



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

TO AUTHORIZE NEW CHARTER SCHOOLS

FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PURSUANT TO NEW YORK EDUCATION LAW §§ 2852(9-A) AND 2853(1)(B-1)  
RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 10, 2023

2023

## 2023 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TIMELINE

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At the time of the release of the 2023 Request for Proposals (“RFP”), the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) intends to hold one review cycle for applications to open charter schools outside of the boroughs of New York City. SUNY, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to modify the 2023 RFP schedule; hold additional round(s) in the year and/or incorporate any new statutory or regulatory requirements into this RFP. SUNY also reserves the right not to review applications that fail to meet minimum eligibility requirements.

ACTION	DATE
Draft RFP Public Comment Period	January 9 – February 3, 2023
Release of Final 2023 RFP	February 10, 2023
Notify the Institute of Intent to Apply and Request Epicenter Login	March 7, 2023
Intent to Apply Form Due	March 14, 2023, at 12:00 PM
Final Proposals and Business Plans Due <i>(if applicable)</i>	March 28, 2023, at 12:00 PM
Proposal Review	April – May 2023
Applicant Notification	June 2023
Anticipated Charter Schools Committee Meeting	August – September 2023
Charter Transmittal Preparation	October 2023
Proposed Charter Transmittal to New York State Board of Regents	November 1, 2023
Board of Regents' Action on Charters Approved by SUNY Trustees	January 2024

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

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**School:** A school is a vehicle for the delivery of a complete educational program to students that has independent leadership; dedicated staff; and, defined facilities. An education corporation may have the authority to operate more than one school so long as a charter has been issued for each such school. Note that a school may be housed in more than one physical site. A school is its own Local Educational Agency (“LEA”) for federal program purposes except for the education of students with disabilities, and its own accountability unit for purposes of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (“ESEA”) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”).

**Site:** A site is one of a number of facility locations for a single charter school. Sites are typically grouped by grade range (e.g., Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup>-grade site, 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>-grade site, or 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>-grade site). A site would not be its own LEA or ESSA unit. More than one charter school building tightly clustered (i.e., a campus) would also be a “single site” under New York Education Law. Without additional authority, an education corporation may not educate students of the same grade level in more than one site. An education corporation may teach the same grade or grades at an additional site so long as it has obtained additional authority to do so through the issuance of an additional charter. The number of charters issued to an education corporation will determine the maximum number of sites it may have for any particular grade.

**Charter School Education Corporation:** A charter school education corporation is a New York not-for-profit charter school education corporation that comes into existence through the issuance of a charter and the subsequent formation of a corporation by the New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”). Each charter school education corporation is entitled to operate one school in one or more sites for each charter issued to it.

**Partner Organization:** A partner organization is a non-profit entity, such as a community-based organization, college, university, museum, educational institution, or other organization authorized to do business in New York that would provide space or support to the proposed school or be responsible for managing and/or providing services to the proposed school whether or not such goods, services, facilities, etc. would be provided free of charge or pursuant to a contract or shared service agreement with the education corporation.

**Charter Management Organization (“CMO”):** CMO describes any not-for-profit charter management organization, educational service provider, or partner organization providing a majority of the educational management services at a charter school.

**SUNY Charter Schools Committee (the “Committee”):** The SUNY Charter Schools Committee is a committee of the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) that has been delegated the authority to act on behalf of the full SUNY Board of Trustees regarding approval of new SUNY authorized charter schools.

### SUNY AS A CHARTER AUTHORIZER

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The New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (the “Act”) designates the SUNY Trustees as one of two statewide chartering entities, or “authorizers,” along with the New York State Board of Regents. Each authorizer has the authority to grant charters for the purpose of organizing new charter school education corporations to operate one or more independent and autonomous public charter schools or adding new charters to existing education corporations. SUNY is the largest charter school authorizer in New York State and the largest university-based authorizer in the country.

The Institute supports the SUNY Trustees’ commitment to the guiding principles of the Act through its rigorous processes for reviewing new charter applications, monitoring charter school performance, and holding charters accountable for high academic achievement.

The Institute has been recognized by organizations including the CfBT Education Trust, the World Bank, and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (“NACSA”), for the quality of its authorizing practices and specifically its new charter application process. The rigorous new charter application process helps establish consistently high-performing charter schools. An established track record of high academic achievement among SUNY-authorized charter schools affirms recognition of SUNY’s authorizing work.

## INTRODUCTION

SUNY currently authorizes 222 charter schools across New York State serving approximately 120,000 students:

- 193 schools in and around New York City;
- 8 schools in the Capital District;
- 12 schools in Western New York (Buffalo); and,
- 10 schools in Central New York.

The SUNY Trustees support diversity and innovative program designs in the charter schools they authorize, and support schools designed to increase equity and diversity in proposed charter school founding board of trustee members, founding teams, and teachers and staff. The SUNY Trustees set a high bar of expectations for student achievement yet realize there is more than one way to meet that bar.

Among the portfolio of SUNY-authorized charter schools are: schools with a particular focus on English language learners (“ELLs”); schools implementing the Diploma Programmes of the International Baccalaureate Programme; single-gender schools; schools that offer intensive foreign language instruction; schools implementing a diverse by design model; schools devoted to students who are or have been enrolled in the child welfare system, or are homeless; a school infusing the principles of sustainability throughout the curriculum; schools designed specifically to serve the needs of students with autism; a rural school with a focus on agriculture; a Montessori school; schools with specific thematic foci such as basketball operations and nursing; and, many more.

The SUNY Trustees and the Institute recognize the significant time and effort required to develop a quality proposal. Institute staff members look forward to working with each applicant group throughout the process and strongly encourage prospective applicants to contact the Institute in the early stages of application development.

### CRITICAL INFORMATION FOR ALL APPLICANTS

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#### AVAILABLE CHARTERS AND APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

At the time of the 2023 RFP's publication, the SUNY Trustees and the Board of Regents may together award a maximum of 84 charters statewide outside New York City. Only in the event that additional charters become available for the Trustees to grant in New York City in 2023 will the Institute identify and publish an additional application schedule for New York City under this RFP.

Applications approved by the Committee pursuant to the 2019 RFP that have not yet received charters must, in the event new charters become available in New York City, submit updates to application materials to the Institute for review including, but not limited to, updated budgets and evidence of ongoing community outreach, support, and demand. Only in the event that additional charters become available for the Trustees to grant in New York City in 2023 will SUNY provide guidance to those applicants in conjunction with any New York City application round. These applications will receive priority in preference scoring as identified in the statutorily required preference scoring rubric included in this RFP below.

If a limited number of charters becomes available in New York City, the SUNY Trustees reserve the right to grant no more than one charter each to new applicants and/or existing SUNY-authorized education corporations. The SUNY Trustees also reserve the right to restrict the eligibility of applicants who have requested to delay, or are delaying, the opening of already issued charters.

#### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

SUNY's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is foundational to its original mission. SUNY's mission statement begins as follows:

*"The mission of the state university system shall be to provide to the people of New York education services of the highest quality, **with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population...**"*

The SUNY Trustees and the Institute are committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion through our policies and practices, and support charter schools designed to promote equity and diversity in charter school leadership, staffing, and board membership from historically underrepresented communities.

#### ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

The Institute recognizes that education models across the country have undergone significant changes due to school closures and imperatives resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This unprecedented event has restructured education in ways that educators may not fully understand

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for years to come. It has also underscored the need for high-quality schools that effectively address interrupted instruction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### REPLICATING APPLICANTS

The Act permits a charter school education corporation to have more than one charter issued to it, thus allowing it to operate more than one charter school.

Institute evaluators rely on qualitative data about the strength of the existing schools collected through the Institute's school evaluation process and quantitative data collected through the analysis of the replicating school's academic outcomes. This assumes that the proposed school model is not materially different from the model used in one or more schools in which an existing education corporation operates.

By making the replication option available, SUNY in no way suggests that applicants attempt to take on more schools than they have the capacity to manage. In fact, SUNY's due diligence regarding fiscal and human capital capacity becomes more rigorous when considering the award of multiple charters to one education corporation or founding team.

Existing SUNY-approved education corporations authorized after July 2018 may at the Institute's discretion incorporate requests by reference according to the Replicator Checklist available on [our resource page](#). All other applicants must respond to all requests in order to provide updated materials.

Applicants should review the following list of questions to determine whether they are eligible to incorporate requests by reference.

Any applicant answering "No" to **any one** of these questions must respond to all requests.

Any applicant answering "Yes" to **all three** of these questions may incorporate requests by reference according to the Replicator Checklist.

1. Are you a SUNY-approved charter school education corporation proposing to replicate one of your currently operating SUNY-authorized charter schools?
2. Did the SUNY Trustees approve the application for the original education corporation after July 2018?
3. Would the proposed school replicate all or a vast majority of the academic program components in use at the existing school?

***NOTE: The Institute strongly encourages applicants to consult with our office when determining eligibility to incorporate requests by reference. If you have any questions, please contact the Institute at [Charter.NewApp@suny.edu](mailto:Charter.NewApp@suny.edu). Additionally, applicants with existing charters from any***

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*authorizer are strongly encouraged to contact the Institute to ensure an understanding of the proposed legal structure, operations, and related requirements. Applicants should contact our office prior to the deadline for submission of Intent to Apply Forms. The Institute reserves the right to make a final determination regarding an applicant's eligibility to incorporate materials by reference.*

### INCORPORATING MATERIALS BY REFERENCE

If there are no material changes to the exhibits, applicants may respond to some requests by incorporating by reference the applicable documents on file at the Institute. Requests to be incorporated by reference must meet the following criteria:

- The document must have been submitted to the Institute as part of an original, merger, renewal, or revision application during or after July 2018. **Applicants may not incorporate by reference any documents submitted to the Institute prior to July 2018.**
- Applicants may not incorporate by reference any documents that in turn contain incorporations by reference.
- Applicants may not incorporate reference documents from prior applications that the Institute did not recommend for approval.

### BUSINESS PLANS

Applicants submitting a proposal in conjunction with an organization that would be responsible for managing and/or providing significant portions of the school's academic program or organizational structure (e.g., a partner organization, CMO, or shared services team) must submit a business plan. Small replicators operating under shared service structures must also submit a business plan. The Institute reserves the right to request a business plan from any organization that would play a substantial role in the management or operation of the proposed school(s).

Institute staff and, at the Institute's discretion, external experts, review applicant groups' business plans in tandem with their proposals to gauge CMOs', partner organizations', and education corporations' organizational and fiscal capacity to fulfill their obligations to the proposed school(s) effectively.

***NOTE: The Institute strongly encourages applicants to contact our office at [Charter.NewApp@suny.edu](mailto:Charter.NewApp@suny.edu) prior to the Intent to Apply Form submission deadline to determine whether to submit a Business Plan.***

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## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- New York Education Law § 2852(9-a) requires authorizers to use an RFP process to award new charters. Education Law § 2853(1)(b-1) allows existing education corporations to seek authority to operate one or more additional charter schools “provided that a charter must be issued for each such additional school in accordance with the requirements for the issuance of a charter.”
- Education Law § 2852(9-a) requires SUNY to review proposals in accordance with the criteria and objectives in the RFP and to not consider applications that do not demonstrate: i) they can meet enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (“FRPL”) under the National School Lunch Program; and, ii) the applicant has conducted public outreach to solicit community input regarding the application and “to address comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students.”
- Education Law § 2851(1) prohibits RFP applicants from contracting with a for-profit entity to operate a charter school.

