

PROSPECTUS

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission Statement: Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School will impart to its students the academic and personal foundation necessary to successfully pursue advanced studies and achieve continued personal growth as ethical and informed global citizens. Harlem Hebrew will accomplish this by creating a nurturing and rigorous K-5 dual language school community committed to academic excellence and to the fostering of a high degree of Hebrew language proficiency where students in a diverse student body will also develop a strong sense of social and civic responsibility through the integration of community service and service learning across the curriculum.

Key Design Elements and Unique Characteristics: Harlem Hebrew is a proposed K-5 school that will serve students in CSD 3 in Manhattan. The School is modeled after the Hebrew Language Academy Charter School (HLA) which opened in 2009 in Brooklyn's CSD 22. As with its predecessor, a crucial part of Harlem Hebrew's mission of academic excellence and rigorous curriculum is the study of the Hebrew language. Incorporating an intensive focus on Modern Hebrew in the curriculum will foster positive learning and developmental outcomes in students. There is ample research that points to the advantages children gain when they begin the study of a foreign language at an early age, not the least of which is their development as bilingual and bi-literate individuals. We believe this distinctive aspect will better prepare our students to be active participants in the global community of today and tomorrow. A unique component that enriches the study of the Hebrew language is the study of the attendant history and culture of the language through examination and exploration of Hebrew culture and history in the context of both American and world histories and imparts to students the commonalities of all humankind's struggles and successes throughout time while illustrating the interconnectedness of our global world today.

We have set high standards for and expect high levels of achievement from *all* of our students. There will be increased time on task so that all students, especially those at-risk of academic failure, can meet proficiency standards in all subject areas while still allowing time to engage in studies outside core subjects. We will have a longer school day (8 am-4 pm) and a longer school year (190 instructional days). We will have an intensive focus on core academic subjects. Each week, all students will have 10 hours of instruction in ELA, 5 hours in Math, 5 hours in Hebrew, 3 hours in Social Studies and 2¼ hours in Science. Each classroom of 25 students will have two teachers (a general education teacher and a Hebrew teacher). We have designed an innovative daily schedule that allows each classroom to have intensive ELA instruction with two general education teachers during Readers Workshop. Likewise, each classroom will be taught Hebrew by two Hebrew teachers. Most other subjects will be co-taught by the general education or specials teacher *and* the Hebrew teacher. Students will have opportunities for the study of the arts and physical education with daily gym class and regular Art and Music instruction each week which will also incorporate Hebrew language instruction.

We will use the workshop model of instruction because it is the most effective in working with classrooms of heterogeneous students, including students with disabilities (SWD), English language learners (ELLs) and Title I students. It is also aligned with our philosophy that there is an inseparable interrelation between content knowledge and higher order thinking. By allowing students to actively participate in their own learning through discussion and collaboration, the model allows students to engage more fully in higher order skills. The workshop model builds capacity in teachers to differentiate instruction through the use of assessment data to identify student needs and tailor instruction to address those needs. Harlem Hebrew's comprehensive assessment program will include a variety of tools, such as standardized and teacher made assessments, as well as ongoing daily teacher observations of students' performances.

Harlem Hebrew will utilize the Proficiency Approach in the teaching of Hebrew. In the field of second language teaching, academics distinguish between *learning* a language and *acquiring* a language. When one *learns* a language, one accumulates knowledge about the language, its behavior and its structure: one relates to it as an outsider. When one *acquires* a language one internalizes its structure and its behavior; and as a result of this internalization, one begins to use its linguistic components automatically to either understand or create meaningful messages. The most effective tool for enabling students to *acquire* language in a classroom setting

PROSPECTUS

is the Proficiency Approach; it aims to develop learners' ability to listen, speak, read and write in the learned language. The American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) considers the Proficiency Approach the gold standard for foreign language learning. The Proficiency Approach incorporates robust assessment tools that are utilized both for formative and summative evaluations. It is important to note that the Proficiency Approach is consistent with the Workshop Model. This consistency lends itself to a seamless transition for students, most importantly in the younger grades, from their instruction in the Hebrew language to their instruction in reading and writing and other English-driven core subjects.

An important component of our mission is to infuse students with values of understanding and respect for others. We will bring to life these values through an integration of a service learning curriculum that promotes social responsibility. Student work in service learning involves experiential education based in the curriculum. Here, learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems. At the same time, they reflect upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves. In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. In service learning "experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action."¹

Finally, we know we must have strong leadership and a highly qualified teaching staff implementing our program if our students are to succeed. To this end, we will make an investment in our human resources. Recruiting and retaining high quality leadership and staff and continuing to build their leadership and instructional capacities will be priorities. Harlem Hebrew's imbedded professional development model, as reflected in a Head of School *and* full-time Directors of Curriculum and Instruction and of Hebrew Curriculum and Instruction, illustrates the commitment to fully support teachers and strengthen and deepen their instructional capacity.

Founding Group Capacity: Harlem Hebrew has assembled an Applicant Team that has the requisite background and skills and, importantly, the *dedication* to commit their time and expertise, to develop and implement a strong charter school educational program and operational plan. While at this stage the Founding Board of Trustees has not been finalized, it is expected that a subset of this Applicant Team will ultimately serve on the initial Board while additional individuals will be recruited. By the time of the charter application submission in March, should Harlem Hebrew be invited to submit a full proposal, the Founding Board will have been selected. There are 9 members of the Harlem Hebrew Applicant Team. The Applicant Team's professional experiences span the following areas critical to the development and implementation of Harlem Hebrew: elementary education; educational leadership; politics; finance; business; the law; real estate brokerage, development and finance; community building and outreach; educational entrepreneurship; philanthropy; and charter school governance, including four individuals who were involved in the development and implementation of HLA, three of whom are current HLA Trustees. In addition, five members are residents of CSD 3, including parents of preschool or school-age children. In identifying potential individuals to join the Founding Board, Harlem Hebrew will require that each prospective Board member have (1) an understanding of and commitment to the School's goals, mission and programs; (2) exceptional professional or community service experience and/or other experience that is needed to ensure that all school stakeholders are appropriately represented on the board; and (3) a willingness to bring to bear their time, talents and connections for the benefit of the school. We will seek individuals who reflect a diverse range of backgrounds, expertise, and accomplishments and will ensure that its founding board reflects the full gamut of backgrounds necessary to ensure it can (1) provide proper leadership and oversight over the school so that it adheres to its charter and achieves its mission and (2) hold the School's leadership accountable for student achievement and operational and fiscal responsibility.

¹ Eyer, J., & D. E. Giles, J. (1999). *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

PROSPECTUS

II. STUDENT POPULATION

A. Student Enrollment

Grades	Projected Enrollment Table				
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
K	75	75	75	75	75
1st	75	75	75	75	75
2nd		75	75	75	75
3rd			75	75	75
4th				75	75
5th					75
Totals	150	225	300	375	450

B. Target Populations

Harlem Hebrew's Expected Student Population: Harlem Hebrew's founders seek to bring a unique school to the families of elementary-age children in CSD 3 and expect its student population to reflect that of the district. Families who reside in the neighborhoods that comprise CSD 3 represent a diverse racial, ethnic and socioeconomic group. According to the 2008-09 District Report Card, students in CSD 3 reflected the following racial/ethnic origin: 32% Black or African American; 37% Hispanic or Latino; 23% White and 7% Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other. Ten percent of CSD 3 students in 2008-09 were classified as limited English proficient and 55% were eligible for free- or reduced-priced lunch. With regard to SWD, the data file referenced in the New York State Education Department (NYSED) 2011 Charter Application Kit did not provide enrollment data on SWD for the district. However, utilizing the *Schools Demographics and Accountability Snapshot* (the most recent data compiled by School's Comprehensive Education Plan appendices dated June 2009 available on the NYCDOE website²), student demographics were examined in the 20 public schools in CSD 3 which represented all the traditional public schools that were configured as pre-K-8th grade, pre-K-5th grade, K-5th and K-8th grade (note: schools configured solely as intermediate schools, high schools and intermediate-high schools were not included in the analysis since Harlem Hebrew intends to serve K-5 initially and K-8 should it be renewed and its expansion approved.) Using this data, Harlem Hebrew determined in the representative traditional public school sample, SWD comprised 13% of CSD 3's student population. This is substantially higher than the current enrollments of SWD for the five elementary charter schools located in CSD 3 according to NYSED's datafile in the 2011 charter application kit. Harlem Link, Sisulu Walker, Future Leadership Institute, Harlem Success #1 and Harlem Success #4 have 2.2%, 3%, 3.65%, .56% and 1.01% of their populations respectively comprised of SWD.

