New York State Education Department

Request for Proposals to Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents

2012 Charter School Application Kit

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INTRODUCTION

In 1998, the New York State Legislature created the opportunity for the creation of new, performance-based public schools through the charter process. In May of 2010, the State Legislature increased the number of charter schools that may be authorized under the law, and required the charter entities to solicit new charter school applications through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. Accordingly, the New York State Education Department (NYSED, or "the Department") has developed new charter school application materials, which also integrate review criteria for the award of federal Charter School Program Planning and Implementation grants to support post-charter new school launch. The Department updated the application kit materials for the 2012 application cycle. This document, the *Request for Proposals (RFP) to Establish New York State Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents,* contains and reflects the updates both to the charter application process and to the application kit prompts and questions that the Department asks applicant groups to consider when constructing applications for new public charter schools in New York State.

While the Application Kit references the New York State Charter Schools Act[1] (the "Act") and other relevant statutory citations, it is not a guide to charter school law and other law that governs the operations of public charter schools. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to fully understand and address the legal requirements of all relevant law and to present a coherent and viable school design that both complies with the law and is likely to improve student learning and achievement in New York State. However, the Department has included a few general but important facts for those interested in charter school development to know about charter schools in New York State:

Tuition-Free Public Schools

Charter schools are secular, tuition-free public schools that are operated as independent education corporations formed for this purpose. New York's charter school legislation offers students, families and educators more choices in public education, allows schools autonomy and flexibility in how they operate, and requires performance-based accountability standards.

Authorizers

Charter schools are created by application to a designated charter entity (also known as a charter school authorizer). The Board of Regents of The University of the State of New York (Board of Regents) is a designated charter entity under State law. The Board of Regents has directed the Commissioner of Education and the New York State Education Department to develop and issue this RFP, to conduct an application review process on its behalf, and to recommend action on charter school applications.

Governance

Charter schools are overseen by a governing board of trustees. High performing charter schools characteristically are governed by a board with a mixture of backgrounds and expertise

[1] N.Y. Education Law Article 56

relevant to a public, not-for-profit educational organization. Such experience optimally includes teaching, administration, legal expertise, real estate and facilities, financial management and accounting, fundraising and development, community engagement, and family involvement.

Autonomy

Charter schools operate with substantial autonomy and flexibility in comparison to traditional public schools. Charter school operators have the opportunity and responsibility to decide the best ways to allocate resources, like time, people and money, to best meet the needs of their students within the bounds of New York State's Charter Schools Act but free of some of the legal constraints that apply to other public schools.

Accountability

Performance-based accountability is a central component of charter school policy in New York State. The Charter Schools Act requires that schools have clear, measurable academic performance standards under which they will operate and be evaluated. In addition, schools must be financially accountable and comply with the same health and safety, federal special education laws, civil rights, and student assessment requirements applicable to other public schools.

Federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grant

Consistent with New York's 2011 – 2016 $113 million federal Charter School Program (CSP) grant to increase public school choice options, each new charter school is eligible to receive a CSP Planning and Implementation subgrant with a base amount of $500,000 over a three year period (planning year, implementation year 1, implementation year 2). Consistent with the priorities articulated in New York's CSP grant, NYSED encourages applications that would qualify for enhanced CSP funding of up to $750,000 total, which is available for new charter schools that are designed to address the needs of high-risk student sub-groups, such as students with disabilities; students who are English language learners; students who are over-aged, under-credited, at risk of not graduating from high school; students who live in underserved rural communities, as well as communities seeking racial diversity in schools; students who attend persistently low performing schools, and proposals that will implement technology-rich or blended instructional programs or are replications of existing high-quality charter school models.

In the 2012 *Request for Proposals* (RFP), the State Education Department will provide **two opportunities for applicants to submit charter applications** for consideration. The State Education Department will launch the first of two application rounds in January 2012 for the Board of Regents to consider and act upon at its regularly scheduled June 2012 meeting; and the second round will launch in June for the Board of Regents to consider and act upon at its regularly scheduled December 2012 meeting. All applicants issued a charter by the Board of Regents in 2012 at either the regularly scheduled June or December Regents meeting will be approved to open for instruction in the fall of 2013. Using the 2012 application kit, all applicants may simultaneously apply for a public school charter <u>and</u> a CSP Grant, as the

eligibility requirements of the grant application are integrated into the overall application process for a public school charter.