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## PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

SUNY takes its statutory responsibilities to disclose information about new proposals seriously.

- The Institute, shortly after receipt of a proposal, will release to the public via its website a “Public List,” containing the name of the proposed charter school education corporation (or, for a replicator, the name of the education corporation), name of the proposed charter school, name of the applicants and public contact information, proposed enrollment and grades served, charter management organization (if any), and the school district or New York City community school district (“CSD”) in which the charter school proposes to locate.
- The Institute will post copies of complete proposals, redacted of all personally identifiable information, within several weeks of receipt.
- As required by the Act, SUNY will, within 30 days of receipt of a proposal, officially notice the district in which the proposed school would be located and all public and non-public schools in the surrounding geographic area<sup>1</sup> based on information filed with the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”).
- The district must hold a public hearing to solicit public comments on the proposal within 30 days of receipt of notice of a proposal.<sup>2</sup>
- SUNY carefully considers all comments about the application as part of the proposal review process. The Institute presents school district comments and a written summary of public comments to the SUNY Trustees when recommending proposals. The Institute is committed to capturing community feedback and strongly requests all stakeholders submit their comments at least two weeks prior to the Committee meeting to approve applications in order for comments to be included in the summary of public comments.

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<sup>1</sup> Education Law § 2857(1).

<sup>2</sup> Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, 8 N.Y.C.R.R. § 119.4, require school districts to hold a public hearing regarding application(s) within 30 days of receipt of the notice of the application(s) from SUNY, and to forward the hearing notices and comments regarding same to the Institute and NYSED”). More information is available at <http://www.nysed.gov/charter-schools/charter-school-regulations-1194>).

### SUNY'S REVIEW PROCESS

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SUNY's review of submitted proposals is a progressive, multi-step process. The SUNY Trustees have charged the Institute with recommending for their consideration only those proposals deemed to have the highest likelihood of success.

SUNY-authorized schools indicate the process adds value to the proposed program as applicants emerge from the process with a strong blueprint to build their schools.

The Institute's review process includes the following:

1. Intake of each proposal to ensure each component is materially and substantively complete and meets minimum eligibility requirements, thereby meriting a full review.
2. Review of the proposal by Institute staff from academic, operational, legal, and fiscal perspectives.
3. When applicable, in-depth analysis of student performance data from the applicant's existing schools to identify areas of strength and deficiency to gauge the proposed program's likelihood of producing exemplary academic outcomes including, but not limited to:
  - Review of past three years of student performance data on state and/or standardized assessments with an emphasis on growth percentile scores;
  - Student attrition rates from year to year;
  - Graduation rates; and,
  - Authorizer evaluation, renewal, and regulatory compliance reports.
4. At the Institute's discretion, an external panel of education expert(s) may review proposals and, where applicable, accompanying business plans.
5. For proposals deemed strong enough to move forward in the review process, an interview by Institute staff (and possibly member(s) of an external review panel) of the proposed school's founding group, which includes the applicant(s), proposed or actual education corporation trustees, and representatives of any proposed or actual CMO and/or other partner organization.
6. Proposals of sufficient strength may undergo a Request for Amendments ("RFA") process to resolve Institute concerns and assure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

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7. If the RFA process yields an application that the Institute identifies as strong enough to move on in the process, a representative of the Committee may interview the applicant(s) and proposed education corporation trustees.
8. After completing the review process, the Institute makes any positive recommendations to the Committee, which renders the final determination at a public meeting. There is no appeal of a negative determination at any stage of the process.

### A NOTE TO APPLICANTS REGARDING PROPOSED TRUSTEES

The Institute understands that applicants may add trustees to the education corporation's board in the future but expects applicants to have at least five board members at the time of application submission and identify four officers including a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

All proposed board officers as well as the lead applicant(s) must undergo background checks and fingerprinting in order for the Institute to recommend the charter for approval. Institute staff will send instructions for completing the fingerprint process to the lead applicant(s) and proposed/actual board officers as necessary according to the timeline for application review. Failure to complete fingerprinting in a timely manner may delay the application review process.

Additionally, the Institute expects all proposed trustees to participate in the applicant interview.

### CRITERIA FOR RECOMMENDING PROPOSALS FOR APPROVAL

When the Institute receives a proposal, it first determines whether applicants meet minimum eligibility requirements as solely determined by the Institute, for example:

- Proposals must be sufficiently complete;
- Proposals must comport fully with formatting and submission conventions described within the RFP; and,
- Proposals must be accompanied by complete Business Plans, where required.

The Institute reserves the right not to review proposals that fail to meet minimum eligibility requirements.

The Institute then determines whether a proposal meets minimum statutory requirements, for example:

- The proposal includes a viable plan to meet the enrollment and retention targets established by the SUNY Trustees for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible for FRPL.

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- The proposal provides evidence of public outreach that conforms to the Act and the process prescribed by the SUNY Trustees for the purpose of soliciting and incorporating community input regarding the proposed charter school and its academic program.
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner.
- Approving the proposal is likely to materially further the purposes of the Act, which are to:
  - Improve student learning and achievement;
  - Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure;
  - Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
  - Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators, and other school personnel;
  - Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and,
  - Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding charter schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.<sup>3</sup>
- The proposal meets all of the requirements set out in the Act and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations as well as meets any additional requirements established by the SUNY Trustees as part of their commitment to student achievement.

The Institute reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to discontinue its review if and when it becomes apparent that a proposal does not meet these minimum statutory requirements.

For proposed schools intending to locate in a school district where more than five percent of the students residing in the district attend charter schools, the Institute will evaluate whether approving the proposal would have a significant educational benefit to the students likely to attend the proposed charter school, or whether the school district of location consents to the proposal.

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<sup>3</sup> Education Law § 2850(2).

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### PREFERENCE SCORING

SUNY’s 2023 RFP includes preference criteria to prioritize proposals the Institute intends to recommend to the SUNY Trustees at the conclusion of the review process<sup>4</sup>.

Preference scoring does not occur until the conclusion of a review process.

The Institute bases preference scoring on 10 criteria for which the proposal can earn up to a total of 45 points. Should the Institute be in a position to recommend more proposals than available charters, the Institute will recommend the SUNY Trustees provide the remaining charters in an order to be determined by each application’s preference score.

Should additional charters become available within New York City in 2023, applications approved pursuant to the 2019 RFP that have not yet received a charter shall receive a new preference score pursuant to the criteria in the 2023 RFP. These previously approved applications will receive up to 30 additional preference points in descending order consistent with the scores they received based on the 2019 preference scoring criteria. For example, the highest-scoring application based on the 2019 preference scoring criteria will receive 30 additional preference points, the second highest-scoring will receive 29 additional preference points, and so on.

#### SUNY PREFERENCE SCORING GUIDANCE

PREFERENCE CATEGORY	PRIMARY INDICATORS	POSSIBLE POINTS
<b>1. Community Need, Outreach, and Involvement</b>	The proposed charter school board of trustees and charter school founding team consists of individuals with demonstrated ties to the intended community or CSD where the school would be located.	<b>3</b>
	The proposal presents strong and credible evidence of a compelling need for this school model in the specific community or CSD where the school would locate.	
	The proposed school would be located in a community with a limited choice of high-performing public schools (in New York City this refers to specific CSD).	

<sup>4</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)

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	<p>The proposal includes evidence of effective efforts to inform the intended community about the proposed charter school.</p> <p>The proposal describes explicit efforts and concrete evidence of soliciting and receiving feedback from the community where the school intends to locate as to how the school will address the educational and programmatic needs of students.</p> <p>The proposal explains how the applicant incorporated community feedback into the proposal.</p>	
<p><b>2. District Relations and Partnerships</b></p>	<p>The proposal includes a detailed plan with specific strategies for establishing an ongoing relationship with the district.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>The proposal includes support from the school district (in New York City this could include the Community Education Council (“CEC”)) where the school seeks to locate.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>The proposal includes detailed plans with ongoing resources and supports for sharing best educational practices and innovations with low-performing public schools in the area.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>
<p><b>3. Curriculum and Instruction</b></p>	<p>The school will acquire, adopt, and use local, state, and/or national instructional improvement systems (e.g., curriculum selection and revision, formative and summative assessments, student data analysis systems, etc.) to provide teachers and school leaders with the information and resources needed to inform and improve instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness<sup>8</sup> and raise student achievement with the students they seek to serve.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>

<sup>5</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(viii).

<sup>6</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(viii).

<sup>7</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(vi).

<sup>8</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(v).

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	The school will increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/ELA and mathematics. <sup>9</sup>	
<b>4. High-Quality Assessment System</b>	The school has a well-developed, high-quality assessment system designed to measure students’ knowledge, understanding of, and ability to apply critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats. <sup>10</sup> The system includes specific actionable plans for using results to support teachers’ work in improving student achievement.	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Special Populations</b>	The school has specific staffing structures, strategies, ongoing supports, and oversight to accelerate the achievement of at-risk students including students with disabilities, ELLs, and students struggling academically, and proposes a strong, high-quality educational program for at-risk students.	<b>3</b>
<b>6. School Leadership</b>	The school has a coherent professional development program with explicit plans to evaluate its effectiveness.	<b>3</b>
	The school’s leadership structure provides high-quality teacher supports including sustained coaching and comprehensive professional development that is likely to contribute to student achievement.	
<b>7. Success for Every Student</b>	The school has a coherent and detailed plan for creating an environment that promotes the positive social-emotional development and overall wellness of students and the adults that support them.	<b>3</b>
<b>8. Organizational Capacity and Fiscal Soundness</b>	The school has the capacity to implement quality management, leadership, and governance systems necessary to overcome initial startup problems, and the ability to establish an academically, organizationally, and financially viable new school or schools. <sup>11</sup>	<b>3</b>

<sup>9</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(i).

<sup>10</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(iv).

<sup>11</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(vii).

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	The proposed or current education corporation board has the professional experience, skill sets, structures, and procedures to provide rigorous oversight and support for a startup organization or additional school(s).	<b>3</b>
	The proposal contains a reasonable, feasible, and achievable financial plan and a budget to sustain the creation or addition of a new school or schools.	<b>3</b>
<b>9. Increase Quality Options</b>  <i>Note: Schools may only earn points for one of three primary indicators in this preference category.</i>	The school will open in its first year with a strong elementary school program (e.g., Kindergarten—5 <sup>th</sup> grade) and grow to serve up to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade in order to maximize the potential for success by setting a strong early foundation for students and creating pathways to seats in upper grades.	<b>6</b>
	The school will open in its first year serving middle school grades (e.g., 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade) and presents a detailed and viable plan for a successful transition to high school for those students. <sup>12</sup>	<b>3</b>
	The school will open in its first year serving high school grades (e.g., 9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> grade) with a strong plan for increasing high school graduation rates, a focus on serving specific high school student populations including but not limited to students at risk of not obtaining a high school diploma, re-enrolled high school dropouts, and/or students with academic skills below grade level. <sup>13</sup>	<b>3</b>
<b>10. Completing a Pathway</b>	The school is necessary to expand or complete an existing, high-performing pathway for a charter school not for profit education corporation currently operating in New York.	<b>3</b>

<sup>12</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(iii).

