. Sustainability Indicators:	
2a.	Total Margin
2b.	Debt to Asset Ratio
2c.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:
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.

The Charter School Office reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school's capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school's capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.

Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by the Department's Office of Audit Services. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. Vertus Charter School's 2016-2017 composite score is 1.7.

Vertus Charter School's Composite Scores
2014-2015 to 2016-2017

Year	*Composite Score*
2014-2015	2.1
2015-2016	1.3
2016-2017	1.7

Source: NYSED Office of Audit Services

Near-Term Indicators

Near-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of the school. The Charter School Office uses three measures:

The *current ratio* is a financial ratio that measures whether or not a charter school has enough resources to pay its debts over the next 12 months. The ratio is mainly used to give an idea of the school's ability to pay back its short-term liabilities (debt and payables) with its short-term assets (cash, inventory, receivables). The higher the current ratio, the more capable the school is of paying its obligations, with a ratio under 1.0 indicating concern. For 2016-2017, Vertus Charter School had a current ratio of 1.3.

Unrestricted cash measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Charter schools typically strive to maintain at least 90 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2016-2017, Vertus Charter School operated with 32 days of unrestricted cash.

Enrollment maximization measures whether or not a charter school is meeting its enrollment projections, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Actual enrollment that is over 85 percent is considered reasonable. Vertus Charter School's enrollment maximization for 2016-2017 was at 87 percent.

Long-Term Indicators

A charter school's *debt to asset ratio* measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. It is calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets. A ratio of 0.9 or less meets a standard of low risk. For 2016-2017, Vertus Charter School's debt to asset ratio was 0.6.

Total margin measures the deficit or surplus a charter school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Total margin is calculated as net income divided by total revenue. A total margin that is positive indicates low risk. For 2016-2017, Vertus Charter School's total margin was 7 percent.

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

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

1. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
2. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget in relation to those objectives.
3. 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.
4. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
5. The school has complied with state and federal financial reporting requirements.
6. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
7. 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:

The Charter School Office reviewed Vertus Charter School's 2016-2017 audited financial statements to determine whether the independent auditor observed sufficient internal controls over financial reporting. The auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal controls that could be considered material weaknesses.

The auditors followed up on matters identified in the school's 2015 and 2016 audits. As required in the school's financial policies and procedures manual, checks for $20,000 or more must be signed by a board member, packing slips must be kept in cash disbursement packets, and debit card purchases must be pre-approved by the head of school or a board member. In 2015, the auditor identified instances where these procedures were not followed and did so again in 2017, recommending that the school implement the internal controls documented in its financial policies and procedures manual.

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 recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school. b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission and educational philosophy. c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals. d. The board regularly updates school policies. e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers. f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

1. Element: ***Board Oversight and Governance:***
    - The Vertus board of trustees has been successfully retaining founding members and recruiting new members with complementary skills and expertise to support the school's needs. Four of the seven founding members remained through the charter term and three new members have been added representing expertise in real estate and online learning. Board members explained they refer to an inventory of skills and they recruit to fill any skills needed to support the school. Board members reported they are focused on deepening relationships with the community and are seeking members reflective of the ethnic and cultural diversity in Rochester. The board described the challenges of finding successful individuals who are not already overcommitted to the many needs of the community. Two additional members have been identified and are proceeding through the approval process with the goal of an eight- or nine-member board.
    - The Vertus board sets goals and engages in continuous improvement planning aligned with the "pillars" or key design elements established in the original charter. In collaboration with school leaders, the board established goals for student attendance and retention for the "strong relationships" pillar; graduation rate, credit accumulation, Regents exam passing rate, and NWEA growth for the "personalized year-round academics" pillar; and reductions in discipline referrals and character growth for the "character education" pillar. As reported in the renewal application and by the board, the goals for career preparation are under review to better reflect experiences over the charter term and the financial condition of the school. The original goal of having students complete a college level course before graduation has proven to be both

academically and fiscally challenging. Detailed reports from the administrators and the chief operating officer are reviewed monthly by the board to track progress toward each of the measurable goals. In addition, the board establishes goals for its own operations, including expanding membership, fundraising, facilities expansion, community engagement, locating outdoor sports fields, and expanding work opportunities for Vertus students.