CSD 3 is in need of strong public school options as reflected in NYS ELA and Math assessment data over the last several years³. Over the period from 2006-2010, CSD 3 Grades 3-8 students made little improvement in their performance on the NYS ELA exam. In 2006, 52% of all tested students performed at a Level 3 or 4; in 2010 that percentage rose to only 52.9%. Math scores showed the same stagnant performance, with 59.9% of tested students scoring at Level 3 or 4 on the NYS math test in both 2006 and 2010.

Harlem Hebrew's founders recognized there was an opportunity to create a unique school of choice in CSD 3 focused on excellence in the core academic subjects with an intensive focus on the acquisition of the Hebrew language. Harlem Hebrew is committed to student diversity and to having a student population representative of the district, particularly in terms of economic status, ELLs and SWD as contemplated in the Charter Schools Act as reauthorized in 2010. Based on the experience of HLA, the most integrated school in a diverse CSD, Harlem Hebrew believes its rich and innovative curriculum will be relevant to all the students who make up the student body and its chosen instructional methodologies and strategies will be effective in

²<http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/Reports/Data/Research/CEP%202008%20Demographics%20Data%20-%20Final-20090601v2.xls>

³ Harlem Hebrew compiled these performance statistics using data publicly available on the New York City Department of Education website. <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>

PROSPECTUS

addressing their learning needs, enabling them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to meet and exceed the School's and New York State's newly adopted Common Core standards.

Harlem Hebrew's Outreach and Recruitment Plan: Harlem Hebrew will meet the new requirements around targets for students eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunch (FRPL), ELLs and SWD. The School's educational philosophy, curriculum and chosen instructional strategies and methods are designed to meet the needs of all students, including the aforementioned special student populations. The School recognizes that in order to have a demographic reflective of the surrounding CSD, it will be incumbent upon the school to have extensive outreach and marketing efforts particularly to families of these populations of students. The outreach and marketing efforts will only be successful if the School can demonstrate its desire to serve these special populations with an academic model that has the staffing, programs and interventions in place to truly meet the needs of ELLs, SWD and FRPL along with a school culture that welcomes these special populations and their families. Harlem Hebrew has such an academic environment and school culture, and it will resonate with these families and their children.

Attracting Families Eligible for Free- and Reduced Lunch and of ELLs: The first step in the strategy to attract these populations groups is for Harlem Hebrew to annually review the demographics of CSD 3 with an eye toward income levels and non-English speaking families prior to the enrollment period. By drilling down into the individual areas where a predominance of low-income/poverty-level families and non-English speaking families reside, we can efficiently target some of our recruitment and marketing efforts specifically to families whose children will meet these income and language profiles; thus, ensuring that we will meet the NYSED targets for FRPL and ELLs. We will leverage the community-based contacts of our Applicant Team and Board to reach out to various language minority communities and will enlist the help of houses of worship, preschools and community-based organizations (CBOs) such as settlement houses and youth programs, and other organizations and agencies that serve an economically disadvantaged and/or non-English speaking constituency to assist us in informing their clients about our school.

Based on the neighborhoods and communities identified, during the formal enrollment period

1. Harlem Hebrew will blanket these areas with information on the School with flyers about the school and student applications for the upcoming school year. These documents will be distributed in housing projects, CBOs, houses of worship, public libraries, and other venues which families--especially low income and immigrant families with school-age children frequent. Materials distributed at these venues will provide as much information as possible for parents to complete the application, and will also provide families with information about the school's website, information to contact the school with questions and any upcoming School Open Houses or local information sessions to attend.
2. Harlem Hebrew staff will host family information sessions not only at the school, but more importantly in locations *within* the identified communities—such as in houses of worship and local CBOs (especially Head Starts and pre-schools serving low income children). These meetings will highlight the academic program, curriculum, key design features and welcoming and inclusive school culture, support services, and importantly for families which might live more than walking distance from the school location, transportation options to the school (yellow bus, student-fare Metrocard, local MTA transportation routes). Informational materials, including student applications, will be available at these meetings. Parents will be encouraged to complete the student application at the conclusion of each of the meetings. In order to prevent *any* barrier to entry for these families to apply to the school, parents will be provided with *multiple* ways to return a completed application—by regular mail, in person, via fax or e-mail.
3. Harlem Hebrew will translate all documents and materials into other languages spoken in the communities that the School will serve and will provide, when necessary and where practical, translators for families who do not speak English during in-person events and meetings for prospective families;
4. Harlem Hebrew will advertise in local community newspapers including newspapers focused on particular ethnic populations (i.e. Spanish language papers) with descriptions of how Harlem Hebrew is welcoming to and supportive of all students, including FRPL, ELLs, and SWD.

PROSPECTUS

5. After the first year of operations, we will seek the support of our parent body, especially those fitting this economic and language profile, to be volunteer Ambassadors for the School providing entrée to additional community organizations and housing developments from which we can recruit students.

Attracting Families of Students with Disabilities: We will target our recruitment and community outreach efforts to seek an annual enrollment of SWD that is comparable to CSD 3. Based on the special education data in CSD 3, Harlem Hebrew can expect to serve approximately 13% SWD. The School's efforts to recruit SWD will include: (1) print advertisements that include specific information about our Special Education program and that, where appropriate, describe the qualifications of our Special Education staff, (2) presentations regarding our special education programs and related services at open-house information sessions held throughout the district and at CBOs and preschools identified as serving SWD; and (3) one-on-one meetings between Harlem Hebrew's administrators and/or Special Education staff with any parents of SWD who express interest in learning more about how the School can meet their child's needs.

Accommodations for the needs of SWD and their families will be provided for application completion, and the lottery announcement. Publicity used by Harlem Hebrew staff to inform parents and students about the School during the admission process will be reviewed carefully for the purpose of identifying and removing any statement, photo, statistic, etc. that might discourage parents of students who have or may have a disability from participating in the School's lottery and enrollment process. Such publicity will, where appropriate, include specific reference to our policies and procedures that describe its compliance with all laws, regulations and guidelines related to the education of SWD. We will also provide the general public with information about its educational practices related to special education and its philosophical commitment to the inclusion approach in the education of its SWD.

We believe that our proactive and comprehensive recruitment strategy will result in the applicant pool being comprised of a significant number of families of FRPL, SWD and ELLs. With these recruitment strategies in place to ensure we meet our targets for special populations, the following describes the admissions, lottery and enrollment procedure and general timeline for implementation. Although we have set forth the following admissions process for the school, we assure that we will abide by any and all future guidelines set forth by NYSED regarding the charter school admission, lottery and enrollment process should the process described below not conform to future guidance provided by NYSED.

Admission, Lottery and Enrollment Process: Harlem Hebrew's admission policy is non-sectarian and does not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability or any other ground that would be unlawful if done by a school. Admission to Harlem Hebrew will not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry. Any child who is qualified under New York State law for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to Harlem Hebrew. The School will ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and §2854(2) of the New York Education Law, governing admission to a charter school.

For admission to Harlem Hebrew during the School's initial year, a child must be entering Grade K or 1 in September 2012. There will be 75 Grade K and 75 Grade 1 students during the school's first year of operations. Every year thereafter, Harlem Hebrew will have 75 new K seats available in the school. Harlem Hebrew admissions will be open to both entering kindergarten students as well as students in every grade that the School is currently serving, in the event that seats are available in those older grades. In order to be eligible to apply for Kindergarten, students must turn 5 by December 31 of the year in which they will enter Kindergarten. Harlem Hebrew will maintain an explicit policy regarding the absolute preference for enrollment of children from CSD 3 where the School will be located. Admission preference shall be granted to applicants in the following manner: first preference (after the first year) will be given to returning students, who will automatically be assigned a space at the School if their parents elect to re-enroll them; second preference will be given to siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school and to siblings of a

PROSPECTUS

student drawn in the lottery who also have their names in the current lottery; third preference for admission is for applicants who reside in the district of location, CSD 3; and finally, any remaining slots will be available to applicants residing outside the district of location.