<sup>13</sup> Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(ii).

### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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Applicants submit up to three sets of different materials in response to the SUNY Request for Proposals. [Guiding documents and templates](#) (where applicable) for all sets of materials may be found on the Institute's website.

- **Intent to Apply Form:** All applicants must submit an Intent to Apply Form that includes information about the proposed school, the founding team, and the board.
- **Proposal:** All applicants must submit a proposal. Some applicants from existing SUNY-authorized education corporations may be eligible to incorporate requests by reference. Please refer to the Replicating Applicants section above for more information regarding whether an applicant is eligible to incorporate by reference.
- **Business Plan:** Not all applicants must complete a Business Plan, and some applicants may have to submit more than one business plan. See the Business Plans section above for additional information.

### RESOURCES

The Institute's website includes links to [multiple documents providing guidance to applicants](#). The Institute periodically updates this site with additional, sometimes critical, guidance. Applicants should check the website regularly. If you have any questions, please email [charter.newapp@suny.edu](mailto:charter.newapp@suny.edu).

# FORMATTING AND SUBMITTING PROPOSALS AND BUSINESS PLANS

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## INTENT TO APPLY FORM NOTIFICATION AND SUBMISSION

Applicants must contact the Institute by emailing [Charter.NewApp@suny.edu](mailto:Charter.NewApp@suny.edu) at least one week prior to the Intent to Apply form deadline to request information about how to submit a form. Please include the lead applicant's full name, email address, and proposed school name in this request. Intent to Apply Forms are available on [our resource page](#). Applicants must upload Intent to Apply forms to Epicenter (see below for additional information).

## SUBMITTING MATERIALS TO THE INSTITUTE

Applicants must upload digital files to Epicenter, the online system the Institute uses for document management. The Institute will provide each applicant with Epicenter login credentials for this purpose. Note that this is the only system applicants may use to submit proposals including the Intent to Apply Form and that the Institute will not accept materials submitted via email.

## DOCUMENT FORMATTING

- Applicants must use the electronic file conventions included in both the RFP and the Business Plan Requirements.
- Each submitted file should include a heading on the first page indicating the request and number the response pertains to (e.g., "R02ab - Addressing Need").
- Responses should include page numbers at the bottom of the page. The notation should be the response number followed by the page number for that response. For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> page of the 11<sup>th</sup> RFP request would be numbered "Response 11-4."
- The Institute does not have specific text formatting requirements. The Institute recommends but does not require an 11 or 12-point sans-serif font (e.g., Calibri, Arial, etc.).

***NOTE: For requests containing templates provided on the Institute's website, such as the budget template, applicants must use the most current version available on the website as of the RFP year. The Institute will not accept submissions using outdated templates.***

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## FILE STRUCTURE

- The Institute will assign applicants all relevant requests in Epicenter. Applicants must organize files as follows:
  - Do not upload multiple files to a single submission in Epicenter. If your submission for a particular request has multiple files, combine them into a single document or file before submitting.
  - For each response, use the file name and file type indicated in the Proposal Electronic File Conventions table. Acceptable electronic formats for the files are MS Word®, MS Excel®, or Adobe Acrobat®.
  - MS Word® files should contain no track changes and the track changes setting must be off prior to submission.
  - MS Excel® print settings must enable printing to letter-sized paper.
  - Please optimize scanned Adobe Acrobat® files to minimize the file size.

***NOTE: The Institute will not accept edited or updated application materials after the application deadline. Applicants must ensure that all materials reflect accurate information at the time of submission.***

## HOW TO ADDRESS REQUESTS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE

Replicating applicants from existing SUNY-authorized education corporations who are eligible to incorporate requests by reference according to the criteria described in the Replicating Applicants section above must use the Replicator Checklist (available on [our resource page](#)) to determine which materials may be incorporated by reference. Applicants must submit a response to every request including those that are being incorporated by reference.

Note that requests incorporated by reference must have been submitted to the Institute as part of an original, merger, renewal, or revision application after July 2018 as described above.

Applicants wishing to incorporate materials by reference should submit an appropriately formatted file for the request that includes:

- A statement indicating that the materials are incorporated by reference;
- The specific document from which the request is incorporated (e.g., “<School Name> 2018 Replication Application”);

## INTRODUCTION

- The specific file name of the original document submitted to the Institute (e.g., “Response D(4)a - Educational Program”); and,
- The month, day, and year on which the applicant submitted the document to the Institute.

The Institute will consider incomplete any application that does not appropriately identify requests incorporated by reference.

### HOW TO ADDRESS REQUESTS THAT DO NOT REQUIRE A DIRECT RESPONSE

**Applicants must submit a file responding to every request, including those that are not applicable.**

If the request does not apply, applicants should submit an appropriately formatted file for the request that states, “The request is not applicable.” The Institute will consider incomplete any application that does not include a response to every request.

# INTRODUCTION

## PROPOSAL ELECTRONIC FILE CONVENTIONS

REQUEST	REQUIRED FILE NAME	FILE TYPE
<b>Transmittal and Summary</b>	R-00a - Transmittal and Summary Form	Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Statistical Overview</b> <i>(existing education corporations only)</i>	R-00b - Statistical Overview	MS Excel®
<b>Request 1</b>	R-01ac - Community Need and Proposed School Impact	MS Word®
<b>Request 2</b>	R-02ab - Addressing Need	MS Word®
<b>Request 3</b>	R-03ad - Proposal History	MS Word®
	R-03e - Letters of Justification	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-03f - Founding Team Resumes	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-03g – Probationary Status of Affiliated Charter School(s)	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 4</b>	R-04abc – Community Outreach, Support, and Demand	MS Word®
	R-04d – Evidence of Outreach	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-04e - Evidence of Support	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-04f - Evidence of Demand	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 5</b>	R-05ac - Enrollment	MS Word®
	R-05d - Admissions Policy	MS Word®
<b>Request 6</b>	R-06af - Curriculum and Instruction	MS Word®
	R-06g - Draft Accountability Plan	MS Word®
<b>Request 7</b>	R-07ac - Calendar and Schedules	MS Word® or MS Excel®
<b>Request 8</b>	R-08ad - Specific Populations	MS Word®
<b>Request 9</b>	R-09ad - Instructional Leadership	MS Word®
<b>Request 10</b>	R-10a - Culture and Discipline	MS Word®
	R-10b - Discipline Policy	MS Word®
	R-10c - Special Education Policy	MS Word®
	R-10d - Dress Code	MS Word®

## INTRODUCTION

<b>Request 11</b>	R-11ab - School Management and Leadership	MS Word®
<b>Request 12</b>	R-12ac - Personnel	MS Word®
	R-12d - Personnel Policies	MS Word®
<b>Request 13</b>	R-13a - Partner Organizations	MS Word®
	R-13b - Partner Commitment	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 14</b>	R-14ad - Governance	MS Word®
	R-14e - Bylaws	MS Word®
	R-14f - Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy	MS Word®
	R-14g - Complaint Policy	MS Word®
	R-14h - Board Member Resumes	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-14i - Board Member RFI Forms	Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 15</b>	R-15 - District Relations	MS Word®
<b>Request 16</b>	R-16ac - Facilities	MS Word®
	R-16d - Facilities Documents	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 17</b>	R-17 - Food Services	MS Word®
<b>Request 18</b>	R-18 - Health Services	MS Word®
<b>Request 19</b>	R-19 - Transportation	MS Word®
<b>Request 20</b>	R-20 - Insurance	MS Word®
<b>Request 21</b>	R-21ad - Fiscal Soundness	MS Word®
	R-21e - Budget Template	MS Excel®
	R-21f - Letters of Commitment	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
	R-21g - Non-SUNY Financials	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 22</b>	R-22 - Action Plan	MS Excel®
<b>Request 23</b>	R-23a - Supplemental Narrative	MS Word®
	R-23b - Supplemental Attachments	MS Word® or Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Request 24</b>	R-24 - Full Merged Application	Adobe Acrobat®
<b>Business Plan</b> <i>(if applicable)</i>	Refer to the Business Plan Requirements available on <a href="#">our resource page</a> for file naming conventions for business plan attachments.	

SUNY

Request for Proposals (2023)

# APPLICATION REQUESTS

Some applicants must also complete one or more Business Plans. Refer to the Business Plan Requirement section of the Introduction for more information. If you are unsure whether you must submit a Business Plan, please contact the Institute at [Charter.NewApp@suny.edu](mailto:Charter.NewApp@suny.edu).

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### PROPOSAL TRANSMITTAL AND SUMMARY FORM

All applicants must submit a signed Transmittal and Summary Form with the proposal.

The Institute only accepts valid digital signatures. Applicants may not submit a scanned copy of the Transmittal and Summary form or a typed signature. The Transmittal and Summary Form is available from the Institute's website on [our resource page](#).

***NOTE: Please ensure the enrollment numbers provided on the Transmittal and Summary Form are consistent with the enrollment numbers provided in Response 5 – Enrollment.***

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the completed electronic copy of the Proposal Transmittal and Summary Form as an Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-00a - Transmittal and Summary Form**.

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### STATISTICAL OVERVIEW FORM

Applicants associated with one or more current operating education corporations should complete the Statistical Overview – Existing Schools chart available on [our resource page](#).

Non-replicators/first-time applicants should submit a document indicating that this request is not applicable.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the completed electronic copy of the Statistical Overview Form as a Microsoft Excel® file named: **R-00b - Statistical Overview Form**.

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## SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT

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### 1. Community Need and Proposed School Impact

#### a. Community Description and Need

Provide a narrative analysis of the community and target population for the school including:

- A description of the community from which the proposed school intends to draw students;
- Community demographics ;
- A description of the specific population of students the proposed school intends to serve;
- The applicant’s rationale for selecting the community;
- Performance of local schools in meeting the community’s needs;
- How the proposed school would provide a needed alternative for the community; and,
- A detailed discussion of the educational impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the target community, which may include an analysis of indicators of interrupted learning (e.g., assessment scores, absenteeism rates, enrollment rates, etc.).