The remainder of this Application Kit is dedicated to the specific steps and requirements that a charter school applicant must follow to submit an application to the Board of Regents for consideration. All necessary forms, requirements and deadlines related to the initial application process are contained within this Application Kit.

The Board of Regents will only approve applications that clearly demonstrate a strong capacity for establishing and operating a high quality charter school. This standard requires a sound educational program, organizational plan, and financial plan, as well as strong capacity to implement the proposal effectively. The Department and staff look forward to reviewing your proposal to launch a new, high-quality, public charter school in New York State.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Much of the information provided in this Charter School Application Kit was derived from exemplar materials created by charter school authorizers and other supporting organizations that are nationally recognized for their policies and procedures aimed at increasing the number of high quality charter schools. The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department wish to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for their contributions and assistance in creating this Charter School Application Kit.

Charter School Office
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
www.doe.mass.edu/charter

Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York
41 State Street, Suite 700
Albany, NY 12207
www.newyorkcharters.org

Charter School Institute
1580 Logan Street, Suite 210
Denver, CO 80203
www.csi.state.co.us

Office of Charter Schools
Oakland Unified School District
1025 Second Ave. Rm. 206
Oakland CA, 94606
www.ousdcharters.net

National Association of Charter School Authorizers
105 West Adams Street, Suite 3500
Chicago, IL 60603-6253
www.qualitycharters.org

SchoolWorks
100 Cummings Center, Suite 236C
Beverly, MA 01915
www.schoolworks.org

OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department (NYSED) utilizes an application process that is designed to ensure that any charter school application presented to the Board of Regents for consideration demonstrates that the applicant possesses a clear understanding of the New York State Charter Schools Act and what it means to comply with the Act; the applicant's proposed school is clearly aligned with the purpose and objectives of the Act; the applicant presents a coherent and practical design for the proposed school; and the applicant and the founding board of trustees demonstrates the necessary experience, skill and will to manage the challenging and dynamic process of opening and operating a public charter school.

To assess application quality, NYSED will review and evaluate the Letter of Intent and the Full Application against the criteria outlined in this RFP. On the strength of the full application, NYSED may conduct a Capacity Interview with members of the founding group and initial proposed board of trustees. In addition, NYSED will invite and consider the comments of the public about the potential impact of the proposed new school. This process will include a call for public comment directly to the Department, as well as public hearings conducted by the school districts of location. At the conclusion of the process, NYSED will prepare a formal recommendation to the Board of Regents.

Some applications may not meet the required criteria to complete all phases of the process. Due to the competitive nature of the process, NYSED cannot extend an opportunity for the applicant to address deficiencies at any stage of the process during a single application cycle. Applicants may correct any deficiencies and resubmit their application by the due date of a subsequent application round or cycle.

The following is a brief description of each phase, a description of the evaluation criteria that applicants must meet to continue on to the next phase of the application process, and the corresponding dates/timelines for submission and review.

Phase I: Letter of Intent. The Letter of Intent is designed to solicit basic school design information about the applicant group, school mission and model and target population. The Letter of Intent requires applicants to address questions that directly align to some, but not all, of the requirements stated in the Act (applicants will be required to address all the requirements stated in the Act in detail in the Full Application). In the Letter of Intent, the applicant must provide: a brief description of the mission and school design; a description of the proposed student population (including plans to meet enrollment and retention goals for target populations); proposed grade levels and number of students to be enrolled; initial evidence of community outreach efforts and community support; a proposed location and/or proposed facility; and information about the founding group and anticipated members of the Board of Trustees. The Letter of Intent may not exceed **5 pages**, and must be submitted to the NYSED Charter School Office **by 5:00 p.m. on the due date specified on the timeline for the**

applicable 2012 RFP cycle. Please see Application Submission Instructions for full submission details.