Formal recruitment of students will begin immediately after the charter school is authorized. In each successive year, the School will advertise open registration beginning at or before the start of each calendar year. Families will be able to meet with staff and learn additional details of the School at Open Houses. Families may submit applications beginning on or before January 15 until April 1. If as of April 1, the number of applicants to the charter school exceeds capacity, a lottery will be used to admit students. This lottery, if necessary, will be held on or about April 15th and will be conducted by the Harlem Hebrew Board or administration and will open to the public. Names will be drawn in the lottery by an individual or organization unaffiliated with Harlem Hebrew to ensure complete integrity of the process. Students not selected for admission through the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order that their names were drawn.

Provision of Services to Students with Disabilities: Harlem Hebrew will educate SWD in the least restrictive environment, with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) prepared by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) of the students' school district of residence and all applicable federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The School will not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices on the basis of a student having or being suspected of having a disability. All special education programs and services at the School shall be provided in accordance with Education Law § 2853(4)(a) and applicable federal laws and regulations and in accordance with the IEP recommended by the CSE of the students' school district of residence. SWD are expected to participate in, and receive credit for, nonacademic, extracurricular and ancillary programs and activities with all other students to the extent allowed by the IEP. SWD will receive all notices concerning school-sponsored programs, activities, and services.

The School will ensure that the special education programs and services as indicated on each student's IEP will be provided directly to the student during school hours. The School will provide support services to students to ensure that IEP mandates and measurable goals are met. The School will not place a student in a learning environment that is inconsistent with the IEP. According to Education Law § 2853(4)(a), Harlem Hebrew has the option of providing the special education programs directly or by contract, or arranging to have such services provided by the school district of residence. If Harlem Hebrew requests that the school district of residence provide a self-contained class or resource room, Harlem Hebrew and the school district of residence will meet such obligation by placing the student in a self-contained class or resource room operated by the school district at a location other than the charter school, if that is appropriate to the needs of the student. However, if a self-contained class or resource room on the site of the charter school is determined by the CSE to be the appropriate placement for the student and the charter school requests that the school district provide such services, the self-contained class or resource room will be provided by the school district of residence. In this situation, Harlem Hebrew will ensure that the CSE fully understands the school's instructional model to facilitate the development of an IEP that integrates the services of the school into the IEP. Harlem Hebrew will work in concert with the CSE and with the parents to develop an IEP that meets the student's needs and design a program that is integrated into the charter school's educational programs and makes use of charter school and school district resources.

Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of SWD from the regular educational environment will occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily, in accordance with the student's IEP. SWD in Harlem Hebrew, when appropriate according to their IEPs, will receive their adapted curriculum work and other therapies such as speech-language therapy and occupational therapy, within a regular education classroom. Special educators and therapists will come to the regular education classroom, when appropriate,

PROSPECTUS

to provide services to small groups of regular education students and SWD. A special education teacher, paraprofessional or aide may sit with the SWD to help implement the goals of their IEPs.

Harlem Hebrew is serviced by the CSD 3 CSE. Services provided to Harlem Hebrew include annual reviews, processing of referral submissions from the School; observations and evaluations of students referred to the CSE, assistance with providers of specialized services that are not available at Harlem Hebrew. Harlem Hebrew will maintain close communication with its regional CSE and can request appropriate placement through the CSE for a student whose needs cannot be met at Harlem Hebrew. If Harlem Hebrew is unable to directly provide services to the extent necessary, Harlem Hebrew will contract with appropriately certified or licensed individuals to provide services under its direction. The services to be provided may include, but are not limited to: speech language pathology and audiologist services; psychological services; physical and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; early rehabilitation counseling; orientation and mobility services; diagnostic and/or evaluative medical services and student and/or parent counseling.

In its first year, Harlem Hebrew will have one full time special education teacher. Additional special education teachers will be hired based on the number of SWD as the school grows to ensure compliance with all pertinent laws. Harlem Hebrew's Head of School (HOS) and, when hired, its Special Education Coordinator (SEC) will communicate directly and on an ongoing basis with the Chairperson of the CSE of the district of residence of each SWD. At the beginning of each school year, the HOS and/or SEC will work with the CSE to ensure that the School has been provided the IEP in effect for each SWD and to discuss its implementation. Each student's IEP will be made accessible to his or her classroom teachers, special education teachers and any individuals or organizations providing services under contract. Each teacher will be briefed on his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP, including specific accommodations, modifications and services that must be provided. Harlem Hebrew's special education staff will interact with the students' school district of residence in a number of ways, including seeing that referrals are made for students suspected of having a disability; fulfilling reporting requirements of the resident district; ensuring that all appropriate school staff participate in meetings of the CSE; and establishing a reporting structure in accordance with applicable law whereby the CSE is provided information regarding progress on the degree to which the services on the IEP are being provided.

The Harlem Hebrew special education staff will provide consultation and support to classroom teachers, work in the general education classrooms with special education students individually and in small groups, provide resource room services and serve as special education consultants to the overall school community. Harlem Hebrew classroom teachers will be knowledgeable about the needs of SWD; informed of their responsibilities for particular students; receive the support they require to implement a student's program; and implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the students' IEPs. Teachers will receive on-going training regarding the education of SWD including during the pre-opening professional development prior to the opening of school each year.

If a student enrolls in Harlem Hebrew and is suspected of having a disability, the School's special education teacher or its SEC, when hired, will review the student's academic history, in collaboration with the HOS and the student's teachers. In accordance with the review, the School will consider or provide additional support with supplementary aides or support services as necessary. If despite these interventions, the student continues to struggle, s/he will be referred in writing to the chairperson of the CSE of the student's district of residence for an individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services. The special education teacher or the SEC, under supervision by the HOS, will make such referrals. Such referrals will: (1) state the reasons for the referral and include any test results, records or reports upon which the referral is based, if any; (2) describe any attempts to remediate the student's performance prior to the referral, including any supplementary aids or support services provided for this purpose, if any; and (3) describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral. A copy of the referral, along with the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504, will be sent to the student's parents.

PROSPECTUS

Initial evaluations, re-evaluations, and revisions of IEPs, and the procedures relating thereto, are the responsibility of the CSE of the school district of a student's residence (*see* 34 CFR §§300.22, 300.312 and 300.340 *et al*). Harlem Hebrew will implement the IEP developed by the CSE of the student's district of residence for each SWD, and will cooperate with the student's district of residence to ensure that all services as recommended in that IEP are provided to the student.

Harlem Hebrew will provide substitute coverage for teachers as necessary to ensure that they are able to attend CSE meetings. Each student's general education teachers, and other appropriate teachers as necessary, will be involved in the development and implementation of a student's IEP, provided that the student is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment. The School will ensure that the teacher is knowledgeable about the student's needs and will help implement any modifications or accommodation as required by the student's IEP. Every teacher of an SWD will be provided with a copy of the student's IEP and training, information and support will be provided by the SEC or Special Education Teacher, as needed, to ensure their understanding of the student's needs and their responsibilities related to the student's IEP.

In addition, the School will communicate with parents of SWD on an ongoing basis regarding the progress their child is making, their child's IEPs and ways that parents and families can support the education and development of their child. At the minimum, the School will provide quarterly written progress reports on the progress of each student against his or her IEP goals, as well as copies of all report cards, to the parents of each special education student and to the CSD of his or her district of residence. Parents will be encouraged to contact and/or meet with their children's teachers and Harlem Hebrew administrators at any time to discuss concerns, questions or complaints. At the beginning of each school year, parents will be informed by letter that they can contact the School at any time, verbally or in writing, to request a meeting with any teacher or administrator or can contact the school anytime with questions about their children's IEPs and about any and all services provided to their children, and that such meetings will be scheduled by the School as soon as possible following the request. The School will prepare and submit to NYSED all required reports regarding students with disabilities.