#### b. Programmatic Impact

Describe the programmatic impact the proposed charter school would have on existing public and nonpublic schools in the same geographic area as the proposed school location. Responses should include:

- A table listing the existing educational options and grades served available to the target population including all district, charter, and private schools in the geographic area;
- Information demonstrating a thorough analysis of existing educational options for the community and target population that takes into account disruptions and demographic changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Analysis of how the proposed school’s enrollment plan would impact the enrollment and programmatic viability of the public and non-public schools; and,
- Analysis of the provision of novel or different programs or instructional approaches compared to those currently in place in the targeted community.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### c. Fiscal Impact

Complete the fiscal impact table in the budget template and include a copy with this response. Discuss the fiscal impact of the school on other public and non-public schools in the area including:

- Enrollment expectations;
- Per Pupil Allocation assumptions using the most recent charter school per pupil aid, available on [www.NYSED.gov](http://www.NYSED.gov);
- Dollar amounts the proposed charter school anticipates receiving from each district in per pupil funding;
- Other projected revenue the proposed charter school anticipates receiving from the district (special education, grant, etc.);
- Projected budget for the school district of location (please note the source and year for this figure); and,
- Yearly projected impact as a percentage of each sending district's budget (for districts projected to send at least ten students).

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the narrative response to Request 1 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-01ac - Community Need and Proposed School Impact.**

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## 2. Addressing the Need

### a. Mission

Provide the mission statement for the proposed charter school.

### b. Key Design Elements

Provide a clear and concise overview of the proposed charter school's key design elements, which are those aspects of the school critical to its success. Provide an analysis of any research, evidence of effectiveness, or examples of existing programs that support the selection of these elements. The response should include a brief discussion of how the school will determine if it is effectively executing its key design elements in a way that is aligned with its mission. The response should also address how the key design elements

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

address the specific needs identified in Request 1. If the key design elements for the proposed school differ from those submitted to the Institute as part of the most recent application, or application for renewal, of an education corporation or one of its schools, please describe why any element changed.

***NOTE: This response should not exceed five pages in length, and the key design elements discussed should match those included in the Transmittal and Summary Form.***

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### What to Submit:

Submit the narrative response to Request 2(a-b) as a Microsoft Word® file named: R-02ab - Addressing Need.

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### 3. Proposal History

#### a. Applicant Information

Indicate whether the applicant is a parent, teacher, administrator, and/or community resident as required by the Act or, if a board chair of an existing SUNY-authorized education corporation, indicate “Education Corp./Charter School.” Provide a brief biographical description for the applicant(s) including relevant background experience and education background. Provide a description of the applicant's knowledge of and relationship to the community in which the proposed charter school would be located.

#### b. Proposal History

Describe how the applicant team formed and the relationship of its members to each other. Clearly describe the process that the founding group used to develop the proposal. Discuss any assistance the founding group received from outside advisors (e.g., support organizations or consultants), even if these outside advisors are not active members of the founding group.

#### c. List of Founding Team Members

Provide a brief biography (approximately one paragraph) for all founding team members. Founding team members include individuals who contributed to the development of the proposal and/or would play a role in the development of the proposed school.

Do not include proposed board members on this list (applicants will submit board member information as part of Request 14 - Governance).

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### d. Withdrawn, Rejected, and Concurrent Proposals (SUNY and/or Other Authorizers)

Indicate whether this proposal was previously withdrawn from or rejected by the SUNY Trustees and/or any other charter authorizer (e.g., the New York State Board of Regents). If yes, provide:

- The name of the proposed charter school(s) when previously submitted;
- The date(s) of the previous submission(s); and,
- A detailed summary of what has changed in the proposal since its previous submission(s) and the reasons, therefore.

Indicate whether the applicant and/or founding team has previously applied or is currently applying for a charter from a charter entity other than the SUNY Trustees (e.g., the Board of Regents). This includes applications to charter entities in other states. If yes, provide:

- The name of the charter entity;
- The state where the application was submitted (if not New York);
- The name(s) of the proposed school(s) and the date(s) when the application(s) were submitted;
- The status of the application(s);
- If any members of the founding group withdrew an application for a substantially similar school from consideration by a charter entity, or if such an entity ever denied such an application, provide the reasons for the withdrawal or denial;
- If the application was granted, but the charter school is no longer in existence, please provide an explanation; and,
- Describe any changes made to the application following the withdrawal or denial of the application evident in this proposal.

***NOTE: Failure to disclose previous applications by the same or a similarly constituted founding group for a substantially similar school to an authorizing entity in any state may result in the application's disqualification for review by the Institute.***

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### e. Letters of Justification for Previously Denied Applications

If a charter entity in any state has provided any formal documentation to explain a decision not to move forward an application for a substantially similar school (resulting in an applicant withdrawal, or denial of the application), attach the document(s) as part of this Response.

### f. Founding Team Resumes

Submit an updated resume for all founding team members (not including board members).

### g. Probationary Status of Affiliated Charter School(s)

If any currently operating charter school within the proposed education corporation or associated with the proposed charter management organization has been in violation of the terms of their charter or been placed on probationary status or any other corrective action within the current charter term, please provide written confirmation from the existing authorizing entity that the conditions related to the violation or probationary status have been satisfied and lifted.

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#### What to Submit:

- Submit the narrative response to Request 3(a-e) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-03ad - Proposal History.**
- Attach any letters of justification as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-03e - Letters of Justification.**
- Attach founding team resumes as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-03f - Founding Team Resumes.**
- Attach probationary status of affiliated charter school(s) as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-03g – Probationary Status of Affiliated Charter School(s).**

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## 4. Community Outreach, Support, and Demand

### a. Description and Analysis of Community Outreach Efforts

Provide a narrative description of the methods used to inform stakeholders in the intended community about the proposed charter school including:

- The strategies used to solicit community input regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students and the plan to meet those needs;

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- The form and nature of feedback received from community stakeholders and the process for incorporating that feedback into the submitted proposal; and,
- The extent to which, if at all, the proposal incorporates community input regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students.

In addition to the narrative description, this response may also include a table, bulleted list, etc. with information about outreach efforts.

### **b. Description and Analysis of Community Support**

Provide a narrative description of support for the proposal from community stakeholders or others including a candid analysis of both the depth of support and opposition to the school.

### **c. Description and Analysis of Student Demand**

Provide a narrative description of student demand including an analysis of evidence indicating that families with age-appropriate students would consider enrolling them in the school. Explain how this evidence supports the school's ability to meet its proposed enrollment. If using existing waitlists as evidence of demand, provide an estimate based on the experience of how many waitlist entries it takes to fill a seat.

### **d. Evidence of Community Outreach**

Submit documents that provide evidence of community outreach (e.g., flyers, websites, social media pages, virtual meeting announcements, online survey results, etc.).

Include a cover sheet with a table that identifies each document included with the evidence for this request, its page number(s), and a brief description of the document.

### **e. Evidence of Community Support**

Submit documents that provide evidence of community support (e.g., letters of support from community stakeholders, emails with evidence of support, petitions, online survey results, etc.).

Include a cover sheet with a table that identifies each document included with the evidence for this request, its page number(s), and a brief description of the document.

### **f. Evidence of Student Demand**

Submit documents that provide evidence of demand for the school (e.g., petitions that clearly indicate signers have students of age to enroll in the school and would consider enrolling them in the school, etc.).

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Include a cover sheet with a table that identifies each document included with the evidence for this request, its page number(s), and a brief description of the document.

***NOTE: If evidence of community outreach, support, and/or demand overlaps, it is not necessary to duplicate documents. Describe how any specific evidence of one demonstrates evidence of another in the applicable narrative description.***

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### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Requests 4(a-b) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-04abc - Community Outreach, Support, and Demand.**
- Attach evidence of community outreach as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-04d - Evidence of Outreach.**
- Attach evidence of community support as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-04e - Evidence of Support.**
- Attach evidence of demand as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-04f - Evidence of Demand.**

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## 5. Enrollment

### a. Enrollment Plan

Provide a narrative description of the following aspects of the school's enrollment plan including:

- The extent to which the proposed charter school's grade configuration aligns with the school district of location and how any misalignment may impact the school;
- Any differences in eligible or minimum age in the same grades between the proposed charter school and district schools;
- The pattern of growth over the charter term including anticipated student attrition, the rationale for the attrition rate, and plans to replace or limit the intake of students (i.e., the proposed school's "backfill" policy); and
- A statement about any growth that the applicants may seek in a future charter period if the school is renewed.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

***NOTE: The school district of location or NYSED reviews applications for pre-K programs. Applicants may not submit an application for pre-K until the SUNY Trustees approve the charter.***

### **b. Target Population Enrollment**

Explain how the school will meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets established by the SUNY Trustees for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL students. The response should:

- Cite the proposed school’s enrollment and retention targets as determined through the [enrollment and retention calculator](#) found on our website;
- Describe the recruitment strategies the school will employ to attract each target population to the school;
- Describe any at-risk admissions factors, set-asides, or “preferences” the school would offer to increase the likelihood of enrolling targeted students;
- Provide a brief explanation of the efforts, resources, structures, or programs that the school will employ to retain these students and how the school will monitor the efficacy of such efforts including disaggregation of student performance data for each subgroup; and,
- Any replicator that is not currently meeting targets at any of its schools must provide an explanation as to why it is not meeting the targets, efforts made to meet the targets, and what new strategies the applicant intends to employ to meet the targets.

***NOTE: Including preferences beyond one extra weight (ticket) in the lottery may make the proposed school ineligible to receive federal Charter School Program (“CSP”) grant funding.<sup>14</sup>***

### **c. Student Enrollment Table**

Complete the student enrollment table provided in the budget template and include a copy of it with this request.

### **d. Admissions Policy**

Describe the admissions policy for the school including any at-risk designations or set-asides, and how the school intends to apply the statutory preferences for returning students, siblings, students residing in the school district or CSD of the location of the charter school,

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<sup>14</sup> See Appendix A of this document and the Guidance Handbook for further information.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

and employees of the education corporation or CMO (up to a 15% set aside) in accordance with the Act.

Further [Institute guidance relating to school admissions](#), including the new employee and CMO employee preference, is available on our website.

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### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Request 5(a-d) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-05ac - Enrollment.**
  - Attach the school's admissions policy as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-05d - Admissions Policy.**
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## ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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### 6. Curriculum and Instructional Design

***NOTE: The responses to Requests 6(a-f) together may not exceed a total of 50 pages in length. This does NOT include Request 6(g) - Draft Accountability Plan. The Institute encourages applicants to use Requests 6(a-f) to develop a narrative explaining in detail the proposed school's academic program and use Request 23 – Supplemental Information to provide any supporting curricular artifacts (e.g., planning templates, pacing calendars, evaluation rubrics, etc.).***

#### a. Curriculum Selection Process

Summarize the school's curriculum, by subject, and the rationale for all curriculum decisions including:

- Research-based evidence of effectiveness, particularly in meeting the needs of the school's target population, including proper citations;
- Discussion of how the school's curriculum is aligned to New York State standards;
- Discussion of how the curricula selected address or will be adapted to address unfinished instruction resulting from schooling disruptions due to COVID-19.
- An explanation of how the curriculum aligns with the school's educational philosophy and furthers its specific mission, key design elements, and unique themes;
- How teachers will know what to teach and when to teach it including the curriculum resources that will support instructional planning (e.g., curriculum maps, scope and sequence documents, pacing guides, etc.), and specifically address who will be responsible for creating or selecting these resources; and,
- The processes and procedures the school will use to review, evaluate, and revise the curriculum to ensure its effectiveness for all students, alignment to state standards, and alignment from grade to grade including who will be responsible for these processes and how teachers will be involved.

