**Response to Public Comments**

**January 2014 SUNY
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

* **To Establish New, New York State Charter Schools; and**
* **For Existing SUNY Authorized Charter Schools to
Operate Additional School(s)**

*Collected by the SUNY Charter Schools Institute on behalf of the*

*Board of Trustees of the State University of New York*

**Issued: January 6, 2014**

**Defined Terms**

**Act** – The Charter Schools Act of 1998, as amended

**CEC** – Community Education Council in New York City

**CMO** – Charter Management Organization

**CSE** – Committee on Special Education or “IEP Team” under the IDEA regulations

**DOE** – The New York City Department of Education

**ELL** – English Language Learner

**FAPE** – Free and Appropriate Public Education as defined in the IDEA

**FRPL** – federal Free and/or Reduced Price Lunch Program

**IEP** – An Individualized Education Program as required by the IDEA

**IDEA** – the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**Institute** – The SUNY Charter Schools Institute

**LEA** – Local Educational Agency as defined in the IDEA

**N-PCL** – The New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law

**RFA** – The Requests for Amendment process whereby the Institute works with charter school applicants to correct and/or provide additional detail to an application to resolve Institute concerns and assure compliance with the Act and all applicable laws, rules and regulations before it is recommended to the SUNY Trustees for approval.

**RFP** – The Request for Proposals to Establish New York State Charter Schools

**Proposal** – The document submitted in response to a RFP by an applicant seeking to establish a New York State charter school

**Regents** – The Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York

**SED** – The New York State Education Department

**SUNY Trustees** – The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (or their designee, as appropriate)

**SWD** – Students with disabilities.

NOTE: All page references are to the Draft RFP published on the Institute website.

**Comments/Discussion/
Changes as Noted**

**Comment 1**: A commenter stated that the interval of time between the issuance of the RFP on January 6, 2014, and the proposal submission deadline of February 10, 2014, is prohibitively fast for applicant groups who are new to the process and encouraged SUNY to implement the optional second 2014 application cycle.

*Discussion*: The SUNY proposal review process is rigorous and successful applicants usually take many months if not longer to assemble a strong proposal. If a proposal is not near completion when the final RFP is released, it is unlikely to meet SUNY’s standards by the submission deadline, even when that deadline is three months after the RFP release date.

In establishing the proposal review schedule, SUNY must balance competing pressures. While a longer application cycle allows groups more time to finalize their proposals, a faster application cycle provides successful applicants with valuable additional time to finalize facility planning and prepare for the school opening.

*Changes to RFP*: None.

**Comment 2**: A commenter suggested that the RFP request more specific information regarding applicant groups’ specific level of commitment to any identified facilities.

*Discussion*: The Institute agrees and will modify the language in the RFP.

*Changes to RFP*: Request 16(b) – Facility Selection has been modified to include more explicit language requesting documentation of applicant groups’ level of facilities commitment.

**Comment 3**: A commenter stated that the wording of section 3(g) – Founding Resumes was confusing.

*Discussion*: The Institute agrees and will clarify the language in the RFP.

*Changes to RFP*: The wording of this request has been modified to clarify the different submission requirements of applicants who plan to serve on the education corporation board of trustees compared to those who do not plan to serve on the board of trustees.

**Comment 4**: A commenter stated that some applicants may not understand that an organizational chart is a visual depiction of organizational structure.

*Discussion*: The Institute has not observed any confusion about the requirement to submit a diagrammatic as well as a narrative description of organizational structure.

*Changes to RFP*: None.

**Comment 5**: A commenter suggested that the Institute add to the proposal a request for any planned enrollment cut-off dates.

*Discussion*: Specific information of this type generally goes into the admissions policy called for by Request 15(d). The Institute will make clear in the RFP Guidance Handbook that applicants should include information on backfilling including specific grades and any cut-off dates.

*Changes to RFP*: None. However, the Institute will modify the RFP Guidance Handbook to address the comment.

**Comment 6**: A commenter suggested that the RFP request more detail relating to instructional leadership recruitment criteria.

*Discussion*: The Institute agrees and will modify the language in the RFP.

*Changes to RFP*: The Institute has modified the RFP to request instructional leader recruitment and selection criteria in Request 8(a) – Instructional Leadership Roles.

**Comment 7**: A commenter asked that page numbers be added to the RFP.

*Discussion*: The Institute agrees and will modify the RFP.

*Changes to RFP*: The Institute has added page numbers to the RFP.