Provision of Services to LEP/ELL Students: Harlem Hebrew shall serve any and all Limited English Proficient (LEP)/ELL students by providing supportive instruction so that they achieve proficiency in the English language as quickly as possible. Harlem Hebrew shall comply with all applicable laws including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and the Federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. Harlem Hebrew ensures that LEP/ELL students (ELLs) will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and also that ELLs will not be assigned to special education because of their lack of English proficiency. Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive notices and information from the School in their native language to encourage participation in Harlem Hebrew.

Harlem Hebrew's process for identifying ELLs and the method by which Harlem Hebrew will determine which of its students may need assistance is as follows: (1) If English is the only language spoken in the home as indicated on the Home Language Survey (HLS), then the screening process need not continue; (2) If the home language is other than English or the student's native language is other than English, then appropriate school staff will interview the student and the parent/guardian in English, or when necessary in their native language; (3) If the student speaks a language other than English and speaks little or no English, then the school will administer the Language Assessment Battery-Revised (LAB-R). A student who scores below the designated proficient level is LEP, thus eligible for ESL services. The LAB-R is administered only once to each incoming student; and (4) After placement into ESL services, student achievement or progress in the English language is measured annually (usually in April and May) with the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). The scores on the NYSESLAT indicate the proficiency level the student has achieved each year, and whether or not the student's level of English proficiency is high enough to exit ESL services.

PROSPECTUS

NCLB requires that the language arts proficiency of all students who are ELLs be measured annually as part of school and district accountability. NCLB requires that the English proficiency of all ELLs be annually assessed. Harlem Hebrew will administer the NYS ELA assessment to ELLs who, as of January 3, 2007, have been enrolled in school in the U.S. (excluding Puerto Rico) for one year or more. Only those ELLs who, on January 3, 2007, were enrolled in school in the U.S. (excluding Puerto Rico) for less than one year may take the NYSESLAT in lieu of the ELA test. To measure the progress in English acquisition of ELLs, Harlem Hebrew will analyze annual NYSESLAT results. Scores on the NYSESLAT indicate the proficiency level students have achieved each year, and whether or not a student's level of English proficiency is high enough to exit ESL services. Any student classified and receiving educational services as an ELL who subsequently tests above the established cut-off point will be deemed to be no longer in need of ESL services.

Promoting English Language Acquisition for ELLs in Grades K-2: There is a vast amount of research that documents the stages all children go through in their early development of speech and language. These stages of language acquisition have significant implications for language learning in the workshop model (which aligns with that of the Proficiency Model for Hebrew language instruction) in the early years of education: (1) The production of language—listening, watching and sharing; (2) The understanding of language—sounds and meanings; (3) The function of language—first words (names and items-realía), experiences gained through repeated daily routines and experiences and interaction with others. (Marian R. Whitehead, *Language and Literacy in the Early Years*, 3rd edition, 2004, Sage Publications, LTD, London) Harlem Hebrew's plan to utilize the workshop model of instruction is supported by the above-referenced research in promoting language acquisition by ELLs. Oral language delivered through daily read alouds and shared readings infuse the production of language. These activities allow students to listen, watch and share. Repetitions of shared readings support students in oral and written language acquisition on a daily basis. Shared readings, specifically selected and repeated daily, consist of poetry, songs and short texts. Students are scaffolded to undertake much of the shared reading by the end of the week. Each day "word work," lessons derived directly from the shared readings, address the understanding of language by exploring sounds and meanings in the context of real literature. Here the function of language is explored.

The workshop model environment is one in which there is consistency in daily routines, experiences and interactions with peers. Accountable talk and student sharing are part of the workshop structure. Lessons are conducted in a "meeting area" with close teacher physical contact. Teachers are cognizant of supporting students' needs before students are sent off to work independently to practice a skill or strategy that has been modeled for them. If needed, ELLs will be encouraged to remain at the meeting area to review, reinforce and to repeat instructions given. Small group instruction during guided reading and guided writing and conferring will occur daily and will further focus on ELLs needs.

Harlem Hebrew will utilize the workshop model in all areas of the core curriculum. This unifying instructional approach consists of a mini-lesson, independent work time and a share session. Students in grades K-2 will be read aloud stories about concepts in math, science and social studies through literature in "Big-book" and lap book format. Student partnerships will revisit these readings to repeat and review the material. These stories will include oral language activities such as picture walks that will allow children to interact by gesture, coloring, writing, and speaking. The math, science and social studies materials are replete with visual learning examples that include drawings, photographs, diagrams and the use of common objects. These supports will help our ELLs "connect" abstract concepts to language. The workshop model will allow teachers the opportunity to meet with ELLs before independent work begins and while they are working either independently or with a peer. The model encourages collaborative activities with student partnerships. Teachers will strategically partner ELLs with other students during science, math, and social studies to scaffold ELLs further, encourage language role models, and provide additional social and emotional supports.

We are confident that this ongoing, consistent, infusion of language in our K-2 grades will support our ELL population by: (1) Having high expectations of what ELLs can accomplish; (2) Embedding ELL instruction during Readers' and Writers' workshop and the core subject areas; (3) Providing more language role models;

PROSPECTUS

and (4) Providing social and emotional support from peer interactions within the daily classroom environment. Students will not be forced to stop using their primary language while learning English. If a teacher feels it will be beneficial, we will seek to ensure that there will be somebody in the ELL's classroom who knows the child's language. Finally, K-2 classroom teachers will further support ELLs within the workshop model by utilizing Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) techniques (described later in this section) to make content more accessible to ELLs.

The Proficiency Approach for teaching Hebrew as it relates to ELLs is consistent with our full immersion approach to teaching English to ELLs for the K-2 strand. Therefore, ELLs in grades K-2 will not need an ELL teacher support in Hebrew class. Given Hebrew is taught by the Hebrew teacher solely in the Hebrew language, there is no need for an ELL instructor to support instruction just as there is no English speaking teacher present in the Hebrew classroom to support English speaking students. Unless they come to us already proficient in Hebrew, all students at Harlem Hebrew, native English speakers and ELLs alike, will be "Hebrew Language Learners." Like the workshop model, the Proficiency Approach addresses different ability-levels of language students in small instructional groupings based on their level of language acquisition as measured against a native Hebrew speaker. Thus, needs of learners at different levels in Hebrew language acquisition are met.

We are confident that for grades K-2, the use of the workshop model and the Proficiency Approach, classroom teachers' incorporation of SEI strategies and our choices of general education and academic intervention curriculum will effectively address the needs of young ELLs without a designated ELL teacher.

Promoting English Language Acquisition for ELLs Grades 3-5: It will be our intention to have on staff an ELL teacher by Year 3 recognizing that we may enroll new students who are Grade 3 and older who are ELLs and who will need the support of a designated ELL teacher using the SEI model in both push-in and pull-out settings.

With SEI, ELLs receive the same academic content as those students who are English proficient. All instruction will be in English; however, the level of English used for instruction—both verbal and written—will be modified for any ELL if necessary. Harlem Hebrew will provide appropriate staff with specialized curricular materials to enable ELLs to achieve proficiency. Harlem Hebrew will also directly provide or make referrals to appropriate support services that may be needed by ELLs in order to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. Such services may include individual counseling, group counseling, home visits, parental counseling. ELL teachers will use the research-based SEI program model for instructional purposes. ESL program research indicates successful performance on ELA assessments is based on the development of both oral proficiency and cognitive academic language proficiency, which includes the language skills required for literacy and complex thinking such as reading comprehension, writing mechanics, critical thinking skills, study skills, and academic vocabulary. Strategies that promote the acquisition of cognitive academic language proficiency include SEI⁴, which is "a means for making grade-level academic content more accessible for ELLs while at the same time promoting their English language development."⁵

Teachers will be supported with professional development to utilize special instructional strategies sometimes referred to nationally as Sheltered English Techniques (SET) or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) for delivering content to English language learner students in English. At Harlem Hebrew, students will receive instruction from their classroom teacher and, as needed, discrete ESL instruction from the highly qualified ELL teacher. Harlem Hebrew will use the new ESL standards document entitled, *The*

⁴ Cummins, J. (1989). *Empowering minority students*. Sacramento, CA: California Association for Bilingual Education.

