



SUNY Trustees Approve Seven New Charter Schools

Six new charter schools approved for New York City; One school approved for Elmira

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New York – Upon recommendation of the SUNY Charter Schools Institute, the SUNY Trustees' Charter Schools Committee today approved seven resolutions to establish seven new charter schools: six in New York City – in Brooklyn, Bronx and Queens; and, one in Elmira. All schools approved today will open in the fall of 2015.

The decision brings the total number of SUNY authorized charter schools in operation or approved to open across New York State to 131 schools. SUNY charter schools currently serve over 40,000 New York students.

Brief summaries of each new school are available below. For a detailed report, see the *Summary of Findings* available at the Institute's website: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org>

- **Amber Charter School II (Bronx or Queens)** will open in September 2015 with 250 students in Kindergarten and 1st grades. The school would grow to add one grade each year until it reaches a total of 650 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade in the current charter term. In the subsequent charter term, if approved, the school plans to enroll Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Amber Charter School II will build on the success of Amber Charter School, also authorized by the SUNY Trustees. The academic program, organizational, governance and fiscal performance of the existing school warrants replication and it is likely to provide additional high-quality options for children and families.

Key design elements include 90 minutes of mathematics and literacy instruction per day, Spanish language and cultural education, enrichment opportunities and a required community service project. The school intends to lease private space in New York City Community School District 6 (Bronx) or Community School District 28 (Queens).

- **Atmosphere Academy Public Charter School (Bronx)** will open in August 2015 with 120 students in 6th grade and would grow one grade each year to 342 students in 6th through 8th grades. Atmosphere Academy would ultimately seek to enroll students in 6th through 12th grade in subsequent charter terms, if approved.

The school will be located in a private facility in Community School District 10 in the Bronx. The planned educational model includes 400 minutes of math instruction and 500 minutes of English instruction per week, full-service programs for English Language Learners and special education students, development of 21st century skills

and an emphasis on student-led exploration and discovery.

- **Bronx Charter School for Better Learning II (Bronx)** will open in August 2015 with 75 students in Kindergarten and would grow one grade each year to 375 students in Kindergarten through 4th grade. Ultimately, the school would enroll students in Kindergarten through 5th grade if approved.

The school would replicate the program in place at Bronx Charter School for Better Learning, also authorized by the SUNY Trustees, which serves students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. The academic program, organizational, governance and fiscal performance of the existing school makes it a candidate for replication.

Key design elements of the program include data-based decision making, a program that adapts to meet the needs of each student, and an instructional program that emphasizes engagement, effort, and efficacy so students develop a sense of their own innate abilities. The school intends to seek facility space from the New York City Department of Education in New York City Community School District 11 (Bronx).

- **Brooklyn Prospect Charter School – Downtown (Brooklyn)** will open in August 2015 with 100 students in 6th grade and would grow one grade each year to 300 students in 6th through 8th grades.

The school will replicate its International Baccalaureate program in place at its original school, Brooklyn Prospect Charter School, which currently includes Kindergarten and 1st grade and 6th through 12th grades. The performance of the existing school indicates that the academic program, organizational, governance and fiscal performance makes it a candidate for replication.

Brooklyn Prospect Downtown seeks to locate in a private facility in New York City Community School District 13 (Brooklyn). Key design elements include a commitment to global citizenship, the recruitment, hiring and training of high quality educators, and establishing admissions policies to broaden the group of students attending the school.

- **Storefront Academy Charter School (Bronx)** will open in August 2015 with 100 students in Kindergarten and 1st grade and would grow one grade each year to 408 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. In the subsequent charter term, the school would serve, if approved, students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Storefront Academy is modeled on the design of the not-for-profit, tuition-free, blind admission school in Harlem, The Children's Storefront. The proposed program includes interactive and collaborative learning, holistic student support through small school and class size, and data-driven decision making to enhance accountability and transparency.

The school intends to open in private space in New York City Community School Districts 7 or 8 (Bronx).

- **The International Charter School (Brooklyn)** will open in August 2015 with 155 students in Kindergarten and 1st grade and would grow one grade each year to 549 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade. If approved, the school would ultimately serve students in Kindergarten through 8th grade in the subsequent charter term.

The school is seeking space in Community School District 13 either in a private facility or public facility if sufficient space is available through the New York City Department

of Education. Key design elements include content-rich curriculum that provides students in the earliest grades with foreign language instruction, socio-emotional learning, support for high-quality teachers and research based organizational design to leverage practices of high-performing schools.

- **Finn Academy: An Elmira Charter School (Elmira)** will open in August 2015 with 180 students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade and would grow one grade each year to 396 students in Kindergarten through 7th grade. The school would ultimately seek to enroll students in Kindergarten through 8th grade in the subsequent charter term, if approved.

The program includes a college awareness program at every grade level, STREaM Education that incorporates STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) plus reading and arts, extended school day and year, a wellness program, extensive teacher development and a student advisory program.

Finn Academy identified two potential facilities in the Elmira City School District including a district building that is no longer in use and a former building in downtown Elmira.

SUNY is the largest charter school authorizer in New York State and the largest university-based charter school authorizer in the country serving over 40,000 students at 131 charter schools. The SUNY Charter Schools Institute was created by the SUNY Board of Trustees to assist it in carrying out its responsibilities under the New York Charter Schools Act. Guided by the rigorous standards set by the SUNY Board of Trustees, the Institute's oversight of SUNY authorized charter schools is comprehensive, including: evaluating initial applications for the opening of charter schools; ongoing oversight and evaluation of operating schools; conducting a comprehensive evaluation when a school applies to renew its charter; and reporting to the school and the public on each school's performance and progress.

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