- Minutes from the Vertus board meetings provide evidence of active and coordinated oversight of the school. Detailed monthly reports from school administrators include data on academic progress, enrollment, attendance and behavior for all students and by subgroup. During its annual planning meeting, the board established a schedule of topics for discussion at each month's agenda aligned with scheduled activities such as Regents exam administration, student and staff surveys, special events and ceremonies, and an annual review of yearly goals.
- The Vertus board regularly reviews and updates school policies, which are reported and updated in the *Vertus Way* school handbook. Board minutes reference discussion of policy changes in light of data presented on the monthly reports. In the focus group, the board explained that they review policies on a rolling basis across the year when alerted to changes in regulations or when administrators recommend changes in practice to improve student success.
- The board agenda lists a yearly evaluation of the principal and of the board each September in conjunction with a review of yearly strategic goals. However, the 2018 board and principal evaluations have not been completed due, in part, to the change in principal and preparations for the renewal visit. Board members reviewed the renewal application which provided an opportunity to assess each of the school's strategic goals as well as the board goals. A formal board self-evaluation is rescheduled for the December meeting. The principal evaluation will be completed after the new principal has completed a full school year.
- The Vertus board maintains its awareness of its legal obligations through regular consultations with administrators and participation in training hosted by NYSED and the Northeast Charter School Network (NECSN). In addition, the board assigns the COO responsibility for monitoring changes in state and federal regulation that may impact the school and recommending modifications in practices or policies for board consideration. One board member has links to the federal Department of Education and shares information about potential regulatory changes with the board. To maintain fidelity to the school's original mission and charter, the board allocated funds to hire the founding principal to return as a consultant as the transition to new school leader moves forward.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. School Leadership	a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning. b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities. c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school. d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.
2. Professional Climate	a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication. b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers. c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students' needs. d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice. e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.
3. Contractual Relationships ✓*N/A*	a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider. b. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures. c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

1. Element: ***School Leadership:***
    - The leadership team at Vertus maintains close relationships with all staff members to ensure a common understanding and commitment of effort to the school's mission and goals. The 11-member Vertus leadership team includes representatives responsible for the academic, character development, and operational components of the organization. Leaders meet regularly to monitor progress toward full implementation of the school's design elements. The school adopted a distributed leadership model to enable staff and their supervisors to develop the personal relationships that are core to the school's design.

- Roles and responsibilities for staff, administrators and the board are defined in the *Vertus Way* document. The document includes standard procedures to maintain organizational effectiveness and consistent focus on the school's mission and key design elements. In interviews, stakeholders clearly described their responsibilities and detailed how their actions support student success. Monthly reports to the board from school administrators document each group's actions in detail, and board minutes reflect careful analysis of the school's successes and challenges. Members of the school community carry out their responsibilities for governance, operations, academic programs and character development consistent with their role definitions.
- Communication systems at Vertus are clear and comprehensive. Internal emails and frequent and regular meetings connect staff and administrators. Preceptors communicate biweekly with families about their student's progress, and periodic family newsletters and the website provide information about school wide events. Administrators described the weekly staff meetings as an opportunity to review data from surveys or assessments and to engage all staff in professional development and collaborative problem-solving conversations.
- Vertus has recruited and retained a stable staff of key personnel as well as a stable teaching staff. Leadership changes have been carefully structured with the replacement for the founding principal mentored by the departing leader to ensure continuity. Administrators attributed their ability to retain a diverse staff to the culture of personal relationships that allows supervisors and staff to engage in honest conversation and productive feedback to promote continual improvement in staff effectiveness.