⁵ Short, D., Hudec, J., & Echevarria, J. (2002). *Using the SIOP model: Professional development manual for sheltered instruction*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

PROSPECTUS

Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/English Language Learners: Learning Standards for English as a Second Language as a guide to ensure that ELL students meet the same standards as the general student population.

Harlem Hebrew's reasons for having an ELL teacher for ELLs whose entry into the school is at Grade 3 and above are the same reasons for needing ELL teacher support for these students in Hebrew language instruction. With regard to a non-English/non-Hebrew speaker, the key to appropriate instructional intervention is the student's level of literacy in his or her native language. A literate speaker of a third language (such as Spanish) would be grouped with any other English-speaking student coming into the School in a later grade. A non-literate non-English/non-Hebrew speaker would require extra support in the foreign language instruction, as s/he would need in all other English-driven subject instruction. The support for Hebrew would be similar to support for the other subjects. Supports and interventions that would be explored for a non-Hebrew/non-English speaking student entering Harlem Hebrew at older grades might be: (1) Special preparation over the summer to prepare the child for the lowest Hebrew level in his/her grade level; (2) Special groupings for students who come into the School at a later grade: these students will continue to work in a separate group until they reach the lowest Hebrew level in their grade level at which time they will move into a regular group. These students will then be able to move into even higher levels as they progress; and (3) Inclusion of these students in the lowest level of their grade level and providing them with in-class support from the ELL instructor.

III. School Design

Students and families who reside in CSD 3 make up a highly diverse community from a racial, ethnic and socioeconomic perspective, yet the vast majority of elementary schools within the district do not individually reflect that diversity. Based on an analysis of individual school demographic data available on School Report Cards, except for a few schools, each elementary school has either a significant majority Black and/or Hispanic student population and is majority economically poor or has a majority White and Asian student population and is more economically advantaged. And sadly, the fact is that the lower performing public elementary schools tend to be those with the higher percentage of students eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunch and more often than not, those schools have a greater percentage of minority students.

We believe that there are tremendous tangible and intangible benefits to be gained by students, their families and the community at large when children from all backgrounds are educated under one roof, not the least of which is a greater understanding of and sensitivity to people who are different from themselves. There is no shortage of research of the academic and social benefits that accrue to all students, their families and their communities when children from diverse backgrounds live, learn and play together. In creating Harlem Hebrew, we envision a public charter school of excellence whose mission, vision and rich, innovative and inclusive curriculum would resonate with all families, no matter their ethnic or socioeconomic background and as a result the school community created in Harlem Hebrew would truly reflect the diversity of the families and children that live in the neighborhoods that make up CSD 3.

Harlem Hebrew's school design, its key design elements and unique characteristics, summarized in Section I of this prospectus will resonate with and promote academic success in all students expected to become a part of its diverse community. The following responses provide greater depth to those elements as they relate to the main purposes in the creation of charter schools as delineated in the NYS Charter Schools Act.

a. **Increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics:**

At its core, Harlem Hebrew expects high levels of achievement from *all* of its students. Harlem Hebrew made the conscious decision to start its school with kindergarten and first grade. In working with students at the start of their formal schooling and providing them with a solid academic foundation in all subject areas, including specifically reading/language arts and mathematics, through a rigorous curriculum, combined with high standards and expectations delivered through data-driven instructional best practices, Harlem Hebrew is

PROSPECTUS

in the position to ensure that *all* students achieve proficiency in all subjects and is able to eliminate the student achievement gaps that typically widen between minority and white students and between poor and more affluent students as they move on to higher and higher grades. Harlem Hebrew's longer school day and school year provide sufficient time on task for students to excel in core academic subjects, while the school's commitment to strengthening and deepening teacher's instructional capacity through its imbedded staff development model and data driven instructional model, will ensure that children have the most qualified teachers engaging them in the learning process.

Reading/Language Arts: Harlem Hebrew is committed to the belief that mastery of the spoken and written word is fundamental to overall educational success. Continual acquisition of knowledge rests on an individual's ability to use his or her language skills for information gathering, understanding, critical analysis and evaluation in addition to effective communication with others. Thus, Harlem Hebrew has set high learning standards for ELA and has chosen the type of curricula that will provide its teachers with the instructional resources to successfully develop these skills and abilities in its students.

Because mastery of the written and spoken language is critical to success in all subject areas, Harlem Hebrew will engage a rigorous and *balanced* ELA curriculum starting in Kindergarten. Reading and writing skills will be integrated throughout all subject areas. The priority to develop strong readers, writers and communicators is reflected in a daily two-hour block devoted to ELA instruction in Grades K-5 in addition to continued work on these skills as a matter of course throughout the curriculum. Further, through an innovative scheduling model, all students are provided with intensive ELA instruction with *two* general education teachers during Readers Workshop. ELA instruction is conducted within the workshop model and teachers will plan lessons and differentiate instruction based on their assessments of students' reading and writing abilities.

Harlem Hebrew's Kindergarten content standards focus heavily on increasing the oral English-language skills and early alphabetic and phonemic awareness skills of children. Phonemic awareness—the ability to hear and manipulate the distinct sounds of the spoken language—forms the basis for a child's ability to decode and spell words. Harlem Hebrew will also have a strong phonics-based (and research backed) instructional program starting in Kindergarten through Grade 2, the *Read Well* program by Soprist West. Harlem Hebrew, while focusing on phonics and phonemic awareness in the early grades, will also introduce students to the joy of reading with authentic literature. Its students will understand that the goal of reading is to achieve comprehension and to obtain information, and the concurrent focus on phonics and phonemic awareness will provide them with the tools to do just that. From the earliest grades, composition and writing will be stressed. *Teachers College (TC) Reading and Writing Workshop* curriculum will be implemented along with the *Read Well* program beginning in Grade K. The study of reading and writing genres will support the use of authentic literature. The *Read Well* program is a research-based curriculum that rests its foundation on those components and methods of instruction that research^{6 7} has shown to be most effective for early literacy development. As students progress to Grades 3-5, the *TC Reading and Writing Workshop* provides strategy lessons that are supported with touchstone texts that exemplify a specific reading skill or strategy that is modeled in the workshop. Children are then able to practice the specific skill or strategy with leveled texts that are appropriate for their abilities.

Fountas & Pinnell *Benchmark Assessment System* will be utilized as the ELA 6-week assessment system. This running records assessment provides teachers with current diagnostic information that informs their grouping of students in the guided instruction portion of the workshop model allowing for further support, reinforcement and practice of skills with students when needed. Through this assessment, an analysis of the reading cue systems is analyzed. This analysis will enable the teacher to support the reading cue systems that are and are not being utilized. Fluency is also measured in this assessment. Lessons are provided to support teacher interventions to improve reading skills and strategies. Teachers will develop a Plan of Action for each

⁶ Snow, C., Burns, M., & Griffin, P. (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

⁷ Adams, M. J. (1990). *Beginning to read: Thinking and learning about print*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

PROSPECTUS

student following each 6-week assessment, which will drive the instructional program. A system of “monitoring for results” will be implemented to note benchmark achievements and to identify student needs.

Finally, in order to provide supplemental ELA support to special learning groups within Harlem Hebrew, for instance Title I students, ELLs and SWD, the School has chosen Wilson’s *Foundations* as its academic intervention curriculum. *Foundations* provides teachers and administrators with the tools they need to successfully engage children with language and print. *Foundations* is aligned to the findings of both the National Reading Council (1998) and the National Reading Panel (2000) and it fully addresses the five essential components of reading: *phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.*

It is important to note that Harlem Hebrew’s incorporation of the study of Hebrew beginning at Kindergarten also supports higher achievement in ELA as research points to positive evidence-based learning outcomes in students engaged in foreign language study. The ACTFL offers the following conclusions (<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=4524>):

Language learning supports academic achievement:

- Language learning correlates with higher academic achievement on standardized test measures.
- Language learning is beneficial to both monolingual English and English language learners in two-way immersion programs.
- Language learning is beneficial in the development of students’ reading abilities.
- There is evidence that language learners transfer skills from one language to another.
- There is a correlation between second language learning and increased linguistic awareness.
- Language learning can benefit all students.
- There is a correlation between young children’s second language development and the development of print awareness.
- There is a correlation between language study and higher scores on the SAT and ACT Tests.
- There is a correlation between high school foreign language study and higher academic performance at the college level.

