



SUNY Board Approves Applications to Establish Eight 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 eight new charter schools: Brooklyn Dreams Charter School (Brooklyn); Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Boys (Albany); Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Girls (Albany); Harlem Success Academy Charter School 6 (Manhattan); Harlem Success Academy Charter School 7 (Manhattan); Icahn Charter School 5 (Bronx); New Hope Academy Charter School (Brooklyn); and New World Preparatory Charter School (Staten Island).

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 31.

Details on the approved schools follow:

- **Brooklyn Dreams Charter School:** Brooklyn Dreams Charter School will open in September 2010 serving 196 students in Kindergarten through 3rd grades, growing to serve 496 students in Kindergarten through 6th grades during the initial term of its charter. Proposed location is NYC CSD 22.

The mission of Brooklyn Dreams Charter School is to offer the families of Brooklyn a school with a culture that values integrity, academic excellence and accountability, where all students are given the opportunity for success in high school, college and beyond by offering an academically rigorous and challenging K-8 educational program.

- **Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Boys and Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Girls:** The Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Boys and the Brighter Choice Charter Middle School for Girls will open in September 2010. Each school will serve 54 5th grade students of the appropriate gender in their first year and grow to serve 220 students in grades 5-8 during their initial charter terms. Proposed location is the Albany City School District.

Intended as extensions of the high performing Brighter Choice Charter School for Boys and Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls, both of which serve students in Kindergarten through 4th grades, the

two schools will prepare boys and girls for high school and college success while attending to the unique developmental needs of middle school students.

- **Harlem Success Academy Charter Schools 6 and 7:** Harlem Success Academy Charter School 6 and Harlem Success Academy Charter School 7 will open in the fall of 2010. Each school will serve 180 students in Developmental Kindergarten, Kindergarten and first grade during its first year and grow to serve 557 students in Developmental Kindergarten through 5th grades during the initial term of its charter. Proposed location is NYC CSD 3, 4 or 5.

The mission of the schools is to provide New York City elementary students, particularly those from economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods, with the knowledge, skills, character and disposition to meet and exceed New York State standards and give them the resources to lead and succeed in school, college and life. Both schools will be managed by Success Charter Network, Inc., a non-profit charter management organization which currently supports four other schools in New York City, three of which are authorized by the State University Trustees.

- **Icahn Charter School 5:** Icahn Charter School 5, a proposed replication of the highly successful Icahn Charter School 1 in the Bronx, will open in September 2010. The school will serve 108 students in Kindergarten through 2nd grades in its first year and grow to accommodate 252 students in Kindergarten through 6th grades during the initial term of its charter. Proposed location is NYC CSD 9.

The school's mission is to use the Core Knowledge curriculum, developed by E.D. Hirsch, to provide students with a rigorous academic program offered in an extended day/year setting. 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.

- **New Hope Academy Charter School:** New Hope Academy Charter School will open in September 2010 serving 168 students in Kindergarten through 2nd grades, growing to serve 336 students in Kindergarten through 5th grades during its initial charter term. Proposed location is NYC CSD 18.

The school's mission is to provide a safe, structured and quality learning community where students' creativity and potential can flourish in a program with science and technology integrated throughout its core subject areas, the arts, and various enrichment programs. The school will be managed by Victory Schools, Inc., a for-profit management company which currently supports three other schools authorized by the State University Trustees.

- **New World Preparatory Charter School:** New World Preparatory Charter School will open in September 2010 serving 125 students in 6th grade in its first year, growing to serve 375 students in 6th through 8th grades during the initial term of its charter. Proposed location is NYC CSD 31.

The mission of the school is to provide and exceptional education to students by employing research-proven strategies and to graduate students with a strong academic foundation, an awareness of the needs of others, and social and emotional readiness to succeed in high school and graduate from college. The school will be managed by Victory Schools, Inc., a for-profit management company

which currently supports three other schools authorized by the State University Trustees. It is the first SUNY authorized charter school to be located on Staten Island.

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.

In making its recommendation for the approval of these applications to the State University Trustees, the Institute prepared a detailed Summary of Findings and Recommendations document for each school that 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.

In a recent conference call hosted by Education Secretary Arne Duncan and his staff, Dean Kern, Director of the Charter Schools Program for the United States Department of Education, cited SUNY as one of three authorizers in the country that are exemplars of quality authorizing: “A couple of examples of high quality authorizers that are taken seriously, closing down low-performing schools... would be [New York’s] state university system, SUNY. They have done an incredible job of holding their charter schools accountable and closing those that are not demonstrating results.”