#### b. Assessment System

Describe the diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments the school will use to evaluate student knowledge and skills. This response should:

- Describe each assessment's purpose, design, format, and rationale for its selection;

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- Describe key considerations in the selection or creation of any assessments not yet identified including as it relates to ascertaining the impact of student learning loss;
- Describe how the school will collect and analyze assessment results;
- Explain how the school will ensure assessment results are valid and reliable;
- Describe who will be responsible for administering assessments and collecting and analyzing the results;
- Explain how school leaders and teachers will ensure student work products resulting from instruction indicate student preparation for success on state assessments;
- Explain how the following stakeholders will have access to and be able to use assessment results: teachers, school leaders, the education corporation’s board of trustees, and students and parents; and
- Describe how the school will inform parents and students about academic achievement and progress including the timing, frequency, and nature of the information.

### **c. Instructional Methods**

Describe the pedagogical approach the school will use to implement its curriculum including:

- The instructional methods or techniques to be employed in the school including any specific requirements for implementing this pedagogical approach (e.g., co-teaching or aides, technology, physical space, approaches to classroom management, etc.);
- Research or existing models that support the use of these instructional methods, especially considering the school’s target population and curricular choices outlined in Response 6(a) – Curriculum Selection Process;
- Discussion of specific instructional methods the school would incorporate to address interrupted instruction due to COVID-19; and
- An explanation of how the instructional methods align with the school’s educational philosophy and further its specific mission, key design elements, and unique themes.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### d. Course or Subject Overview

Provide course descriptions for **every subject and grade level** the school will serve **within the initial five years of operation**, accounting for both core and non-core subject areas including all courses identified in Request 7 – Calendar and Schedules and specials (e.g., physical education, art, etc.). This should include, at a minimum:

- A general description of the specific content and skills that would be addressed in the course, if known;
- The curricular programs (e.g., Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, FOSS, etc.) that would be used in each course;
- Essential course-specific assessments (e.g., the state’s 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade assessments/Regents exams, end-of-course portfolios or performances, etc.); and,
- If serving students in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, provide an outline of course sequences leading to graduation.

### e. Promotion and Graduation Policy

Explain the school’s policies for promoting students from one grade to the next including any early promotion. Include any provisions related to the retention of students for a specified number of absences including any equating of tardies to absences. Address when and how the school will inform students and parents about promotion and graduation policies and decisions.

If the school will offer high school grades within the proposed charter term:

- Describe the types of diplomas the school will offer along with the credit and other requirements for each;
- Explain how students will meet the requirements set forth by New York State for the granting of each relevant type of diploma; and,
- Include any additional specific graduation requirements and the rationale for their selection.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### f. Programmatic Audits

Describe a plan for annual programmatic audits of the implementation and effectiveness of the school's education program. Programmatic audits should include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's academic program, governance, and operations. Note that the programmatic audit is not simply a cost/benefit audit as conducted by some school districts. The plan should include, but is not limited to, the:

- Purpose and objectives;
- Areas to be audited;
- Schedule of events;
- Responsible persons, who may include outside consultants;
- Description of the written end product;
- How and to whom such written end product will be disseminated; and,
- Any plans to hire outside consultants to perform such audits.

### g. Draft Accountability Plan

Complete the [Accountability Plan Template](#) available on the Institute's website. The web page includes additional detail to assist the applicant in drafting the required SUNY Accountability Plan. This response should serve as a draft based on the applicant's understanding of the Institute's accountability requirements and align with the proposed school model. Institute staff will work with successful applicants in the school's first year of operation to finalize the plan.

***NOTE: Much of the Institute's Accountability Plan template centers on the results of annual state exams, the future administration of which may be uncertain given the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Institute encourages applicants to consider other means of accountability and be prepared to discuss them if invited to participate in an interview.***

# APPLICATION REQUESTS

## What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Request 6(a-f) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-06af - Curriculum and Instruction**. *This response may not exceed 50 pages in length.*
- Attach a draft accountability plan as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-06g - Accountability Plan**.

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## 7. Calendar and Schedules

### a. School Calendar

Provide a copy of the school's proposed calendar for its first year of operation that clearly articulates:

- Total number of **days** of instruction for the school year including whole and half days;
- Total number of **hours** of instruction for the school year including and not including additional instructional time such as tutoring;
- First and last day of classes;
- Organization of the school year (i.e., semesters, trimesters, quarters, etc.);
- All planned holidays and other days off, as well as planned half days; and,
- Dates for summer school, orientation, and other activities outside of the core academic calendar, if planned.

Provide a narrative to explain any aspects of the calendar that are not evident on the first-year calendar or where further explanation is necessary.

### b. Sample Student Schedule

For each division of the school (e.g., lower elementary, upper elementary, middle, high) provide the following for a typical week of instruction:

- A narrative describing the typical school day (including the approximate start and dismissal times and any regular variations; for example, one day a week early dismissal for teacher professional development), components of the school day devoted to core academics; components of the school day devoted to before or after school electives; and, remediation or other non-core academic components of the proposed school design;

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- A table that clearly identifies the minimum number of weekly minutes the school will devote to individual core academic subjects in each grade (e.g., ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies), and the total number of instructional minutes the school would offer per week (exclusive of lunch, recess, study hall, etc.); and,
- A sample student schedule for a typical week.

### c. Sample Teacher Schedule

For each division of the school, provide a sample teacher schedule for a typical week of instruction including:

- Length of teachers' workday;
- Time devoted to core teaching assignments, planning, and other activities; and,
- A narrative describing key considerations in the development of an alternate teacher schedule for remote and/or hybrid instruction, should circumstances require (e.g., length of the remote school day, the number of synchronous vs. asynchronous lessons per day/week, planning time allotments, etc.).

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### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 7 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-07ac - Calendar and Schedules.**

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## 8. Specific Populations

### a. Struggling Students

Discuss the school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving students who are struggling academically and at risk of academic failure including:

- How the school will determine and identify which students are struggling including within the context of a Response to Intervention ("RTI") program. The applicant should clearly define the term "struggling student" as it would be applied in the school;
- The strategies, programs, specific curricula, and resources (including personnel) the school will devote to assisting struggling students both within general education classrooms and in other settings (e.g., planning time, small group instruction, tutoring, targeted assistance, technology, staff, and consultants, etc.);

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- How the school would ensure the effective implementation of these interventions in a remote setting;
- Any research or evidence that supports the appropriateness of the proposed approach; and,
- The process that the school will use to evaluate the efficacy of the program and ensure that the school is meeting the needs of these students.

### **b. Students with Disabilities**

Discuss the school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving students with disabilities in compliance with all federal laws and regulations. Please refer to Appendix B – Assurances Regarding the Provision of Special Education Services when creating this response as, if approved, the final charter will incorporate the assurances found in this document. Include:

- A statement agreeing to abide by all of the assurances found in Appendix B of this RFP – Special Education Assurances;
- The process for identifying students with disabilities (child find), especially within the context of the school's RTI process;
- The resources, personnel (including administrative responsibilities), and direct and related services the school is likely to provide both within general education classrooms and in other settings (e.g., collaborative team teaching ("CTT"), Special Education Teacher Support Services ("SETSS"), speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, planning time, instructional materials, technology, professional development, staff and consultants, etc.) and a brief discussion about how specifically the school would ensure that students entitled to these services would continue to receive them in a remote setting;
- The services or settings that will be provided by the school district of the student's residency or through a third-party contract (pursuant to the Act);
- Any research or evidence that supports the appropriateness of the school's approach to serving students with disabilities;
- The process for coordination between general education teachers and special education teachers or service providers;
- The process that will be used to monitor the achievement and progress of students with disabilities including how the school would do so in a remote setting;

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- The process that will be used to evaluate the efficacy of the program and ensure that the needs of these students are being met; and,
- Specific professional development for identifying, supporting, and evaluating the progress of special education students including the implementation of RTI and behavioral intervention plans (“BIPs”) in the classroom.

### c. English Language Learners

Discuss the school’s methods and strategies for identifying and serving ELLs in compliance with all federal laws and regulations including:

- The process for identifying students whose first language is not English and the methods for determining the scope of assistance that these students may need including how the school will ensure that they are not inappropriately identified as students with special education needs;
- The approach, resources, and personnel (including qualifications and associated administrative responsibilities) the school will use to meet the needs of ELLs (both within general education classrooms and in other settings) including a brief discussion about how specifically the school would ensure that students continue to receive language acquisition support in a remote setting;
- The research and evidence that supports the appropriateness of this approach;
- The process for coordination between general education teachers and staff serving ELLs and professional development for general education teachers serving ELLs;
- The process that will be used to monitor the achievement and progress of ELLs including exit criteria;
- The process that will be used to evaluate the efficacy of the program and instructors and ensure that the needs of ELL students are being met;
- How the school will make all necessary materials available to parents of ELLs in a language that they can understand; and,
- How the school will make after-school and other extra-curricular programming accessible to ELLs.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### d. Gifted and Advanced Students

Discuss the school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving students who are academically advanced and/or gifted and at risk of not being adequately served including:

- How the school will identify advanced and/or gifted and talented students; and,
- Strategies and programs the school will use within general education classrooms and in other settings to accelerate learning for advanced and gifted and/or talented students including how the school would implement these strategies in a remote setting.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 8(a-d) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-08ad - Specific Populations.**

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### 9. Instructional Leadership

Proposals should include strategies to promote and prioritize diversity and equity within the operational, instructional, and administrative leadership and staff.

#### a. Instructional Leadership Roles

Describe instructional leadership in the school over the first five years of operation including:

- Specific roles and responsibilities of the personnel who would provide instructional leadership in the proposed school;
- The process and criteria for identifying and selecting instructional leaders including how such criteria align with the school's educational philosophy and mission; and,
- How instructional leaders will monitor the effectiveness of the academic program and at-risk students' academic performance.

#### b. Teacher Support and Supervision

Describe the school's approach to ongoing individual teacher supervision and support including (but not limited to) coaching and feedback systems and supports to ensure high-quality instructional planning and implementation.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### c. Professional Development

Describe how the school's professional development program will assist teachers in meeting students' academic needs and school goals including:

- An overview of the frequency and format of professional development;
- Who will be responsible for leading and providing professional development;
- How the school will identify professional development topics;
- How the school's professional development plans support the school's mission, key design elements, and the target and special populations' needs;
- How the professional development program will meet the needs of all teachers, including novice teachers, teachers new to the school, highly effective teachers, and teachers of all subjects; and,
- The process for evaluating the efficacy of the professional development program.