Math: Harlem Hebrew’s approach to math instruction is a *balanced* one that is based on the belief that facility with basic skills, knowledge of standard algorithms and mastery with the help of drill and practice are necessary precursors to its students’ ability to engage in the higher order critical thinking and analytical skills. As Hung-Hsi Wu, professor of mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley, wrote in his article “*Basic Skills Versus Conceptual Understanding—A Bogus Dichotomy in Mathematics Education,*” in the Fall 1999 issue of *American Educator*, “The truth is that in mathematics, skills and understanding are completely intertwined. In most cases, the precision and fluency in the execution of the skills are the requisite vehicles to convey the conceptual understanding. There is not ‘conceptual understanding’ and ‘problem-solving skill’ on the one hand and ‘basic skills’ on the other. Nor can one acquire the former without the latter.” Harlem Hebrew’s approach to mathematics is aligned with Prof. Wu’s research. Harlem Hebrew’s more grounded and structured approach to mathematics—where concepts are presented in a logical fashion and complicated concepts are not introduced until children have been given the fundamental tools to master them—will allow students to perform math at an extremely high levels. Harlem Hebrew recognizes that the study of math involves incremental steps that build upon each other allowing for the development of a solid base. It is Harlem Hebrew’s intention that *all* students will be able to progress to algebra by the time they reach middle school because of the solid foundations in arithmetic skills and concepts that they developed and mastered in the elementary school years.

Harlem Hebrew has chosen the Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley enVisionMATH text for Grades K-5. The curriculum is aligned with the Common Core Standards and is based on scientific research on how children learn mathematics as well as on classroom evidence that validates proven reliability. enVisionMATH teaches for deep conceptual understanding using research-based best practices. enVisionMATH supports the Workshop Model and differentiated instruction in a heterogeneous classroom setting. It engages and

PROSPECTUS

interests all students with leveled activities for ongoing differentiated instruction. Topic-specific considerations for ELL, SWD, at-risk, and advanced students enable the teacher to differentiate for the diverse learners in every classroom. Further, students will receive 60 minutes of daily math instruction provided by two teachers in the classroom (both the general education teacher and Hebrew teacher) allowing for increased instructional support for students, especially in need of more individualized attention.

b. Increase high school graduation rates and focus on serving at-risk high school student populations (including re-enrolled drop-outs and those below grade level);

Harlem Hebrew will become a K-5 school during its first charter term with the intention to seek expansion to the middle school grades during the charter renewal process. However despite the fact that it will not serve high school students, it believes strongly that it will play a significant role in increasing high school graduation rates, including among students who would have otherwise been at-risk of dropping out of high school. As more fully described in Sections I, III.a., III.d and III.e., as a result of the solid academic model it has developed and the strong academic preparation its students will receive, including proficiency in a second language and involvement in service learning, and the disciplined approach to learning it instills in its students, it will *produce* matriculating high school students who will be well prepared and well equipped to excel in high school level courses and ultimately matriculate into a four-year college or university. It is important to note that statistics from NYCDOE indicate that students who graduate from 8th grade with at least an 8th grade reading level offers students a more than 80% statistical likelihood that they will graduate from high school. As its mission statement maintains, “Harlem Hebrew will impart to its students the academic and personal foundation necessary to successfully pursue advanced studies and achieve continued personal growth as ethical and informed global citizens.”

c. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school (if applicable);

Harlem Hebrew intends to expand to become a K-8 school after its first charter term, thus serving the middle school 6-8 grade span. As such, in the future Harlem Hebrew will directly focus on and impact the academic achievement of middle school students in CSD 3 through its rigorous curriculum and promulgated high standards. Prior to its expansion to the middle school grades, Harlem Hebrew will be providing its students with the foundational skills and knowledge, the disciplined approach to learning and the character building through its service learning curriculum during the elementary years that are essential to success in middle school as well as high school, higher education and the world beyond. Harlem Hebrew’s rigorous academic model and data-driven culture will ensure that as students move from grade to grade they will be meeting and exceeding the learning and content standards in each subject. As stated in III.a. by working with students at the start of their formal schooling and providing them with a solid academic foundation in all subject areas, including specifically reading/language arts and mathematics, through a rigorous curriculum, combined with high standards and expectations delivered through data-driven instructional best practices, Harlem Hebrew is in the position to ensure students annually achieve grade-level proficiency in all subjects. Thus, when Harlem Hebrew’s students enter middle school and high school, they will be ready to begin work at the appropriate grade level, obviating the need for middle school and high school teachers to focus on remediation.

d. Utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical application of concepts;

A key element of Harlem Hebrew’s educational program is the use of assessment data to identify student needs and tailor instruction to address them further described in III.e. Harlem Hebrew’s comprehensive assessment program will include a variety of tools, such as standardized and teacher made assessments, and teacher observations of students’ performances. The following table provides a breakdown of the School’s assessment protocol.

Name of Assessment	Purpose	Grades Administered
ITBS Reading and Math	Estimate the general developmental level of students, identify each student’s areas of strengths/weaknesses in	1-5

PROSPECTUS

	subject area and achievement levels to monitor year to year developmental changes.	
Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessments	To determine three reading levels for each student: benchmark independent, benchmark instructional and recommended placement. To group students for reading instruction. To plan efficient and effective instruction. To identify students who need intervention and help to document student progress across a school year.	K-5
New York State ELA	Identify students' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in reading, reading comprehension and writing	3-5
New York State Math	Identify students' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in mathematical computation, mathematical reasoning and problem-solving.	3-5
New York State Science	Identify students' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in science content and use of scientific tools	4
Curricular Unit Assessments	Commercial or teacher-developed summative assessments covering material from an entire unit of study.	K-5
LAB-R	To determine English proficiency.	K-5 as identified by the HLS and Staff Assessment
NYSESLAT	To determined when students identified as ELLs become fluent in English and exit ELL status.	K-5, if in ELL status.
New York State Alternative Assessment	Identify students' ability to meet or exceed grade level standards in all areas for Special Education students	K-5 if needed by IEP
Teacher Generated Assessments	Teacher-developed assessments (tests, quizzes, homework or other graded and ungraded assignments) administered to assess students' mastery of material covered in class at a given point within a unit of study.	K-5
ELLOPA ⁸	To allow young students to demonstrate their precise level of Hebrew performance in oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary and listening comprehension based on the ACTFL guidelines.	K-1
MOPI and OPI ³	To allow students to demonstrate their precise proficiency level of Hebrew performance in oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary and listening comprehension based on the ACTFL guidelines	1-5
Written, Reading and Letter Recognition/ Letter Writing Summative Assessments	To determine the development level of students written, reading, and letter recognition and writing skills, respectively, based on ACTFL guidelines. To identify each student's areas of strengths and weaknesses and achievement information.	K-5

e. Increase implementation of local instructional improvement systems to assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making and effectiveness;

We will develop a data-rich and data-driven school culture. The use of assessment data will lie at the core of all decision-making processes at Harlem Hebrew, particularly those decisions related to teaching and learning. As delineated in III.d., Harlem Hebrew will implement a comprehensive student assessment system that

⁸ The ELLOPA is developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics and are aligned with the ACTFL guidelines for foreign language proficiency in all language domains. The MOPI and OPI are designed by ACTFL.

PROSPECTUS

includes a variety of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments tools. Harlem Hebrew administrators and teachers will continually look at the results of these assessments to identify student needs and tailor instruction to address them. Harlem Hebrew recognizes that the basis for its long term success lies in effectively using student assessment data to monitor and improve student academic achievement. Harlem Hebrew's implementation of local instructional improvement systems will go beyond the use of student data to assess and inform instructional practice, but will also be evident in how administrators and teachers are evaluated and how the Board evaluates the school's program.