NYSED staff will review all submitted Letters of Intent to evaluate that each requested component is included and that the Letter of Intent is complete. Letters of Intent that are incomplete and do not provide the requested information will not be accepted and applicants will not be permitted to submit Full Applications in that round. In the cases of Letters of Intent that, while technically complete, do not present thorough and robust information, applicants may choose to submit Full Applications, but may also be encouraged to take additional time to further develop the school design and build capacity. The information provided in the Letters of Intent will be used by NYSED staff to plan and coordinate peer review panels with appropriate expertise to evaluate Full Applications.

All Letters of Intent will be posted at the NYSED Charter School Office website at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html, to inform the general public that submission of a charter school Full Application is anticipated. Applicants' personal contact information will not be posted; however, designated media contact information for each submitted application will be posted separately. After submission, the Department will post all Full Applications at the website.

Phase II: Full Application. The Full Application requires applicants to fully address a set of questions and prompts that directly align to all of the requirements and priorities stated in the Charter Schools Act and allow the Department to assess the will, skill and capacity of the proposed founding board to launch and sustain a quality public school in New York State. The applicant must demonstrate educational alignment and operational compliance to the requirements and educational priorities of the Act.

Applicants must submit the Full Application by **5:00 p.m. on the due date specified on the timeline for the applicable RFP cycle.** The Full Application narrative to establish a charter school may not exceed **60 pages** and the required attachments may not exceed an additional **75 pages**, with certain exceptions outlined in the Attachment information. Upon submission, NYSED staff will screen the Full Applications for compliance with submission requirements; those applications that exceed the established page limits, are missing sections and/or that are received after the established timeframe and deadline will be rejected as non-responsive and will not be evaluated or advanced for action by the Board of Regents. Please see Application Submission Instructions for full submission details.

Please note: the Full Application will not require applicants to create documents that are only needed once the school is operational (e.g. full curriculum or a human resources handbook). When a charter is issued, NYSED staff will work with the founding board and applicant group to establish the timeline for completion of such documents, as well as all other required policies and pre-opening actions. NYSED pre-opening requirements and procedures are outlined in documents related to Opening Procedures, which is available online at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/OversightPlan.html.

Panels of reviewers with expertise in charter school operation and, when appropriate, knowledge that is relevant to the proposed school design will evaluate Full Applications. The Department will only advance to the Capacity Interview phase of the review cycle those applications that receive satisfactory ratings on the full evaluation criteria, as outlined in the Charter School Application Kit. The Department will notify applicants will by the date specified on the applicable RFP cycle timeline as to whether the founding group will be invited to the Capacity Interview. Senior staff at the Department will recommend that the Board of Regents not award new public school charters to applicant groups that do not receive satisfactory scores on the written application or who do not demonstrate the will, skill and capacity to launch and sustain a quality public school n New York State. Applicants may choose to withdraw an application prior to determination by the Board of Regents at any time for any reason.

***Important Note for "Replication" Applications**: NYSED recognizes that applications proposing to replicate an existing charter school model are developed differently than applications for new, independent charter schools. However, with the exception of an optional Attachment of a strategic or growth plan for a charter school that is part of a network of schools, elements of the replication should be addressed within the prompts contained in the Full Application as applicable, drawing on existing information and resources as appropriate. For the 2013 RFP, NYSED is currently considering possible avenues for a differentiated proposal format for founding groups replicating an existing high-quality charter school model. NYSED is also currently working through the policy and legal issues related to the multi-school and multi-site arrangements that are permitted in the Charter Schools Act as amended in 2010.

Phase III: Capacity Interview. The Department will invite applicants whose Full Applications were determined to meet or exceed the evaluation criteria in each of the three major sections outlined in the application to participate in a Capacity Interview. NYSED officials conduct the capacity interview to evaluate the founding group and initial board members' understanding of academic and operational accountability as well as the characteristics of the community where the proposed school will be located. Equally as important, NYSED assesses the capacity of the proposed board to effectively launch and oversee the school's academic program, organizational viability, and finances. The interview provides opportunities for the founding group and proposed board to present and elaborate on the information provided in the Full Application, and respond to any technical questions that may have been generated by peer reviewers during the application review process as well as other questions that may have emerged during the public hearing and comment process. Please see the applicable RFP timeline for the dates during which NYSED will conduct the Capacity Interviews.

