improvement of its academic program and operations. **Metric 7.1.** School leadership will recruit, hire, mange, train, and retain a diverse staff. **Metric 7.2.** The staff will annually evaluate the school program against the charter goals. **Metric 7.3.** As measured by the staff survey, 80% of staff indicate that PD is effective.

**Benchmark 8 – Mission and Key Design Elements:** The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements outlined in its charter.

**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, ELLs, and students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch, or has demonstrated extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students. **Metric 9.1.** The school meets or exceeds projected enrollment by October 1 each year. **Metric 9.2.** The school enrolls a population that reflects the demographics of the surrounding community. **Metric 9.3.** At least 85% of grade-eligible students re-enroll. **Metric 9.4.** The average daily attendance rate is at least 95%.

**Benchmark 10 – Legal Compliance:** School has complied with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of its charter.

# B. Key Design Elements

**Key Design Elements and Rationale.** Our key design elements are grounded in six core beliefs supported by empirical research and the detailed study of successful urban schools across the country.[2](#_bookmark0) Specifically, our key design elements are informed by the work being done in Uncommon Schools, Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem, and Brooke Charter Schools in Boston. The empirical research that principally guides our design comes from *The 2011 Fryer Paper*, which outlines the key drivers of academic achievement in urban charter schools: frequent teacher feedback, data to guide instruction, high-dosage small-group instruction, increased instructional time, and high academic and behavioral expectations.[3](#_bookmark1) To reach our mission of placing all students on the path to college, all design elements are driven by these core beliefs.

1. **College Begins in Kindergarten**. We believe that college preparation begins on the first day of kindergarten; it is our responsibility to provide all students with the knowledge, habits, and mindsets needed to be on the path to college beginning day one.[4](#_bookmark2) True college preparation requires ample time for high-quality instruction.[5](#_bookmark3) To ensure students are getting the instructional time they need, we provide an **extended school day and year**.[6](#_bookmark4)

2 Through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Lead Founder Cary Finnegan has studied nationally recognized, high achieving, urban charter schools such as Brooke in Boston, MA, North Star in Newark, NJ, South Bronx Classical (BES school) in Bronx, NY, Purpose Prep (BES school) in Nashville, TN, and Equitas Academy (BES school) in Los Angeles, CA. These schools, composed primarily of low-income, minority students, consistently score above local and state averages on state assessments.

3 Dobbie, Will, and Roland Fryer, “Getting Beneath the Veil of Effective Schools: Evidence from New York City.” *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. December 2012. [http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie\_fryer\_revision\_final.pdf.](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_revision_final.pdf)

4 Chetty, Raj, et al., *“How Does Your Kindergarten Classroom Affect Your Earnings? ”* NBER Working Paper 16381, September 2010.

5 Silva, E. (2007). *On the clock: Rethinking the way schools use time.* Washington, DC: Education Sector.

6 “A child’s early language exposure is increasingly acknowledged as pivotal in language development and, more importantly, in ultimate educational and intellectual achievement. Studies have demonstrated a large inequality in children’s early language environments, with children from families of lower socioeconomic status hearing approximately thirty million words less than their peers from families of higher socioeconomic status. Furthermore, the number of words a child is exposed to between ages 0-3 is significantly correlated to the child’s ultimate IQ and academic success.” [http://thirtymillionwords.org/tmw-initiative/.](http://thirtymillionwords.org/tmw-initiative/)