2. Element: ***Professional Climate:***
    - Vertus is fully staffed with skilled personnel to manage operations, finance, and technology as well as the academic and character components of the school's mission. The school employs 19 preceptors as mentors of teams of 12-15 students, and seven teaching fellows to work alongside the preceptors during lab classes to monitor and support students as they complete their online coursework. Eleven classroom teachers provide content instruction that complements and supplements online courses. Eight special education teachers and one special education coordinator provide in-class and pull-out support for the 50 special education students. Three deans and two behavior specialists oversee the work of the preceptors and coordinate recognition activities that reflect student growth toward the school's character goals and, as necessary, take remedial steps as defined in the *Vertus Way* handbook. The school recently added two counselors, one working with students nearing graduation to develop individualized career plans and track career readiness.
    - Vertus schedules a combination of daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings among staff in team, house, and department groupings to ensure collaboration in support of student success. Formal meetings are scheduled weekly by house for teachers and special educators to review student progress and revise instructional strategies as needed. Preceptors meet with their dean weekly, and one-on-one with their lead preceptor. Weekly staff meetings engage all staff in discussions of topics of common interest, and biweekly department meetings provide opportunities for content area teachers to align the curriculum with students' needs.
    - Vertus ensures staff has the skills and expertise through weekly professional development for teachers, and weekly circle meetings for preceptors. Administrators noted that teachers and preceptors have opportunities to take on additional responsibilities and staff members

mentioned this as a factor contributing to their satisfaction with their work at the school. Recently, the Vertus board engaged with Relay Graduate School of Education to offer educators the opportunity to pursue advanced training. Administrators reported that staff pursuing certification are enrolled in the Relay program.

- Vertus has systems in place to monitor instructional quality and organizational effectiveness consisting of frequent review of both qualitative and quantitative data. Student progress in the online courses is monitored continually by the software and classroom teachers use daily exit tickets and biweekly Regents-aligned tests and quizzes to assess whether the academic program is preparing students for success. Qualitative data gathered through surveys and regular classroom visits documented by the principal and instructional coach provide additional insight into the effectiveness of the academic program. Deans, preceptors, and behavior specialists track behavior infractions and demonstrations of character to assess the impact of the character development program. In conjunction with measures of student performance, administrators use a common set of evaluation criteria to assess staff effectiveness for each of their direct reports. The board receives regular reports on school enrollment and operations from the chief operation officer and the board finance committee tracks revenues and expenditures monthly. According to the board, these detailed reports provide a comprehensive view of the effectiveness of each aspect of the organization.
- Vertus surveys staff twice yearly to monitor satisfaction and to forecast staffing needs. The school provided documents describing staff meetings during which family, student and staff survey results were examined and staff engaged in discussion of possible strategies to address concerns raised in the surveys. Vertus has retained a high proportion of its professional staff across the charter term, and, on the NYSED survey, 16 of 19 teachers agreed that the school is a long-term option for them, citing opportunities for professional growth, common values, and a supportive environment as reasons for their satisfaction. The two respondents who disagreed cited time demands and pay as factors that might motivate them to leave. The board explained that teachers are asked to work a longer day and year without increased compensation, and administrators reported that the supportive, collegial climate contributes to teachers' commitment to the mission of the school despite the demanding workload.

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

Element	*Indicators*
1. Mission and Key Design Elements	a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter. b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

1. Element: ***Mission and Key Design Elements:***
    - Board members, administrators, teachers and students shared a common understanding of the mission of Vertus Charter School to include two key elements—preparation for college and career and building leaders of character. On the NYSED survey, teachers mentioned respect, high academic and behavioral expectations, building relationships and blended learning as components of the school's mission. Students in the focus group enthusiastically described their personal growth academically and socially and credited their personal relationships with supportive adults at the school for the changes they've experienced.
    - The key design elements in the Vertus charter, referred to as the "four pillars," are moving toward full implementation in the school's educational practices and operations.
        - Strong relationships: The school has established practices including a high staff to student ratio, frequent, regular and honest conversations between supervisors and staff, and positive support from administrators and board to create a culture of shared responsibility and accountability between all members of the school community. The school has met its goals for student and staff attendance and retention to demonstrate effective implementation of this key design element.
        - Personalized, year-round academics: The blended curriculum of online- and classroom-based instruction individualized for each student represents faithful implementation of the school's personalized academic program. Despite unanticipated funding challenges, the school continues its year-round program toward the goal of achieving at least 1.5 years of academic growth for each year at the school.
        - Career preparation: In its original charter, Vertus set a graduation goal that included the completion of one college level course for at least 75% of students. Gaps in student readiness and financial concerns led to a board decision to revise the goal while retaining career preparation as a key design element. The school hired a counselor to work with upper level students to create a career plan and adopted a program to track career readiness. Board members reported their interest in expanding work opportunities for Vertus students similar to the eNable program currently housed at the school.
        - Character education: Vertus implements the character education design element through comprehensive and consistent attention to the character traits essential for success in college and career. Clear behavior expectations defined in the Vertus

