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Abstract: Replicating & Expanding Success for Thousands of NYC Children

Since opening its first charter school in Harlem in 2006, Success Academy has maintained an excellent track record for operational efficiency and high academic achievement among students of color, English Language Learners (ELL), and special needs children alike. SA has reversed the achievement gap for thousands of children: 76% of its scholars qualify for free or reduced price lunch; 86% are children of color. For five consecutive years, SA students have achieved tremendous academic success, ranking in the top percentages of all schools in the city and state. On the 2013 state exams, 100% of SA students passed science; 82% passed math, compared to 30% of NYC students; 58% passed English Language Arts, compared with 26% of NYC kids. SA's ELL and special needs students outperformed their citywide peers by dramatic margins.

Even as SA students have excelled academically, they have also benefitted from a robust, engaging curriculum: science five days a week, chess, art, music, dance, and sports. They know the thrill of competing – and winning – at national chess and debate championships. They have met famous writers and journalists, chess grand masters, and Olympic champions. Regardless of personal circumstances, they have experienced a world rich with art, music, theater and dance.

The vast majority of NYC public schools are failing to help children, especially children of color, achieve at a level that will prepare them for college. There is great demand for the high-quality education SA schools offer – as this year's wait list of 10,000 shows. SA is determined to meet this need. As of August 2014, SA will operate 32 K-12 charter schools in New York City, serving 9,000 primarily low-income, minority students in neighborhoods deprived of safe, high-quality schools. With the help of this grant and other public and private funding, SA can replicate and expand by opening 20 elementary, 10 middle, and 2 high schools over the next five years, educating more than 26,000 students.