Extended learning time, when used strategically, yields significant academic benefits, especially for specific student subgroups such as ELLs.[7](#_bookmark5) Additional instructional time will allow students to develop the skills they need to be on the path to college.[8](#_bookmark6) We **prioritize time** in our extended model on the core subjects. All students will be reading and writing at or above grade level by third grade.[9](#_bookmark7) All will receive approximately 200 minutes of daily literacy instruction. That time will be used for a balanced literacy approach: students will engage in interactive read aloud, shared reading, small-group guided reading, and independent reading each day.[10](#_bookmark8) Targeted guided reading provides students the opportunity for phonics work and word study, critical to the development of reading skills. The balanced approach between print and language-rich learning opportunities is an accepted best practice supported by research and national literacy experts.[11](#_bookmark9) We will provide targeted development and support to teachers so they can implement rigorous literacy instruction, guided by principles in *Reading Reconsidered*.[12](#_bookmark10) We will incorporate close reading and challenging texts so students develop into enthusiastic, analytical readers. A **love of literacy** will be cultivated across classrooms and throughout the school community. Each classroom will have a library of books labeled by level and organized by genre or topic; students will have independent reading books with them throughout the day. In addition to 200 minutes of daily literacy instruction, students will be expected to read at home every night; families will sign nightly reading logs, provided in the home language, to ensure literacy expectations are consistent in school and at home. With the goal of placing students on the path to college, we will develop **rigorous curricula** and deliver **quality instruction** across content areas. To ensure students are being challenged and engaging with high-quality content, we will select research-based, standards-aligned curricula across subject areas and create internal curricula as necessary. Within each subject area, we will break down content using essential questions and key ideas that students need to answer and understand to master an objective. Teachers will use high-level questioning and prompting to ensure students are doing the cognitive heavy lifting. When a student answers a question, rather than addressing the answer with “Right” or “Wrong,” teachers will respond with, “Why do you think that?,” “What is the evidence that supports your claim,” or “Do you agree or disagree with ?,” so students develop the habits of justifying their answers and evaluating the answers of classmates. College prep academics will be accompanied by supportive college messaging. Each classroom will be named for a college/university students might aim to attend. There will be “Class of ” banners in each room, college banners will adorn hallways, and bulletin boards will provide inspirational information about colleges and universities. All students will receive the message that they are working hard every day to be on the path to college so they can live lives of opportunity.

1. **Transformational Teachers are Paramount**. We believe that **excellent teaching** is key to student achievement. Students who have the most effective teachers can learn two to three additional months’ of math and reading content and skill each year, are more likely to go to college and earn higher salaries, and less likely to become teenage parents.[13](#_bookmark11) **Every classroom**

7 [https://www.timeandlearning.org/sites/default/files/resources/ell\_report\_12.14.15.pdf.](https://www.timeandlearning.org/sites/default/files/resources/ell_report_12.14.15.pdf)

8 The extended day and year approach has been applied and proven effective at other high-performing urban charter schools, including Uncommon Schools in Brooklyn, Purpose Prep in Nashville, and Brooke Charter Schools in Boston.

9 [http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-Early\_Warning\_Full\_Report-2010.pdf.](http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-Early_Warning_Full_Report-2010.pdf)

10 Silva, E. (2007). *On the Clock: Rethinking the way schools use time*. Washington, DC: Education Sector.

11 Allington, R. L., *What really matters for struggling readers.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2012 (3rd ed.).

12 Lemov, Doug, “*Reading Reconsidered*,” San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2016.

13 [https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP\_Irreplaceables\_2012.pdf.](https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_Irreplaceables_2012.pdf)

**will be led by an engaging, highly skilled, professionally supported, and mission-aligned teacher** so students make the gains they need to be on the path to college. We will invest the time and resources necessary to recruit, develop, and retain the strongest teachers. As explained in a recent McKinsey study, “The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. Research has shown that of all the controllable factors in an education system, the most important by far is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher. The world’s best-performing school systems make great teaching their ‘north star.’ They have strategic and systematic approaches to attract, develop, retain, and ensure the efficacy of the most talented educators— and they make sure great teachers serve students of all socioeconomic backgrounds.”[14](#_bookmark12) **Teachers will be recruited and developed based on our core tenets of effective teaching**: hustle, humility, and hard work. Every adult will exhibit an urgent commitment to maximizing learning time and quickly improving instructional practice. Teachers will be trained on strategies that allow them to create a fast-paced, outcomes-oriented, and engaging classroom.[15](#_bookmark13) The goals we set for students can be achieved only with teachers who exemplify the hustle that it takes to get each student on the path to college. Humility is another core tenet, as all teachers, regardless of expertise or experience, must be willing to grow and improve.[16](#_bookmark14) We will provide **regular, targeted feedback and teacher coaching grounded in a teacher-effectiveness rubric**, ensuring teachers are able self-reflect and receive comments on strengths and areas for improvement.[17](#_bookmark15) There is no replacement for hard work. Grounded in taxonomies in *Teach Like a Champion*[18](#_bookmark16) and practice techniques described in *Practice Perfect*,[19](#_bookmark17) we will provide **extensive professional development and practice opportunities for teachers**. Staff will be expected to give full effort and dedication to their own growth by bringing their best, hard-working selves to every PD opportunity. PD will be based on observational and student-achievement data and will be strategically created with teacher strengths and needs in mind. We will expect all teachers to have a 110% effort attitude toward our work and a strongly held belief that our students deserve nothing less.

