



Charter Schools Institute

The State University of New York

SUNY Board Approves Application to Establish a New Charter School

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New York - Upon recommendation of the Charter Schools Institute and the Charter Schools Committee of the State University of New York Board of Trustees, the full Board of Trustees today voted to approve an application to establish the Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls in Albany, New York.

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 initially set a cap of 100 charter schools, which was met in January of 2006. In April of 2007, the New York State Legislature voted to raise the cap to 200 charter schools, effective July 1, 2007, as part of the 2007-08 budget process. Today's action brings the total number of new charter schools approved by the State University Trustees since the cap raise to 22.

Details on the approved school follow:

- **Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls:** Proposed location is Albany City School District with a planned opening in August 2010; 1st year proposed enrollment/grades served - 125 students/grade 9; 5th year proposed enrollment/grades served - 375 students/grades 9-12.

The mission of Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls is to prepare young women to complete high school with a Regents diploma so they will have the opportunity to succeed in college. Albany Leadership High will achieve this mission by providing a complete high school curriculum that ensures every student will attain the skills and coursework necessary for a Regents diploma.

All applications received by the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on behalf of the State University Trustees undergo a rigorous and thorough review not only by Institute staff but by a panel of nationally renowned experts from the fields of education and other related areas, representing the charter and traditional school arenas. Pursuant to its review protocols, the Institute interviews the lead applicant and founding trustees for all submitted applications. Those applications the Institute considers moving forward—based on staff review, feedback from the external expert panels and the personal interview—move into the Request for Amendment (RFA) phase of the Institute's review process. In this phase, the Institute makes very specific requests for amendments to the application to ensure its clarity, and educational, fiscal and legal soundness. In addition, for applicants proposing to contract with a management organization, the Institute conducts its own due diligence regarding the management organization in terms of its capacity to provide the proposed services, including its fiscal and organizational soundness. If an application remains in the review process through the RFA

phase, a second interview of the lead applicant and school's proposed board of trustees is then conducted by one or more members of the State University Trustees' Charter Schools Committee. There are currently 115 charter schools operating in New York State. Of those 115 schools, 49 were authorized by the State University Trustees. A recent Institute analysis of the 2007-08 state exams revealed that 92 percent of SUNY-authorized charter schools outperformed their local districts on the State exam in mathematics, and 76 percent outperformed their local districts on the State exam in English Language Arts.

In making its recommendation for the approval of this application to the State University Trustees, the Institute prepared a detailed Summary of Findings and Recommendations document that thoroughly describes the school. This document is available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/newsPRs.htm>. Additional details about SUNY's application review process are available on the Institute's website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/openAppKit.htm>.

The Charter Schools Institute was created by the State University Trustees to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998. Guided by the rigorous standards set by the State University Trustees, the Institute's oversight of SUNY-authorized charter schools is comprehensive, including: acceptance and evaluation of new school charter applications; ongoing oversight and evaluation of all charter schools subsequently authorized by SUNY; reporting to the public on each school's performance and progress; and conducting a comprehensive evaluation when a school applies to renew its charter.

The State University Trustees and the Charter Schools Institute were featured in a United States Department of Education guide on high quality charter authorizing, *Supporting Charter School Excellence Through Quality Authorizing*. SUNY was nominated and selected after a rigorous review process—chosen from over 800 charter authorizers nationally—and is one of only eight charter authorizers profiled.

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