



## **SUNY Board Approves Applications to Establish Seven New Charter Schools**

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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 applications to establish seven new charter schools: The Academy Charter School (Hempstead); Carl C. Icahn Charter School Nine (Bronx); Crown Heights Collegiate Charter School (Brooklyn); East New York Collegiate Charter School (Brooklyn); Flatbush Collegiate Charter School (Brooklyn); Girls Preparatory Charter School of East Harlem (Manhattan); and New Roots Charter School (Ithaca).

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 21.

Details on the approved schools follow:

- **The Academy Charter School:** The Academy will open in September 2009 serving 168 students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, growing to serve 336 students in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grades during the initial term of its charter. Proposed location is the Hempstead Union Free School District (Hempstead).

The mission of The Academy is to offer an exceptional interdisciplinary curriculum in a technology rich environment that challenges students to explore connections across subjects and use experiential learning to bridge the gaps between theory and practice. The school's focus on character development and community service will cultivate a student body poised to be active, engaged and responsible members of the community.

- **Carl C. Icahn Charter School Nine:** Carl C. Icahn Charter School Nine will open in September 2009 with 108 students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, growing to include 252 students in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade during the initial term of its charter. The school will be located in the Bronx.

Carl C. Icahn Charter School Nine, a proposed replication of the highly successful Carl C. Icahn Charter School in the Bronx, will offer a rigorous school program based on Core Knowledge. Students will graduate armed with the skills and knowledge to participate successfully in the most rigorous academic environments, and will have a sense of personal and community responsibility.

- **Three Collegiate Charter Schools:** Three Collegiate Charter Schools, to be located in Brooklyn, were submitted by the same applicant and founding team. All three schools will partner with the non-profit charter management organization, Uncommon Schools, Inc.

The mission of the proposed charter schools is to prepare each student for college. Ultimately, the founding team envisions a 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade school in each of the communities.

All of the schools would be managed by USI, which currently supports five high performing charter schools authorized by the State University Trustees in New York City and Rochester and plans to open four additional schools (three in Brooklyn and one in Troy) during the next two years.

- **Crown Heights Collegiate Charter School:** Proposed location is NYC CSD 23 (Brooklyn) with a planned opening in August 2010. The school will serve 78 students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade in its initial year, growing to serve 263 students in grades 5-8 at the end of its initial charter term.
- **East New York Collegiate Charter School:** Proposed location is NYC CSD 23 (Brooklyn) with a planned opening in August 2010. The school will serve 78 students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade in its initial year, growing to serve 263 students in grades 5-8 at the end of its initial charter term.
- **Flatbush Collegiate Charter School:** Proposed location is NYC CSD 17 (Brooklyn) with a planned opening in August 2009. The school will serve 78 students in grade 5 and grow to serve 313 students in grades 5-9 at the end of its initial charter term.
- **Girls Preparatory Charter School of East Harlem:** Girls Prep East Harlem will open in August 2009 with 144 students in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade and grow to include 390 students in Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grades during its first charter term. Proposed location is NYC CSD 4 (Manhattan).

The mission of Girls Prep East Harlem, a proposed replication of the highly successful Girls Prep Charter School of New York in Manhattan, is to prepare New York City's girls to graduate from college and succeed in life. It is anticipated that the school will ultimately serve students in Kindergarten through 8th grade, providing a comprehensive primary education.

- **New Roots Charter School:** New Roots Charter School will open in September 2009 with 125 students (65 students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 60 students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade) and grow over three years to become a 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school with a total enrollment of 225 students. Proposed location is the Ithaca City School District.

With a focus on environmental sustainability, the school's mission is to meet the challenges of citizenship, work, and life-long learning in the 21st century through an inter-disciplinary program that is hands-on and community based.

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’ Committee on Charter Schools.

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 these applications to the State University Trustees, the Institute prepared detailed Summary of Findings and Recommendations documents that thoroughly describe each school. These documents are 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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