### d. Teacher Evaluation and Accountability

Describe how the school will formally evaluate teachers and hold them accountable for student achievement, including:

- An explanation of how expectations for teacher performance and student achievement will be established, communicated to, and instilled in staff members; and,
- A description of the school's process and criteria for evaluating teacher performance and holding teachers and leaders accountable for student achievement.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 9(a-d) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-09ad - Instructional Leadership.**

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# APPLICATION REQUESTS

## 10. School Culture and Discipline

### a. School Culture

Explain how the school will establish and maintain a culture that supports learning and achievement including:

- The school’s general approach to school culture and rationale for this approach;
- Any specific programs the school intends to implement and the rationale for their selection; and,
- How the school will maintain a safe and orderly environment.

### b. Discipline Policy

Provide the school’s discipline policy for general education students.

### c. Special Education Discipline Policy

Provide the school’s discipline policy for special education students with assurances that it is in conformity with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and regulations.

### d. Dress Code Policy

If the charter school would implement a dress code policy, describe the policy and the rationale for its selection. Include a description of how the school would subsidize the cost of uniforms for parents unable to afford them.

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### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Request 10(a) as Microsoft Word® file named: **R-10a - Culture and Discipline.**
  - Attach the school’s Discipline Policies for general education students as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-10b - Discipline Policy.**
  - Attach the school’s Discipline Policies for special education students as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-10c - Special Education Policy.**
  - Attach the school’s Dress Code as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-10d - Dress Code Policy.**
-

## ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

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### 11. School Management and Leadership

#### a. Organizational Chart

Provide organizational charts for both the first and fifth years of operation clearly showing reporting structures between the school leader(s), the board of trustees, and staff. If the charter school intends to contract or partner with an entity for management or educational services, the organizational charts should also reflect that relationship.

#### b. School Leadership and Management Structure

Include a narrative explaining the lines of reporting and accountability, the rationale for choosing this structure, and the roles of any management or partner organizations. The narrative should:

- Describe the management practices and procedures (e.g., how the school will set priorities and make key organizational decisions);
- Outline the evaluation procedures for staff in management positions; and,
- Describe recruitment plans for the school leader including:
  - The process and criteria the school will use to select the school leader;
  - Who has been or will be involved in the selection process; and,
  - The role of any CMO or partner organization (if any) in the selection process.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 11 as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-11ab - School Management and Leadership.**

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### 12. Personnel

#### a. Staffing Chart and Rationale

Complete the table provided in the budget template to list all instructional and non-instructional staff positions during the first five years of operation and include a copy of the table in this response. Provide a narrative that explains the rationale for the staffing structure and numbers and identifies a specific comparative source for staff salaries (e.g., a

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

document with teacher salaries from the school district of location). The narrative should also address how the proposed staffing structure would lend itself to the provision of instruction in a remote setting.

### **b. Qualifications and Responsibilities**

Provide a list of qualifications and responsibilities for each position including all instructional and administrative positions.

### **c. Staff Recruitment and Retention**

Describe plans to recruit and retain staff members, particularly high-quality teachers including:

- The processes and policies to recruit and hire teachers and other staff members that consider the specific quality and availability of talent in the proposed geographic area; and,
- The strategies for retaining high-quality teachers.

***NOTE: If a Business Plan submitted in conjunction with this proposal fully addresses this request, applicants may reference the business plan response in lieu of addressing these questions in full in the proposal.***

### **d. Personnel Policies**

Submit a copy of the proposed education corporation's personnel policies.

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#### **What to Submit:**

- Submit the response to Request 12(a-c) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-12ac - Personnel.**
- Attach Personnel Policies as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-12d - Personnel Policies.**

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### **13. Partner Organization(s)**

#### **a. Partner Information**

Explain the due diligence process used to select the partner(s) and its role in the development of this proposal. Describe any partner organization(s) that will have a significant relationship with the proposed school. Include the following information in relation to the partner organization:

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- The name of the partner organization(s);
- The name, address, phone number, and e-mail of a contact person(s);
- A description of the nature and purpose of the relationship;
- Any contract or monetary arrangements;
- Names of proposed school board members affiliated with the organization(s); and,
- Evidence of the organization's ability to do business in New York.

***NOTE: Applicants submitting a proposal in conjunction with a CMO do not need to include information about the CMO in this response. CMOs should submit a separate business plan in conjunction with the proposal.***

Not all non-CMO partner organizations are required to submit a business plan with the school proposal. Please refer to the Business Plan Requirements section in the Introduction for further information. The Institute encourages applicants to contact our office well in advance of the application submission deadline to ensure a full understanding of the proposed legal structure and operational aspects.

### **b. Partner Commitment**

For each new proposed partnership, provide a letter of intent or commitment from a bona fide representative of the partner organization(s) indicating the terms and extent of the organization's involvement with the charter school.

If the school would provide compensation to the partner(s) for any goods or services (e.g., a lease or fee), provide a copy of the term sheet or draft contract and include an explanation about how such services would be provided to the charter school at or below fair market value.

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### **What to Submit:**

- Submit the response to Request 13(a) as Microsoft Word® file named: **R-13a - Partner Organizations**
  - Attach the letter(s) of commitment from the partner organization(s) as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe® Acrobat file named: **R-13b - Partner Commitment**
-

# APPLICATION REQUESTS

## 14. Governance

### a. Board Members

Provide a brief narrative describing the methods used to recruit and select board members. Use the Proposed Board Members table (see below) to identify a minimum of five proposed board members. In circumstances where one or two persons affiliated with a CMO will serve on the education corporation board, a total of at least six or seven trustees must be identified when the proposal is submitted. Refer to the Guidance Handbook for more details.

- Under the heading “Position on the Board,” please note any leadership and/or affiliations that proposed board members would hold. For example: “Board Chair,” “Treasurer,” “CMO Representative,” “Parent Representative,” etc.
- Under the heading “Committee Affiliations (if any),” please note any committees on which a proposed trustee would serve (e.g., “Academic Committee,” “Finance Committee,” etc.).
- Include any currently vacant seats that the board would fill at a later date and specify the date. For example, if the board intends to add the head of the school’s Parent Teacher Organization as an *ex-officio* member after PTO elections in December of the first year, that member should appear in the table below as: Name – TBD; Position on the Board – PTO Representative; Committee Affiliations – TBD; Area of Expertise and/or Additional Role at School – Parent; and, indicate whether the role would be “Voting” or “Non-Voting and/or “*Ex-Officio*.”

***NOTE: Paid employees of the school including administrators and teachers generally may not serve as voting members of the board, except perhaps in limited circumstances. Please see the Guidance Handbook for further information.***

TRUSTEE NAME	POSITION ON THE BOARD (OFFICER OR CONSTITUENT REPRESENTATIVE)	COMMITTEE AFFILIATIONS (IF ANY)	EXPERTISE AND/OR ROLE AT SCHOOL (PARENT, STAFF, ETC.)		
				VOTING	EX-OFFICIO
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### **b. Education Corporation Board Roles and Responsibilities**

Describe the roles and responsibilities of the education corporation's board of trustees including:

- Selecting school leader(s) (and partner or management organizations, if any);
- Monitoring school performance including fiscal performance, specifically detailing what that monitoring will entail; and,
- Evaluating school leaders (and partner or management organizations, if any) and holding them accountable for the achievement of the school's mission and goals.

### **c. Education Corporation Board Design**

Describe the rationale for the proposed design of the education corporation's board of trustees including:

- *Ex-officio* members (voting and non-voting);
- Information to be received from the CMO, partner, school leadership, staff, or contractors as applicable;
- Trustee recruitment and selection process and criteria;
- New trustee orientation process; and,
- Board/trustee training and development including the self-evaluation tool the board intends to use.

### **d. Stakeholder Participation**

Explain how parents, the community, and school staff, will provide input and participate in the governance of the educational corporation.

### **e. Bylaws**

Provide a draft of the proposed education corporation's governing bylaws.

### **f. Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy**

Provide a draft of the proposed education corporation's code of ethics and conflict of interest policy. The code of ethics must include a comprehensive and formal conflict of interest policy with specific procedures for implementing the policy and assuring compliance with the

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

policy. The Code of Ethics and conflict of interest policy (which may be one document) must be written to apply not only to trustees but also to officers and employees of the school in conformity with N.Y. General Municipal Law. Please see the Guidance Handbook for more details.

### **g. Complaint Policy**

Provide a draft of the proposed school's complaint policy. The complaint policy must include procedures for handling formal and informal complaints under the Act including from staff, parents, employees, and contractors. It may also include procedures for handling informal complaints. Please refer to the [Guidelines for Complaint Policies and Procedures](#) available on our website.

### **h. Board Member Resumes**

Submit updated resumes for all board members that include each board member's professional experience and educational background. Please do not submit full-form *curriculum vitae* that include extensive information about publications, conference presentations, etc.

### **i. Board Members Request for Information Forms**

Each proposed board trustee must complete, sign, and attach the [Request for Information Prospective Charter School Trustees](#) ("RFI") form available on the Institute's website.

***NOTE: Existing SUNY-authorized education corporations submitting an application to open a new school are not required to submit RFI forms for existing trustees.***

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### **What to Submit:**

- Submit the response to Request 14(a-d) as Microsoft Word® file named: **R-14ad - Governance.**
- Attach Board Bylaws as a as Microsoft Word® file named: **R-14e - Bylaws.**
- Attach the Code of Ethics as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-14f - Code of Ethics.**
- Attach Complaint Policy as a as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-14g - Complaint Policy.**
- Attach board member resumes as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-14h - Board Member Resumes.**
- Attach board member RFI forms as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-14i - Board Member RFI Forms.**

# APPLICATION REQUESTS

## 15. District and School Relations

### a. Relationship Strategies

Provide strategies for establishing and maintaining an ongoing relationship with the local school district including any foreseen opportunities or challenges.

### b. School Partnerships

Provide a description of low-performing schools in the area where the proposed charter school intends to be located and explain how the charter school might partner with those schools to share best practices and innovations.

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### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Requests 15(a-b) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-15 - District Relations**.

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## 16. Facility

### a. Facility Needs

Describe the facility needs of the proposed school for each year of the charter term including any unique features necessary to implement the school design and academic program including:

- The desired location of the school facility;
- The number of general education classrooms required each year;
- Any additional classroom space required for special education or ELL services, labs, specialty classes, and intervention or enrichment programs;
- Space requirements for administrative functions, food services, a nurse's office, and physical education; and,
- If the applicants intend to offer a residence program for students, describe the facility requirements to support this program including overnight staffing, and include specific and detailed information regarding the number of residence rooms, configuration, restrooms, food service, and other facility-related needs.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### b. Facility Selection

Describe the efforts to date to secure a facility for the school including:

- If the applicants have identified a facility, a description of the facility and how it meets the school's needs including its location and whether it is new construction, part of an existing public or private school building, or must be renovated for use;
- How the proposed facility will be able to meet NYSED (outside of NYC), or New York City Department of Buildings School Use (sometimes denoted as use "G"), and state sanitary specifications by the commencement of the first year of operation;
- If another organization is assisting the applicants in obtaining facilities, provide information about the organization;
- If the applicants have not identified a facility, explain the plans for securing a suitable facility and preparing it for use by the time the school would open (including assuring that it meets specifications). Also, explain any contingency planning including the associated costs;
- If an applicant seeks to be located in any public school facility as a primary option, he or she must clearly state these plans and indicate that a facility has *not* been located *unless* all necessary governmental approvals for the facility have been obtained;
- If co-located space is the primary facility plan and the budget template has been completed under that assumption, but the applicant would also investigate other options, and discuss the alternative plans in a narrative. If the Institute deems it necessary, a budget reflecting the secondary assumptions may be requested; and,
- If another organization is assisting the applicants in obtaining facilities, provide information about the organization.