Data to Inform Instruction: Harlem Hebrew's assessment program will provide the data to determine student achievement by individual student or disaggregated by class, grade and school. Under the direction of the HOS, in coordination with the DCI and Director of Hebrew Curriculum and Instruction (DHCI), assessment data will be reviewed and analyzed on an ongoing basis to identify strengths and gaps in the instructional program. These administrators will also oversee instructional staff in a process each year of aligning school-developed assessment questions with specific curriculum frameworks and state performance standards to ensure that analysis of student assessment results will identify particular standards and content that must be reinforced through modified and/or supplemental instruction and other appropriate interventions. Analysis of student data will include the disaggregation of data into such categories as gender, ELLs, SWD, free and reduced lunch status and race, as determined to be appropriate and helpful, and will provide information about Harlem Hebrew's degree of success not only in the aggregate but also with respect to the disaggregated categories. As described later in this response, this data will be shared with the Education Committee of the Board of Trustees, who will use it in decision-making around school academic, operational and budgetary issues. This will enable Harlem Hebrew to make adjustments in its instructional program and to implement effective interventions to ensure that the specific academic needs of *all* students are addressed. Based on this information, Harlem Hebrew teachers will be expected to identify instructional strategies and practices they are employing that are successful and those that need to be improved.

Since Harlem Hebrew will hold teachers to high standards of accountability regarding their use of data, it will also support them in building capacity to use data effectively through staff development. Areas of teacher improvement that are revealed through this analysis will be addressed in the school's professional development plan with the expectation that teachers requiring improvement in one or more areas will avail themselves of the appropriate training, technical assistance and staff development support provided by Harlem Hebrew. Harlem Hebrew's commitment to using data to drive instruction is demonstrated in the fact that "effectiveness of use of student assessment data" will be a criterion in teacher evaluation. Teacher accountability will include regular classroom observations by the HOS, DCI and DHCI. Teachers are expected to provide evidence of planning that incorporates the use of student data in the process of making instructional decisions. Teachers will also practice a diagnostic/prescriptive approach to instruction that demonstrates a high degree of individualized instruction, which is facilitated in the workshop model.

A major portion of ongoing professional development for teachers will be focused on the use of data to drive instruction. Teachers will be trained to analyze data and use that information in order to address student academic needs on a real time basis. Harlem Hebrew has ensured that daily and weekly schedules will allow for teachers to have sufficient individual and common planning times to work with the DCI, DHCI and with each other within and across grade levels about data and strategies to improve student learning and achievement. In addition, each new school year will begin with one full week of pre-opening professional development, during which time the HOS, DCI and DHCI will coordinate a process of establishing specific protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy and that the school's plan for using assessment data is aligned to the Accountability Plan to ensure that it supports the achievement of Accountability Plan goals.

Administrator and Teacher Evaluation: The School's commitment to using data to drive instruction is further demonstrated by the fact that instructional data and other forms of data will be used to evaluate all administrators (HOS, DCI, DHCI, and Director of Operations). The use of data to inform staff evaluations

PROSPECTUS

ensures to the greatest degree possible, evaluations are objective and not subjective. During the school's start-up period, the HOS working with the Board and outside consultants will design evaluation tools that utilize data-driven measures and clear rubrics to assess the performance of all staff.

The Board will carry out an annual evaluation of the HOS that uses key instructional benchmarks, progress towards accountability goals, operational benchmarks, staff and student satisfaction surveys, other criteria that measure the overall health of the school. Likewise, the HOS will formally evaluate instructional staff using student assessment data, other measures of student outcomes, and formal classrooms that occur at least twice a year, with more informal classroom observations and informal evaluations taking place more regularly throughout the year. The HOS will evaluate non-instructional staff using designated operational benchmarks in a similar fashion.

Data Driven Board Decisions: The Board will use a data driven approach to monitor the academic, fiscal and operational progress of the school. The Board will review a report of performance indicators that aligns specific data with expected goals. An analysis of this data will allow the Board to objectively assess the school's progress towards accountability goals and to make informed decisions regarding changes to the instructional program, organizational structure and resource allocation.

f. Partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best practices;

Too often the teaching profession is characterized by privatization. Whether it is a teacher doing exemplary things in her classroom raising student achievement with innovative lesson plans and instructional strategies or a high performing school achieving stellar results in the midst of an otherwise low-performing district, what is working remains private, held within the four walls of the teacher's classroom or of a school building. We are committed to working *in partnership* with our CSD 3 public school counterparts so that the goal of openness and sharing best practices can be achieved across the system. There is no lack of educators who want an opportunity to teach *and learn* from others but do not have a forum to do so. In a recent New York Times article, "*Chancellor Black: Please Consider This,*" Edward Tom, the principal of Bronx Center for Science and Mathematics, said, "[there are] many innovative, proven leaders who have ideas that they believe can help reform urban education. Many of us are looking for a forum to be able to share those ideas." Bronx Prep Charter School's Dr. Samona Tait went on to suggest that we, "figure out where the work is really being done well, whether it's a charter school or a traditional public school. Then share that, and facilitate everyone connecting to those places. How do we begin to really connect what have been these sort of islands of success? How do we connect them to each other, and how do we connect them to the mainland?"

We want to be a part of the movement to facilitate the opening of windows to shine light on exemplary practices. We will endeavor to be an effective facilitator of such an effort; however, we are loath to approach this task as the new kid on the block assuming we are the only ones who have all the answers, because we know we do not. Instead, we would seek to galvanize schools to join in a coalition of educators committed to sharing best practices by asserting that every school has something valuable to contribute, that every school can learn from each other and that every school is at once both a teacher and a learner. Harlem Hebrew would encourage each interested school in self-identifying its own areas of best practice whether instructional or operational and would seek buy-in from as many principals in the district to make time for sessions in which these best practices can be shared. Schools where there are innovation and excellence need to be opened up to the broader community so that other schools can learn how to adapt these best practices to their own unique environments. This is what we want to engage in, and we will work with CEC 3 to help initiate this type of dialogue and sharing among CSD 3 schools.

g. Demonstrate the ability to overcome start-up challenges to open a successful school through management and leadership techniques;

We have assembled a highly qualified, experienced group of individuals on our Applicant Team. They are charged with important work of driving the development of the charter school academic and operational design. The Team includes individuals who were involved with the development of HLA and who continue

PROSPECTUS

to serve on its Board. These individuals bring tremendous insight and practical experience to Harlem Hebrew in its start-up and implementation phases. As discussed in Section I, the initial Board has not yet been finalized. It will, however, include members of the Applicant Team whose professional backgrounds and experiences, as is illustrated in the biographies which follow, cover the gamut of areas upon which a new charter school will need to draw (education, law, real estate, finance, philanthropy, nonprofit management, charter school governance, community and political outreach) to be successful. Other individuals recruited to the Board will also have commitment and the appropriate background to provide effective oversight, access and leadership to the School.

Sara Berman is the lead applicant for Harlem Hebrew and a resident of CSD 3. She was a co-lead applicant for HLA and continues to serve as HLA's Board Chair. Ms. Berman is the Chair of the Board of the Hebrew Charter School Center (HCSC), a nonprofit organization that supports a network of Hebrew language charter schools by providing grants and professional development. Ms. Berman is a journalist and a philanthropist.

Linda Aristondo, Esq., is a resident of Harlem and an Assistant Prosecutor for the City of Jersey City. Her professional experience includes serving as in-house departmental counsel at Columbia Presbyterian Medical center and an attorney with the Port Authority of NY and NJ and as General Counsel for the Association of Puerto Rican Executive Directors/Hispanic Federation. She is on the Board of Latinas United for Political Empowerment and a member of the New York State Bar Association.

Daniel M. Cohen is a resident of CSD 3. He is a Real Estate Mortgage Officer with the Community Preservation Corporation which stabilizes, strengthens and sustains low and mixed-income communities. As real estate mortgage officer, Mr. Cohen has expanded Freddie Mac financing for affordable and market rate housing in New York City, has initiated new lending in the rehabilitation and construction of multi-family transit-oriented developments in Long Island and located and managed new investors for real estate projects in workout or default from initial borrowers.

Lisa Lippmann Finkelstein is a resident of CSD 3. Ms. Finkelstein is a SVP/Director of New Development Marketing and Sales with Brown Harris Stevens where she is responsible for all aspects of the residential sales process including positioning, marketing, showing and negotiations. Ms. Finkelstein began her career as an Associate Litigation Attorney with the firm of Brody and Fabiani. She is a licensed New York Real Estate Broker and a member of the Real Estate Board of New York. She is a member of the Board of Harlem Success Academy #8 Charter School.