1. **Data Drives Decisions**. All work will be grounded in data. With the goal of driving student achievement, we will use data to inform instruction in addition to measuring the effectiveness of our systems, procedures, and school culture. *Driven by Data* outlines key principles of data-driven decision-making and the positive impact of a strong culture of data on schools and student achievement.[20](#_bookmark18) **(1) Assessment:** Create rigorous interim assessments that provide meaningful data. **(2) Analysis:** Examine results to identify causes of strengths and shortcomings. **(3) Action:** Teach effectively what students most need to learn. **(4) Culture:** Create environment in which data-driven instruction can survive and thrive. Data will inform all instructional decisions. We will strategically administer a **variety of assessments each year**, including reliable, nationally normed, and computer-adaptive assessments, state assessments, interim benchmark assessments, unit assessments, and cumulative end-of-year assessments. Teachers will use a backward-planning approach to design classroom instruction, using assessments to create aligned, rigorous lessons. We will use

14 [http://mckinseyonsociety.com/downloads/reports/Education/Closing\_the\_talent\_gap.pdf.](http://mckinseyonsociety.com/downloads/reports/Education/Closing_the_talent_gap.pdf)

15 We will use strategies from Lemov’s *Teach Like a Champion* to maintain high levels of engagement, participation, and hustle, including Change the Pace, Brighten Lines, Circulate, All Hands, Work the Clock, Every Minute Matters, Cold Call, Call and Response, Break It Down, Pepper, At Bats, Control the Game, Turn and Talk, and Habits of Discussion.

16 Stone, Douglas and Sheila Heen, “*Thanks for the Feedback*,” NY: Penguin, 2015.

17 Refer to **Section III.E** for more information on how we plan to evaluate and support teachers.

18 Lemov, Doug. “*Teach Like a Champion 2.0*.” San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2015.

19 Lemov, Doug “*Practice Perfect*.” San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2012.

20 Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. “*Driven by Data.”* San Francisco, CA: Wiley, 2010.

formative assessments, including daily exit tickets and weekly quizzes, to monitor progress and to adjust instruction. Data from these assessments will be analyzed routinely by the leadership team and teachers, whether individually, through grade-level and content-team meetings, or during five dedicated data-analysis professional development days so that data informs daily decisions. Brooklyn RISE will analyze classroom-level and schoolwide data so that the school takes ownership of student results. Classrooms will have data trackers posted, and, when students are in Upper Academy (Grades 3-5), they will take responsibility for tracking and evaluating their own data. Daily data collection, close analysis of student outcomes, and strategic action plans will ensure that every decision made in our building is driven by data.[21](#_bookmark19)

1. **Structure, Joy, and Character Create Community**. We know students learn best in predictable, reliable environments.[22](#_bookmark20) We will cultivate a **structured and joyful school culture,** holding staff and students to the highest expectations. Students are most successful in a **predictable environment** in which they consistently know what is expected. Students will always feel physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe, which in turn will allow them to take academic risks and engage in challenging coursework. Modeled after the best practices of successful organizations, our school will “sweat the small stuff” so that staff and students remain focused on high-quality teaching and engaged learning.[23](#_bookmark21) Brooklyn RISE believes in cultivating a **joyful learning environment** for students. We celebrate students when they meet and exceed expectations and support them in improving decision-making skills and strategies when they do not. Joy will pervade the school community through positive narration, chants and cheers, daily shout-outs related to academic and character development, and weekly community celebrations that will highlight classrooms and students who have met or exceeded schoolwide goals.[24](#_bookmark22) Brooklyn RISE students will develop pride in themselves as well as the school community around them. Along with academic knowledge and skills, students can and should be **developing character and leadership skills**. Strong character skills and a sense of self-efficacy are directly linked to a student’s ability to set ambitious goals and to do the work to achieve them.[25](#_bookmark23) Our **RISE** values of **R**esilience, **I**ntegrity, **S**cholarship, and **E**nthusiasm will be taught during orientation and reinforced through curricula, Morning Meetings, and Closing Circles.[26](#_bookmark24) Students will **RISE** to every occasion, working toward being their best selves. By creating spaces for purposeful character development and social-emotional supports, we will further ensure our school embodies our motto: “With **Voice**. With **Confidence**. With **Purpose**.”
2. **Mindsets Matter**. The **development of key mindsets** is essential to staying on the path to, and persisting through, college. Our community will embody mindsets that lead to long-term academic, professional, and personal success. We will embrace challenge and persist when faced with obstacles because we believe every trial is an opportunity to grow. We view effort as necessary in all we do because nothing is achieved without hard work. We will learn from feedback and be inspired by others’ success because we grow best as a team. We will **teach growth and risk-taking mindsets** such that our students will not fear challenge or failure.