creed are recited daily at the morning meeting led by students who have earned Brothers Keeper status. Regular celebrations of students who demonstrate desired academic and character traits and close relationships with the preceptors and other staff foster positive growth and change as reported by students in the focus group and on the annual survey. The structured character curriculum delivered by the preceptors reinforces the school's expectations. The school has met its measurable goal of reducing discipline infractions between January and June of each year, and is piloting an additional measure, the "character card," to track progress on desirable personal qualities.

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.

Finding: Approaches

Element	*Indicators*
1. *Targets are met*	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. *Targets are not met*	a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets. 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. 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.

See Attachment 1 for data table and additional information.

According to NYSED data, in the 2017-2018 school year, 61% of students were retained in Vertus Charter School compared with 58% in the district of location.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:

1. Element: **Targets are Not Met**
    - Vertus enrolls students with disabilities at or near the same proportion as the district of location. A higher percentage of Vertus students are economically disadvantaged than in RCSD. Vertus enrolls fewer students overall than its chartered maximum and a smaller proportion of ELLs/MLLs than RCSD. The school has submitted a request to NYSED to amend the charter to reduce the maximum enrollment by 45 students. Board members explained that they recognized increasing educational options in Rochester and their data suggests greater competition for students. Board members also noted their concerns about the limits of the facility to house the programs to support the number of students proposed in the original charter.
    - The recruitment strategies implemented by Vertus to attract and retain students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students have been successful in meeting its enrollment targets for these populations. Board members said they have recently established a stronger relationship with Ibero, a community organization serving the Hispanic community in Rochester, to improve their ability to recruit and retain English language learners/multi-lingual learners.

- The Vertus board receives monthly reports from the chief operating officer describing enrollment levels and recruitment activities and the board uses the data to assess the effectiveness of its efforts. The board explained they are in the process of establishing a Community Engagement and Recruitment Committee as a board level initiative to build the school's visibility in the community.

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 the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to: those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meetings Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements. b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed, and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements. c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.

Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

1. Element: ***Legal Compliance:***
   - Vertus Charter School has established systems to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter. The board reported that its audit firm informs them of changes to regulations about finance operations. The job description of the chief operating officer includes the responsibility to monitor changes in state and federal laws affecting charter schools, and the board chair, principal and chief operating officer participate in webinars sponsored by NYSED to learn of changes in procedures or expectations.
   - The Vertus board has taken appropriate actions to modify procedures when informed of defects or changes in requirements. The board revised its by-laws to clarify remote meeting participation, and regularly reviews and updates its conflict of interest policy. To ensure compliance, the board established a new practice of asking the board attorney to conduct a comprehensive review of its policies bi-annually. The school received one formal complaint over the charter term which was resolved through the process defined in its by-laws.
   - The Vertus board followed NYSED CSO procedures to request several non-material revisions to its charter, including reduction in enrollment, modifying program description language, adding job titles and revising titles to more accurately reflect staffing needs and responsibilities.

Attachment 1
Vertus Charter School: Benchmark 1

Indicator 1: All Schools

1.a.i. Accountability - ESEA Accountability Designation:
In the 2017-2018 school year, the ESEA Accountability designation for the Vertus Charter School was Good Standing.

1.b.i. Similar Schools Comparison – Comparative Proficiency:
Vertus Charter School identified several schools from the CSO provided list that they believe are demographically similar (several identified comparison schools had been closed and NYC schools were eliminated for comparison purposes by the school). Because Vertus enrolls 100% male and 73% African American students, they screened for schools that were at least 40% male and at least 70% African American. When comparisons are made among the six remaining schools, Vertus was second only to the Brooklyn Institute for Liberal Arts in the four-year graduation rate (80% to 96%). Vertus students' 8th grade proficiency rates in ELA and math were at 9% and 1%, respectively, in most instances well below the other comparison schools. Further analysis showed that Vertus performed comparatively well on individual Regents exams when compared to the same group of schools.

Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes (The school does not serve students in kindergarten or Grades 1-8).

Indicator 3: High School Outcomes

Note: A "." In any table indicates that the data is suppressed, no student sat for the exam, or the exam was not given.

3.a.i. Regents Testing Outcomes – Aggregate Annual Regents Outcomes: See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Annual Regents Outcomes: Aggregate

	2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Vertus Charter School	NYS	Variance to NYS	Vertus Charter School	NYS	Variance to NYS	Vertus Charter School	NYS	Variance to NYS
Algebra I (Common Core)	100%	72%	+28	65%	75%	-10	59%	70%	-11
English Language Arts (Common Core)	.	.	.	88%	84%	+4	65%	79%	-14
Geometry (Common Core)	.	.	.	67%	63%	+4	70%	67%	+3
Global History	.	.	.	81%	68%	+13	71%	39%	+32
Global History Transition	.	.	.	.	.	.	62%	73%	-11
Living Environment	100%	78%	+22	72%	74%	-2	73%	73%	0
Physical Setting/Earth Science	100%	71%	+29	60%	69%	-9	54%	73%	-19
US History and Government	.	.	.	.	.	.	96%	81%	+15

NOTES:
(1) Data in the table above represents all students who passed the Annual Regents and Regents Common Core Examinations (score of 65 or better).

(2) In some cases, the all students' subgroup did not have enough tested students to form a representative sample (<5 students). In those cases, the testing data was withheld.

3.a.ii. Regents Testing Outcomes – Subgroup Annual Regents Outcomes: See Table 2 below.

Table 2: Annual Regents Outcomes: All Subgroups

Subject	School Year	Students with Disabilities (Variance to the State)	ELL/MLL (Variance to the State)	Economically Disadvantaged (Variance to the State)
Algebra I (Common Core)	2015-2016	. .	. .	100% (+37)
	2016-2017	29% (-18)	. .	65% (-2)
	2017-2018	41% (0)	67% (+19)	60% (0)
English Language Arts (Common Core)	2016-2017	. .	. .	88% (+11)
	2017-2018	50% (-2)	67% (+20)	65% (-6)
Geometry (Common Core)	2016-2017	. .	. .	75% (+25)
	2017-2018	. .	. .	72% (+18)
Global History	2016-2017	. .	. .	80% (+22)
	2017-2018	30% (+7)	. .	71% (+36)
Global History Transition	2017-2018	42% (-3)	60% (+16)	64% (+2)
Living Environment	2015-2016	. .	. .	100% (+31)
	2016-2017	33% (-12)	. .	72% (+8)
	2017-2018	53% (+8)	70% (+26)	71% (+8)
Physical Setting/Earth Science	2015-2016	. .	. .	100% (+43)
	2016-2017	. .	. .	60% (+5)
	2017-2018	33% (-12)	. .	53% (-7)
US History and Government	2017-2018	. .	. .	96% (+23)

NOTES:
(1) Data in the table above represents students within their respective subgroups who passed the Annual Regents and Regents Common Core Examinations (score of 65 or better).
(2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.
(3) In some cases, student subgroups still did not have enough tested students to form a representative sample (<5 students). For these subgroups the testing data was withheld.

3.a.iii. High School Outcomes – Aggregate Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Table 3 below.

Table 3: High School **4- Year** Cohort Outcomes for All Students: School and NYS Level Aggregates

Subject	**2014 Cohort**		
	School	State	Variance
ELA	56%	84%	-28
Global History	60%	77%	-17
Math	73%	83%	-10
Science	73%	83%	-10
US History	42%	80%	-38

NOTE:
(1) Data in the table above represents the percentage of students within each cohort passing Annual Regents tests or equivalents (score of 65 or better).

3.a.iv. High School Outcomes – Subgroup Total Cohort Regents Testing Outcomes: See Table 4 below.

