

## Genesee school charter renewed

Despite criticism, five more years

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Genesee Community Charter School had its state charter renewed for five more years this week, ending uncertainty over whether the school's distinctive demographics would pass state muster.

Twenty-five percent of the school's 216 students are economically disadvantaged, compared to 90 percent in the Rochester School District. Ten percent have disabilities, compared to 18 percent in the district.

State law requires charter schools to have comparable ratios of poverty and students with disabilities as the districts from which they draw their students. Critics charge Genesee Community Charter School, which is located on the Rochester Museum and Science Center campus, with avoiding a proportionate share of poor students.

For its part, the school says it is trying to mirror the demographics of Monroe County, not the city of Rochester. It is the only public school in the city with a poverty rate below 40 percent, a threshold research has shown to be a tipping point in terms of school performance.

The school with the next-fewest poor students, School 23 in the Park Avenue neighborhood, has a rate of 67 percent.

Its charter — the license to operate a charter school — was up for renewal this year, and the New York State Education Department raised questions about why its demographics didn't mirror those of the city more closely. Those questions, however, did not ultimately trip up the school's application for another fiveyear term. That term was granted this week, School Leader Lisa Wing said.

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