### c. Facility-Related Conflicts of Interest

If the charter school education corporation or its CMO or partner organization would own or lease a facility, provide a description of the ownership or lease arrangement indicating specifically any potential conflicts of interest and arrangements by which the education corporation would manage or avoid such conflicts. Note that in cases where there is a potential conflict, the Institute will likely require a fair market valuation of the cost of the facility supported by independent appraisers. Additionally, no education corporation trustee may have an ownership interest in a facility.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### d. Additional Facility Information

Provide Information such as blueprints, maps, certified estimates, etc., as well as documentation of any commitment (e.g., a deposit, written assurance, lease, etc.), to use a particular facility, as part of this response.

***NOTE: If the applicant has identified a facility, include certification from an architect that the proposed facility meets NYSED or NYC specifications, as applicable, by the date the school would commence instruction and the cost of bringing the facility into compliance with the specifications. These costs must be accounted for in the proposed startup budget.***

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#### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Request 16(a-c) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-16ac - Facilities.**
- Attach supporting documents as Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® files named: **R-16d - Facility Documents.**

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### 17. Food Services

Describe the plans for food services the charter school will provide including plans for the provision of food services in the event that the physical school building must close.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 17 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-17 - Food Services.**

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## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### 18. Health Services

Describe the plans for health services the charter school will provide including provision for a school nurse, medical space and equipment, immunization records checks, and medication to students within applicable law.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 18 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-18 - Health Services.**

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### 19. Transportation

Describe the transportation arrangements for students including arrangements for students who would not qualify for public school transportation under Education Law § 3635. Also, describe any supplemental transportation arrangements planned with sending school districts. Include a discussion of any transportation for Saturday school, test preparation, or any transportation that does not align with district options.

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 19 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-19 - Transportation.**

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### 20. Insurance

Describe the insurance coverage the charter school education corporation will carry for the school including the name of the insured and amounts of insurance for liability, property loss, personal injury, and any school-owned or leased vehicles or other property. Please include the costs for annual premiums in the proposal budget(s).

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#### What to Submit:

Submit the response to Request 20 as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-20 - Insurance.**

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## 21. Fiscal Soundness

### a. Budget Narrative

Discuss in narrative form how the startup budget plan, the first-year operational budget and cash flow, and the five-year budget plans are fiscally sound and that sufficient startup funds would be available to the proposed school. Provide the rationale for, or source of, the assumptions upon which the budgets rest, noting specifically which expenses rely on funding from soft money and when the funding for these expenses will transfer to recurring revenue streams, and explain how the budgets support the implementation of the academic program described in the proposal.

Due to the financial challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting uncertainty of economic conditions and enrollment pattern shifts, the Institute also encourages applicants to consider multiple revenue sources, prepare for revenue receipt timing issues, and incorporate backstop strategies.

***NOTE: Schools that include at-risk designations, “preferences,” or set-asides in their admissions policies (with the exception of one extra weight in the lottery) may not be eligible for federal CSP grant funding. Additional information on [funding opportunities](#) is available on the Institute’s website. IMPORTANT: Timing delays of start-up funds can cause significant obstacles for new charters. Recent CSP grant awards have experienced significant delays in the flow of payments to approved charter recipients. As a precaution, SUNY advises new charter applicants to take steps that include proactive planning of financial backstop measures to ensure financial stability.***

### b. Financial Planning

Explain the process the school will use to develop its annual budget including:

- Who will be involved;
- How needs will be identified and weighed;
- The timeline for creating and approving budgets; and,
- Procedures for monitoring and modifying budgets and on what interval.

### c. Fiscal Audits

Describe the school’s plans for at least annual independent fiscal audits conducted by a certified public accountant or certified public accounting firm licensed in New York State. Please note that specific assurances as to fiscal audits are included in the attached Assurances Regarding the Provision of Fiscal Audits and Dissolution.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

### d. Dissolution Procedures

Provide a brief narrative of the procedures that the school would follow, in addition to the SUNY Closure Plan, in the event of closure and dissolution. Please note that specific assurances as to dissolution are included in Appendix B: Assurances Regarding the Provision of Fiscal Audits and Dissolution.

### e. Budget Template

Complete the 2023 RFP Budget Template which can be downloaded from [our resource page](#).

Newly formed applicant groups should submit one budget for each proposed school.

Applicants should submit a budget that reflects the most likely facility cost scenario when the school is to begin operation. If a proposal includes a budget that assumes a district-provided facility, and applicants later secure a private facility, the Institute will require a revised budget. The Institute encourages applicants to consider factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the development of the proposed school's budget. Additional information is available in the Guidance Handbook.

***NOTE: The Institute updates the budget template as changes are made to per-pupil aid funding rates. Please ensure that the application submitted includes the most current template and contact the Institute with any questions or concerns.***

***WARNING: As a financial safeguard, SUNY is advising any CSP grant award funds be conservatively budgeted at the \$500,000 level instead of the previous \$1,000,000 level.***

### f. Letters of Commitment

Attach letters of commitment for any funding from private contributions, grant funds, or other philanthropic sources included in the school budget. List the amounts and the anticipated uses for the funding.

### g. Non-SUNY Financials

This Request pertains only to applicants associated with one or more private or charter schools that SUNY does not authorize. All other applicants should indicate, "Request is not applicable" in response to this Request.

Attach the following documents covering the last five years for each private or charter school that SUNY did not authorize including any out-of-state school that is currently associated with a replicating applicant:

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

- IRS Forms 990;
- Audited financial statements; and,
- Management or Advisory Letters from the independent auditor (if applicable).

***NOTE: This Request seeks charter-level information about individual charters. Applicants seeking to replicate under a larger network should submit a business plan completed by the network in conjunction with the proposal, which requests similar information at the network level. See the Business Plan Overview and Requirements for Applicants located on our [Applicant Resource page](#). If information responsive to this Request is contained in a business plan, reference the business plan in this Response.***

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### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Requests 21(a-d) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R21ad - Fiscal Soundness.**
- Attach the Budget Template as a Microsoft Excel® file named: **R-21e - Budget Template.**
- Attach Letters of Commitment as a Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-21f - Letters of Commitment.**
- Attach Non-SUNY Financials as an Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-21g - Non-SUNY Financials.**

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## 22. Action Plan

Provide a detailed action plan outlining the steps the founding group will undertake to ensure a successful startup. In a well-organized chart, the action plan should include:

- All projected key steps in the pre-opening period (from SUNY approval through the commencement of instruction) including, but not limited to hiring personnel; setting up organizational, legal, and financial structures; securing funding; and, selecting or developing critical aspects of the school's academic program including the curriculum;
- The start date and projected completion date of each task; and,
- The person(s) responsible for each task.

The Institute encourages applicants to take into account potential factors (e.g., procurement delays, availability of materials, etc.) related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the development of the action plan.

## APPLICATION REQUESTS

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### **What to Submit:**

Submit the response to Request 22 as a Microsoft Word® or Excel® file named: **R-22 - Action Plan.**

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## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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### 23. Supplemental Information

#### a. Supplemental Narrative

If there is any additional information that would help the Institute and SUNY Trustees evaluate the proposal, please describe it here and provide a rationale for its inclusion. If no supplementary information is necessary, please indicate that this Request is not applicable.

#### b. Supplemental Attachments

Submit attachments, documents, etc., discussed in response to (a) above. If no supplemental documents are necessary, please indicate that this Request is not applicable.

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#### What to Submit:

- Submit the response to Request 23(a) as a Microsoft Word® file named: **R-23a - Supplemental Narrative.**
  - Attach Supplemental and Support Documents as a Microsoft Word® or Excel, or Adobe Acrobat® file(s) named: **R-23b - Supplemental Attachments.**
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### FULL MERGED APPLICATION

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**24.** Applicants must combine all the individual documents and/or files included in the proposal (Requests 00 – 23) and submit them as a single document. Applicants may submit the merged application files as either Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat®. Please ensure all individual requests are included in the merged document, as missing requests may delay application review or invalidate the application altogether.

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#### **What to Submit:**

Submit the response to Request 24 as an Adobe Acrobat® file named: **R-24 - Full Merged Application.**

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# Appendices

**Appendix A** Charter School Applicant Eligibility Information for Federal Charter School Program (“CSP”) Grants

**Appendix B** Assurances

### CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION FOR FEDERAL CSP GRANTS

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***NOTE: NYSED independently administers CSP grants and provides information on [funding and finance opportunities](#) on its website. The following is provided for informational purposes only. CSP grants are awarded from New York State’s 2018 \$95.5 million federal CSP grant award. CSP funding in any amount is not guaranteed and is contingent upon availability of funds.***

The Charter Schools Program (“CSP”) is a federally funded program designed to increase the number of high-quality charter schools throughout the country by supporting new charter schools during the planning year and first two years of operation. NYSED is the sole administrator of the CSP grant in New York State; however, grant funds are available to all applicants, regardless of the authorizer. After the SUNY Trustees approve a charter request, NYSED will contact applicants about the CSP grant. Applicants should be aware that NYSED will require additional information in order to allow access to the grant funds.

Note that while any school that the SUNY Trustees approve is likely to be eligible to apply for CSP funds, the following factors may cause the school to be ineligible:

- **Applicants who offer admissions set-asides, absolute preferences, or separate lotteries for at-risk students.**

Charter schools receiving CSP grants may weight admission lotteries as long as they only weight one of the following subgroups: ELLs, students with disabilities, or students who are economically disadvantaged. Schools incorporating an at-risk preference into their lottery may only do so using the NYSED Weighted Lottery Generator. Additional information is available in the Guidance Handbook and in the Institute’s Lottery Guidance, available on [our Application and Materials resource page](#). The U.S. Department of Education’s 2013 interpretation of federal non-regulatory guidance may preclude applicants from offering certain admissions preferences to at-risk students while receiving funds from the CSP grant.

- **Applicants partnering with a CMO that has received federal replication grant funds.**

Pursuant to an opinion by the U.S. Department of Education, certain schools seeking to partner with a CMO that has been awarded federal replication grant funds may be ineligible for supplemental CSP Grant funds.

Applicants should direct all questions about CSP grants to NYSED.

### STANDARD CSP GRANT AND SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

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***Timing delays of start-up funds can cause significant obstacles for new charters. Recent CSP grant awardees have experienced significant delays in receipt of payments. As a precaution, SUNY advises new charter applicants take steps that include proactive planning of financial backstop measures to ensure financial stability. Because CSP grant funding in any amount is not guaranteed, SUNY encourages any CSP grant award funds to be conservatively budgeted at no more than \$500,000.***

Applicants may potentially qualify for two types of CSP grants:

#### **Standard CSP Grant**

The standard grant award is \$1,000,000, which is distributed over three years. SUNY encourages any CSP grant award funds included in the proposed budget to be conservatively budgeted at no more than \$500,000. Applicants should also closely review the restrictions on these funds and be sure to propose using them appropriately. Failure to do so may result in the Institute finding that the proposed school is not likely to operate in a fiscally sound manner.

