



MEMORANDUM

January 27, 2014

TO: Members of the Charter Schools Committee

FROM: Joseph W. Belluck, Chair

SUBJECT: Approval of the Application for Charter Renewal of New Roots Charter School (Ithaca)

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the approval of a three-year, short-term charter renewal for New Roots Charter School education corporation pursuant to New York Education Law subdivision 2851(4).

Resolution

I recommend that the Charter Schools Committee adopt the following resolution:

Whereas the Charter Schools Committee, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, as required by Education Law subdivision 2851(4)(e), has considered, prior to approval of the application for charter renewal of New Roots Charter School (the "Education Corporation"), located in Ithaca, the means by which the Education Corporation will meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the federal free and reduced price lunch program as set forth in the application, which targets were prescribed by the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the "Institute") on behalf of the Board; and

Whereas the Charter Schools Committee, acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, as required by Education Law subdivision 2857(1), has considered the comments of the Ithaca City School District in opposition to the renewal application; and

Whereas the Charter Schools Committee has also considered the comments of the Groton Central School District and Newfield Central School District, in which Education Corporation students reside, in opposition to the renewal application; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Education Corporation's application for charter renewal, be, and hereby is, approved to the extent and as limited, restricted and described in the Institute's Renewal Report (copies available in the Office of the Secretary of the University and in the Albany office of the Institute), and the Education Corporation's charter be renewed for a short term through and including July 31, 2017; and be it further

Resolved that: 1) the Education Corporation's school as described in its application for charter renewal, as limited and restricted, meets the requirements of the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended) and applicable laws, rules and regulations; 2) as limited and restricted, the Education Corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate its school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and 3) so approving the renewal application and renewing the charter, as limited and restricted, is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision 2850(2) of the Education Law; and be it further

Resolved that the Institute, acting for the Board of Trustees, be, and hereby is, directed to: 1) enter into a proposed renewal charter with the Education Corporation in accordance with this resolution, which proposed charter shall include such assurances and terms as the Institute shall deem necessary and appropriate; and 2) thereafter to submit the proposed renewal charter to the Board of Regents for its review, comment and potential approval.

Background

The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 permits the Board of Trustees to renew the charters of education corporations it has authorized. Pursuant to Resolution No. 2012-038 dated June 12, 2012, the Board of Trustees delegated authority to renew charters to the Charter Schools Committee. Pursuant to the *Policies for the Renewal of Not-for-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees* (the

“SUNY Renewal Policies”) (last amended on September 4, 2013 and available at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm>), the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) conducts a renewal site visit; reviews the information in the renewal application as well as other relevant information, such as assessment data and site visit reports; interviews education corporation trustees and staff; and produces a draft renewal report containing its findings and preliminary recommendation. The draft renewal report also contains an evaluation of an education corporation’s performance over its charter term based on the criteria provided in the renewal benchmarks described in the SUNY Renewal Policies. The education corporation receives a copy of the draft renewal report and is given an opportunity to comment on it before it is finalized. The Institute makes final renewal reports available in its Albany office and at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/pubsReportsRenewals.htm>. Copies of applications for renewal are on file in the Albany office of the Institute.

As set forth in the Institute’s Renewal Report for New Roots Charter School (the “Education Corporation”), which was distributed to the Board of Trustees, the Institute conducted a renewal review of the Education Corporation pursuant to the SUNY Renewal Policies. As a result of this review, the Institute recommends that the Education Corporation’s application for initial full-term charter renewal should be granted only for a short-term of three years without conditions. If this resolution is approved, the Education Corporation’s charter and its authority to operate the above-referenced school will be renewed only through July 31, 2017.

The Institute properly notified the school district in which the Education Corporation is located regarding the receipt of an application for charter renewal. The Ithaca City School District provided comments in opposition to the Education Corporation’s renewal, which the Institute included in its Renewal Report, and which will be forwarded to the Board of Regents with the proposed renewal charter. In addition, two other schools districts of residence of Education Corporation students provided comments that the Institute included in its Renewal Report.