21 Data practices will be largely influenced by Bambrick-Santoyo’s *Driven By Data*.

22 [http://www.paultough.com/helping/pdf/Helping-Children-Succeed-Paul-Tough.pdf?pdf=hcs-pdf-landing.](http://www.paultough.com/helping/pdf/Helping-Children-Succeed-Paul-Tough.pdf?pdf=hcs-pdf-landing)

23 “Sweating the Small Stuff” is an approach to school culture influenced by Lemov’s *Practice Perfect* and Pat William’s *Coach Wooden’s Greatest Secret*.

24 These practices are being successfully used at schools like Brooke Charters in Boston, the Uncommon Schools network, and the Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem.

25 Peebles-Wilkins, W. “Help Close the Achievement Gap.” *Children & Schools*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2005, pp. 195–196.

26 Morning Meeting and Closing Circle will be daily classroom gatherings based on the Responsive Classroom approach developed by the Northeast Foundation for Children. It is an approach to teaching that emphasizes the social, emotional, and academic growth of elementary school students in a strong, safe learning environment. Brooke Charter Schools in Boston, MA successfully infuse Responsive Classroom approaches into their daily schedules.

Students will learn in environments where error and disagreement are normalized and celebrated as opportunities to better understand themselves as problem solvers. Students who develop an academic-growth mindset persevere through problems and are more likely to succeed academically, graduate from college, and have successful careers.[27](#_bookmark25) Students will develop the mindsets “I can,” “I want,” and “I will.” Students will have a strong sense of self- efficacy and will know they ***can*** accomplish their goals. They will ***want*** to do the work because they will be invested in reaching those goals. They will know that, if they work hard and persist through challenges, they ***will*** grow and achieve. We believe there are learning habits that students need to succeed in their academic and professional lives. We will **teach and reinforce the core college-bound learning** habits of (1) discussion, (2) collaboration and cooperation,

(3) beginning with the end in mind, and (4) organization.[28](#_bookmark26) These habits will be placed on a scope and sequence to ensure they are being explicitly taught and reinforced in a methodical way. We will begin every year teaching and reinforcing habits of discussion to ensure students have the speaking and listening skills they need to engage in high-level discussions with peers.

1. **Family Partnerships**. We believe that families are key partners in ensuring students’ academic and character growth. The relationship between home and school will be built before the school year begins through home visits made by members of the leadership team. Home visits are critical to understanding families’ hopes for their children and allow staff to clearly articulate Brooklyn RISE’s expectations. During home visits, families will be invited to sign a Brooklyn RISE Promise Document that clearly defines the commitments Brooklyn RISE makes to students and families and the commitments families make to the Brooklyn RISE community.[29](#_bookmark27) There must be **ongoing, consistent communication** so that school and home work together to place the student on the path to college. To provide multiple avenues for family engagement, Brooklyn RISE will host a variety of schoolwide parent events throughout the year. There will be nine Family Nights with different themes such as Learning about Literacy, Game Night, and Character and Community. We will communicate opportunities for family volunteering and track hours of involvement so that we can celebrate families when they are able to volunteer in the school. Similarly, we will give shout-outs and awards to families to acknowledge excellence in attendance, homework completion, and dress-code compliance since families play a huge role in supporting those specific elements of school success.

# C. Community and Students to be Served

**Community.** All students, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, home language, or zip code, have the right to an excellent education that will allow them to thrive and to be on the path to college. School-aged children living in the Sunset Park neighborhood of Brooklyn do not currently enjoy this fundamental right. We are specifically targeting 39th to 65th Streets between 2nd and 9th Avenues, as this area of Sunset Park has only five New York City Department of Education (“NYC DOE”) elementary schools and no elementary school choice options. Free and reduced lunch rates range from 78% to 98% across these schools, on average 17% of enrolled elementary students in neighborhood schools are identified as receiving special education services, and 40% to 60% of students are identified as ELLs. The elementary schools in this area

27 Dweck, Carol, *“Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.*” NY: Ballantine Books, 2007.

28 Farrington, Camille, et al., *“Teaching Adolescents to Become Leaners.”* CCSR Literature Review, June 2012.

29 The Promise Document will not be required for enrollment, and no child will be denied enrollment if a family chooses not to sign the document or not to welcome a home visit.