Rabbi David Gedzelman is a resident of CSD 3. Rabbi Gedzelman was one of HLA's founders and continues to serve on its Board as Vice Chair. He is the Executive Vice President of The Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life where he also serves on its Board; he has been actively involved in the foundation's programs since 1995. Rabbi Gedzelman is also the HCSC Board Secretary.

Daniel Pianko is a resident of CSD 3. He has served as an investor in and advisor to education companies in their strategic and development initiatives for over ten years. He began his career as an investment banking analyst at Goldman Sachs. He entered the education industry as Director of Strategy and Planning at LearnNow, a high growth charter school company that was acquired by Edison Schools. Since his initial work with charter schools, he has served as the lead operating executive of a 1,200 student university with multiple campuses, on the board of the largest distributor of K-12 technology products and as the lead analyst of an education focused hedge fund.

Eli Schaap is the Program Officer for Education and Research of the Steinhardt Foundation for Jewish Life. Mr. Schaap was a member of the Applicant Team for HLA. Mr. Schaap is a Treasurer of the Board of the Hatikvah International Academy Charter School in New Jersey—a Hebrew language focused charter school that is a part of the HCSC network.

PROSPECTUS

Basil Smikle, Jr. is a resident of Harlem. He is a political strategist and public relations consultant with Basil Smikle Associates. He recently ran for the NYS Senate representing Harlem, the Upper West Side, and Morningside Heights. Though unsuccessful, his campaign gained national attention in part because of his stance on reforms in education and government.

Hindie Weissman is the Director of Educational Services for the HCSC. In her role at HCSC, she supports the instructional program of network schools through ongoing professional development that includes curriculum mapping, lesson planning, assessment tools, data analysis, staffing, and coordination of services. She has over 30 years experience in NYC public schools as a teacher and staff developer, extensively trained in the TC Workshop Model. She was on the HLA Applicant Team and continues to serve on its Board.

The Harlem Hebrew Applicant Team is very cognizant of the major challenges it will need to overcome to open a successful charter school. With the insight of its HLA-affiliated members, the group has already begun the process of developing a start-up and implementation plan that identifies activities, defines roles and assigns responsibilities, establishes a timeline for completion and a plan to monitor the successful execution of each stage. Among the critical start-up activities are:

Staff Recruitment and Hiring: Harlem Hebrew's human resources will be the most important asset of the school in ensuring student success. As such, Harlem Hebrew's Applicant Team is well aware of the importance of hiring highly skilled and talented professionals who will support the mission and vision of the school. Leadership and teacher recruitment is a major focus of the Applicant Team. The Applicant Team has laid out a detailed strategy to successfully market, recruit, interview and hire for each staff position at the School. HLA has shared their job descriptions for their staff positions and Harlem Hebrew will adapt these job descriptions based on its particular needs.

Facilities: Harlem Hebrew does not intend to co-locate in an existing public school in order to avoid creating additional challenges to what is already a challenging process of opening a charter school. The public outcry that has accompanied other charter schools seeking to co-locate, including the experience of HLA, has convinced the Applicant Team to seek a private alternative for a facility. To this end, the Applicant Team is already working with a number of real estate concerns to identify potential sites that could serve as incubator space for the first few years of operation. Through its support entity, Friends of Hebrew Language Academy Charter Schools (FOHLA), which was founded to support HLA and other Hebrew-focused charter schools that might be developed in the NYC area, Harlem Hebrew has access to resources to help identify sites and fund the potential renovation necessary to house the school.

Financial Management and Human Resources: FOHLA will be providing technical assistance to Harlem Hebrew in other start-up tasks including the development of fiscal management protocols, human resource handbooks and employee benefit plans.

Fundraising: Harlem Hebrew has already had success in a major challenge facing start-up charter schools—raising philanthropic dollars. A member of the Harlem Hebrew Applicant Team has secured a large financial commitment from a major philanthropist who has offered an \$800,000 challenge grant, and the Applicant Team is in the process of securing matching commitments from other philanthropists.

Finally, Harlem Hebrew, if chartered, will become a school in a growing national network of Hebrew-language focused charter schools affiliated with the HCSC, an organization with the mission to promote the development and sustainability of the Hebrew charter school movement by supporting a national network of excellent schools that serve diverse populations of students, foster strong inter-personal relationships, advance overall academic and social/emotional well-being, and promote high levels of Hebrew language proficiency and understanding of the history and culture related to the Hebrew language and secular Israeli society. As a member of this network, Harlem Hebrew will be provided with significant educational, human

PROSPECTUS

and financial resources necessary to overcome many of the major hurdles facing start-up charter schools. HCSC believes that in order to build a sustainable educational movement, it is critical that schools and educators are able to form alliances across the traditional boundaries of classrooms, schools and geography. As such, through HCSC, Harlem Hebrew Board members and school leaders will be provided with opportunities to come together with their counterparts in network schools to share ideas, experiences, and strategies in order to address common concerns, issues, needs and goals and receive tangible forms of peer level support, including the sharing of resources and collaborative programming. (Already, Harlem Hebrew is reaping the benefits of this aspect of its membership in the HCSC network through its collaboration with HLA which is providing the Harlem Hebrew planning team with significant technical assistance, guidance, support and advice through the charter application development stage.) HCSC provides its schools with access to a wealth of resources, professional development and training opportunities around charter school issues including specifics in curriculum and instruction. HCSC is also committed to creating a pipeline of high quality Hebrew language teachers—a resource that Harlem Hebrew will be able to draw from as it engages in the recruitment and hiring of staff. HCSC offers competitive grant opportunities, including for start-up and implementation, to schools within its network—alleviating one of the major challenges to all charter schools, that of start-up and implementation funding especially in the early years when school enrollment is still growing and thus charter schools cannot reap any benefits of economies of scale. Harlem Hebrew has already received a \$35,000 planning grant from HCSC to support the development of its charter application.

Harlem Hebrew is confident in the capacity it has on its current Applicant Team, its future Board, its support entity FOHLA and through its relationship with HCSC to overcome any and all start-up challenges in order to turn the words of its charter application into a successful and vibrant school community.

h. Demonstrate the support of the school district of location and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district; and

Harlem Hebrew's Applicant Team has already met with the President and Vice President of Community Education Council 3, Noah Gotbaum and Christine Annechino. Mr. Gotbaum has arranged for Harlem Hebrew to present at the CEC meeting on February 2, 2011. As discussed in III.f., Harlem Hebrew hopes to continue to work with CEC 3 to facilitate dialogue among traditional CSD 3 public schools to share best practices so that all schools can benefit from what is working well in individual schools and potentially adapt these practices to their unique school communities.

i. Provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there are a lack of alternatives.

As discussed in II.B., families of elementary level students in CSD 3, despite the relatively low performance of existing public elementary schools in the district, have limited alternative public school options. Parents who have the financial ability to send their children to private independent schools or parochial schools have many options aside from their local public schools. But for those families without the means to pay expensive tuition, charter schools offer them another alternative public option. Harlem Hebrew will offer families another viable alternative to the mix of charter schools currently in CSD 3. If HLA's experience in CSD 22 is any indication of what parental demand for Harlem Hebrew will look like, and we believe it is, the school will appeal to a broad and diverse range of families in the community, not just those for whom Hebrew is culturally significant. At HLA, 68% of the students are eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunch, 45% are minority (Black, Hispanic or multi-racial) and 13% are SWD. Parents from *all backgrounds* and parents of *all learners* are drawn to HLA because of its nurturing environment combined with academic rigor, support services and its preparation of their children for the today's global community through its focus on foreign language acquisition. Parents will be interested in Harlem Hebrew for these same reasons. Harlem Hebrew's Applicant Team has already made significant outreach in the community and has received clear indications of parental demand through the signing of parent petitions and support of local CBOs for the establishment of the school for their constituents. The openness of the CEC and of the Community Board education committees that overlap with CSD 3 makes us confident that the community will wholeheartedly welcome Harlem Hebrew to CSD 3 and will seek to enroll their children in our school in significant numbers.