Table 4: High School Total **4-Year** Regents Cohort Outcomes by Subgroups

Subject	**School Year**	**Students with Disabilities (Variance to the State)**	**Economically Disadvantaged (Variance to the State)**
ELA	2014 Cohort (2017-2018)	11% (-43)	58% (-20)
Global History	2014 Cohort (2017-2018)	33% (-9)	63% (-6)
Math	2014 Cohort (2017-2018)	33% (-15)	77% (-1)
Science	2014 Cohort (2017-2018)	33% (-19)	74% (-2)
US History	2014 Cohort (2017-2018)	0% (-48)	44% (-28)

NOTES:
(1) Data in the table above represents the percentage of students within each cohort passing Annual Regents tests or equivalents (score of 65 or better).
(2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.
(3) In some cases, student subgroups still did not have enough tested students to form a representative sample (<5 students). For these subgroups the testing data was withheld.

3.b.i. and 3b.ii. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Cohort Graduation Rates: See Tables 5 and 6 below.

Table 5: High School Diploma Types Awarded

		2014 Cohort		
		Vertus Charter School	NYS	Variance
Local Diplomas	All Students	6%	6%	0
	Students with Disabilities	11%	25%	-14
	Economically Disadvantaged	5%	8%	-3
Regents Diplomas	All Students	54%	44%	+10
	Students with Disabilities	22%	32%	-10
	Economically Disadvantaged	56%	50%	+6
Advanced Regents Diplomas	All Students	4%	34%	-30
	Students with Disabilities	0%	4%	-4
	Economically Disadvantaged	5%	20%	-15

NOTES:

(1) In some cases, student subgroups did not have enough students to form a representative sample (<5 students). For these subgroups the graduation rate data was withheld.

(2) (2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.

(3) (3) Diplomas awarded reported above are as of August.

(4) (4) The percentage of diploma types awarded are based on the total cohort, NOT the number of graduates.

Table 6: High School Total **4-Year** Graduation Rates

		All Students	Students with Disabilities	Economically Disadvantaged
2014 Cohort	School	65%[2]	33%	65%
	NYS	83%	60%	76%
	Variance to NYS	-18	-27	-11
	NYS Target	80%	80%	80%
	Variance to NYS Target	-15	-47	-15

NOTES:

(1) In some cases, student subgroups did not have enough students to form a representative sample (<5 students). For these subgroups the graduation rate data was withheld.

(2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined

(3) Graduation rates reported above are as of August.

3.b.iii. and 3.b.iv. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup On-Track to Graduate: *Vertus Charter School*

The 2015 cohort of all students at Vertus Charter School is 51% on-track towards graduation as evidenced by the number of students in the cohort who have successfully passed at least three of the five required Regents exams by the end of their third year of high school. This fails to meet the target of 75% on-track.

The 2015 cohorts of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged subgroups at Vertus Charter School are, respectively, 14% and 54% on-track towards graduation as evidenced by the number of students in the cohort who have successfully passed at least three of the five required Regents exams by the end of their third year of high school. This fails to meet the target of 75% on-track.

3.b.v. and 3.b.vi. Graduation Outcomes – Aggregate and Subgroup Student Persistence: Vertus Charter School

The 2014 cohort of all students at Vertus Charter School had a 26% persistence rate from 9th grade to a 4- year graduation. This fails to meet the target persistence rate of 80%.

[2] Note that Vertus Charter School disputes that graduation rate published by data.nysed.gov. Vertus claims that the actual 4year August graduation rate for the 2014 cohort at the school is 74%.

Table 7: Student Demographics:
Vertus Charter School Compared to District of Location (Rochester CSD))

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	Vertus Charter School	Rochester City School District	Variance	Vertus Charter School	Rochester City School District	Variance
Students with Disabilities	21%	21%	0	17%	20%	-3
ELL/MLL	4%	16%	-12	8%	18%	-10
Economically Disadvantaged	100%	88%	+12	86%	87%	-1

NOTES:

(1) Data in the table above represents a comparison between those grades served in the charter school to only those same grades in the district.

(2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.

According to NYSED data, in the 2017-2018 school year, 67% of students were retained in Vertus Charter School compared with 96% in the district of location.