#### **Supplemental CSP Funding**

Applicants may be eligible for supplemental CSP funding for an amount up to \$250,000 based on whether a school satisfies either of two priorities: the Underserved Student Populations Priority or one of the Authorizer Program Design Priorities. Note that applicants may only receive supplemental funding once even if they meet more than one priority. While there are multiple Authorizer Program Design Priorities, the maximum total supplemental funding award remains \$250,000. For example, if an applicant receives the full standard grant of \$1,000,000, they could qualify for a one-time supplemental funding of up to \$250,000.

***NOTE: Applicants may not include Supplemental CSP Funding in their proposed budget even if they believe that they would qualify for the funding.***

### SUPPLEMENTAL CSP GRANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Currently, the two supplemental CSP grant priorities are:

- 1. Underserved student populations priority (supplemental funding of \$125,000).** NYSED will provide up to \$125,000 in supplemental CSP grant funding to those charter schools that have met one or more of the enrollment targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, or students who are eligible for the FRPL program, as prescribed by the SUNY Trustees and as required by Education Law § 2852(9-b) by the October Basic Education Data System (“BEDS”) student data reporting date in their first year of operation.

## APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT PRIORITIES

**2. Authorizer program design priority (supplemental funding of \$250,000).** At SUNY's recommendation, NYSED will provide \$250,000 in supplemental CSP grant funding to charter schools that meet one or more of the following design priorities:

- **Applicants that would lease or purchase the proposed facility for a minimum of three years of operation.** The proposal must include a draft lease or purchase agreement or lease OR applicants must forward a draft lease or purchase agreement or lease to the Institute by April in the same year in which the school would open.
- **Applicants that include at least one or more key design elements incorporating the arts (visual arts, music, theatre, dance, or other related) into the school design.** The proposal must support the implementation of the arts as a key design element, for example through adequate staffing, funding, facilities plans, curricular materials, strategic partnerships, etc. Applicants that simply offer classes in the arts will not qualify for this authorizer preference. The arts must be a key component of the academic program design.
- **Applicants who partner with a persistently low-performing district school to phase out that low-performing school while establishing the proposed school.**
- **Applicants replicating an existing SUNY-authorized charter school that meets the following academic performance criteria at the time of proposed school approval:<sup>15</sup>**
  - **Replicating a single K-8 school.** The replicating school has achieved a 0.3 effect size<sup>16</sup> in ELA and mathematics in two of the previous three years based on the Institute's regression analysis of New York State assessment data.

If the replicating school does not have three years of state testing data, it could qualify if the Institute's school evaluation findings indicate that the replicating school is on track to successfully meet the SUNY qualitative charter renewal benchmarks by the end of the charter term. The [benchmarks are available on the Institute's website](#).

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<sup>15</sup> Note that once the SUNY Trustees approve a replication, the Institute will use the most recent data available to assess an applicant's eligibility for supplemental funding.

<sup>16</sup> Charter schools authorized by the SUNY Trustees have in their Accountability Plans a measure of student performance on the state ELA and mathematics exams called Effect Size that compares the school's achievement to that of similar public schools statewide. It reflects the difference between a school's attained and predicted performance in each tested grade, relative to other schools with similar economically disadvantaged statistics and tested grades. The Institute conducts a regression analysis to compare predicted and actual school performance. An effect size of 0.3 demonstrates the school is performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree.

## APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT PRIORITIES

- **Replicating a high school.** Replicating high schools must meet all of the following requirements to be eligible for supplemental funding:
  - At least 75% of students in the second year of a cohort (typically the 10<sup>th</sup> grade) have passed three or more Regents examinations in two of the three previous school years for which data are available;
  - At least 75% of the students in the most recent graduation cohort must have graduated by the end of their 4<sup>th</sup> year in the cohort; and,
  - The school must have procedures and systems in place to assist students in gaining admittance into college, track the matriculation of students into college,<sup>17</sup> and support students as they transition to college.<sup>18</sup> If the replicating high school does not yet have a graduating cohort, it could qualify if the qualitative data collected during the Institute’s school evaluation visits indicate that the replicating school is on track to meet these criteria.

Should the SUNY Trustees approve a single existing SUNY-authorized school for replication, the Institute will notify the applicant of its status related to this requirement prior to moving final paperwork to NYSED for finalization of the charter and in relation to processing CSP paperwork.

- **Replicating as part of a network of schools:**<sup>19</sup> The network’s record of student achievement must have met the standard for a single school listed above. If a network includes one or more schools that do not have three years of applicable data, those schools must demonstrate meeting the criteria during each of the years for which data are available.

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<sup>17</sup> Examples may include high rates of completion of college entrance requirements, such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, individual applications for college entrance, and systems to monitor student matriculation.

<sup>18</sup> Examples may include structured alumni programs that provide formal support structures for graduates, formal dialogue between school staff and college advisors regarding the academic performance of admitted students, etc.

<sup>19</sup> The definition of a “network” for this purpose is broader than, but includes, the Institute’s definition of an Educational Service Provider as set forth in SUNY’s Charter Agreement. While CMOs and educational management organizations (“EMOs”) (other than for-profit organizations) would be included, shared service groups, and schools under common governance or affiliation, schools under a common licensing agreement may all be considered as one network. If a network had particular branding, strands or sub-organizational units, each one of those could also be considered a network. At this time, only schools operated in New York State will be considered part of a network.

### ASSURANCES REGARDING THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

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The education corporation provides the following assurances regarding the provision of special education and other services to students to be enrolled in the proposed charter school.

- The education corporation will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students with disabilities including IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) which are applicable to it.
- The Education Corporation will, consistent with applicable law, work with Local Educational Agency (“LEA”) school districts to ensure that all students with disabilities that qualify under the IDEA:
  - Have available to them a free, appropriate, public education (“FAPE”);
  - Are appropriately evaluated;
  - Are provided with an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”);
  - Receive an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (“LRE”);
  - Are involved in the development of and decisions regarding the IEP, along with their parents; and,
  - Have access to appropriate procedures and mechanisms, along with their parents, to resolve any disputes or disagreements related to the school’s or school district’s provision of FAPE.
- The Education Corporation will employ, at a minimum, a properly certified individual as the school’s special education coordinator, whose responsibilities will include coordinating with Committees on Special Education (“CSEs”); providing information to and obtaining information from CSEs as needed throughout the year; determining if entering students have IEPs; and, working with CSEs and school districts to ensure that all required special education and related services are being provided and that all IEPs are appropriate in the context of the charter school setting. The education corporation may permit the special education coordinator to take on additional administrative duties to the extent that they do not interfere with the coordinator’s responsibilities to ensure the school’s compliance with the IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA.
- The education corporation will make available, as required by law, a student’s regular and special education teachers (and other required school personnel) for meetings convened by such student’s CSE and provide such teachers and personnel with copies of the student’s IEP.

## APPENDIX B: ASSURANCES

- The education corporation will ensure that parents of children with special needs are informed of how their children are progressing on annual IEP goals and in the general curriculum at least as frequently as parents of regular education children.
- The education corporation will abide by the applicable provisions and regulations of the IDEA and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (“FERPA”) as they relate to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, having procedures for maintaining student files in a secure and locked location with limited access.
- The school’s special education coordinator will retain such data and prepare such reports as are needed by each disabled student’s school district of residence or NYSED in order to permit such entities to comply with federal law and regulations.
- The education corporation will comply with its obligations under the Child Find requirements of IDEA including 34 C.F.R. § 300.111 and will provide appropriate notification to parents in connection therewith as applicable including notifying them prior to providing a child’s name to a CSE for potential evaluation.
- The education corporation will not convene its own CSE, make IDEA evaluations of children suspected of being disabled, create IEPs, reevaluate or revise existing IEPs, or conduct due process hearings. The education corporation understands that these responsibilities are left solely to the CSE of the student’s district of residence and will implement IEPs as written.
- Appropriate education corporation personnel will attend such training and technical assistance seminars regarding the education and servicing of special education students as is required by the SUNY Trustees including those sponsored by the NYSED.

### ASSURANCES REGARDING THE PROVISION OF FISCAL AUDITS AND DISSOLUTION

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The education corporation provides the following assurances regarding the provision of fiscal audits and dissolution of the education corporation.

#### FISCAL AUDITS

The Education Corporation will provide for an annual independent fiscal audit conducted by a certified public accountant or certified public accounting firm licensed in New York State.

The Education Corporation will ensure such consolidated audited financial statements include:

- A statement of income and expenditures and a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year for each school of the education corporation for which the Education Corporation has received approval to operate. A separate income and expenditure statement and balance sheet should be included for each approved school or site in a startup phase, and for schools or sites for which opening has been delayed;
- A statement of income and expenditures and a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year for any central or regional back-office component;
- A statement of income and expenditures and a balance sheet for the most recent fiscal year for any other distinct component of the Education Corporation;
- A consolidated statement of income and revenues and a consolidated balance sheet for the Education Corporation; and,
- A federal single audit report, if applicable.

An education corporation with the authority to operate multiple schools must provide specific procedures for conducting independent audits of consolidated financial statements for the education corporation and all of its schools.

#### DISSOLUTION PROCEDURES

The education corporation will:

- Create a communication plan for students, families, and staff. The communication plan shall take into account timing to ensure students are able to take advantage of other school choice options that may be available.

## APPENDIX B: ASSURANCES

- Provide the Institute with the parent names and addresses of all students enrolled in the school, at the time, by grade to enable the Institute to communicate directly with families regarding the process as necessary.
- Transfer all student records, testing materials, etc. to the school district of location of the charter school and make available a copy of such records to each student's parent or legal guardian.
- Designate one or more trustees and/or employees to assist in the closure of the school, from an operational and financial perspective.
- Transfer the education corporation's fixed assets (if any, after the payment of all debts) in accordance with the law at the time of dissolution.
- Provide the procedures that the school would follow in the event of the closure and dissolution of the education corporation including the transfer of students and student records, execution of a SUNY Closure Plan, and for the disposition of school assets.
- Establish an escrow account, in the case of a single-school education corporation, of no less than \$75,000 to pay for the legal, final audit, and other wind-down expenses associated with a dissolution should it occur. The budget shall reflect this commitment and include funding of \$25,000 increments in the school's first three years of instruction. (Note that a separate reserve fund does need to be established and be reflected separately in the financial statements and notes to the financial statements.)
- In the case of an education corporation operating multiple charter schools, the education corporation must follow the dissolution reserve fund provisions in its charter agreement and reserve the appropriate amount of funds accordingly.

The education corporation understands that the above provisions largely apply to an education corporation operating one charter school and that the above provisions must be modified in the case where the Education Corporation operates multiple charter schools and some, but not all, of those schools close.