Phase IV: Request for Modifications.[2] For those applicant groups whose Full Applications <u>and</u> Capacity Interview responses have met all evaluation criteria outlined in this RFP, the Department may request applicant groups to make technical modifications to their applications

[2] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(3)(a)

following the capacity interviews. Such requests would be made to technically align the information contained in the Full Application with the NYSED initial charter agreement template. Please see the applicable RFP timeline for the dates during NYSED will request modifications and during which applicants will submit responses.

Application Scoring and Evaluation

A panel of individuals with education expertise and knowledge of charter school operation and finance will review each complete Full Application. Review panels will include Department staff and external peer reviewers. The review panelists will independently evaluate and rate how well the applicant's responses address the evaluation criteria articulated in each section of the application. The reviewers will rate the response to each criterion as **Inadequate, Approaches, Meets, or Exceeds**, as defined in the sample evaluation rubric in Appendix A. The review panelists will develop a summary rating for each application section, as well as for the Full Application as a whole. Applications that are considered by review panelists substantially meet or exceed the evaluation criteria will be invited to a Capacity Interview with NYSED staff, to further assess the capacity of the founding group and members of the initial board of trustees to launch and govern the proposed school. Further details about the interview process will be provided to those founding groups at that time.

NYSED will further evaluate the applications that are being recommended for charter issuance by the Board of Regents to determine whether the applicant group is eligible to receive an enhanced federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation Grant. See Appendix B for full details.

In the event that the number of applications meeting the evaluation criteria in this RFP exceeds the total maximum number of charters or the maximum within New York City in this RFP cycle, the application will additionally be reviewed and scored by NYSED on the eight priority objectives set forth in the Charter Schools Act,[3] outlined in Appendix C, to determine which charters will be recommended.

NYSED Recommendation for Approval or Denial of the Application. On the basis of the review of the Full Application, Capacity Interview (if applicable) as well as information collected by NYSED during a public comment process, NYSED will determine whether to recommend approval or denial of the charter application to the Board of Regents. An application that is recommended to the Board of Regents for approval will have provided a detailed and complete school design plan that:

- includes a clear plan to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, and students who are eligible to participate in the federal free reduced-price lunch program;

[3] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(i-viii)

- provides evidence of public outreach that conforms to the process prescribed by the Regents for the purpose of soliciting and incorporating community input regarding the proposed charter school;
- meets all requirements set forth in the Charter Schools Act as well as all other applicable laws, rules, regulations;
- demonstrates the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner;
- is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act; and
- would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school

In addition to all the above, the applicant group and founding board of trustees must demonstrate appropriate knowledge, capacity, and abilities to effectively create, maintain, and oversee a high-quality charter school, NYSED will recommend that the Board of Regents issue the charter.

If recommended for approval, NYSED will prepare a draft initial charter agreement for the applicants and founding board members to review the terms and conditions of the contract between the proposed school and the Board of Regents. This will occur in preparation for the Board of Regents meeting at which the Regents will act to approve or deny new charters. Please see the applicable RFP timeline for specific dates.

If the application is found to be materially deficient or if NYSED determines that the proposed founding board does not have the will, skill, and capacity to launch and sustain a high quality public charter school in New York State, NYSED will recommend denial of the application by the Board of Regents. An applicant may choose to withdraw the application from consideration by the Board of Regents at any time prior to this recommendation. NYSED will provide the applicant groups with a summary of the areas in which the application was considered to be deficient, in the cases in which the application is not recommended for approval by the Board of Regents. In some cases, the applicant may be encouraged to address deficiencies discovered during the application review process and re-submit the application in a subsequent application cycle.

Board of Regents Action to Approve or Deny the Application. Although informed by NYSED evaluations and recommendations, all final charter issuance decisions are made by the Board of Regents. At the Board of Regents meetings, the Regents will act to approve or deny charter school applications, and, in the case of those approved, issue a provisional charter (i.e., certificate of incorporation) for the school.

Opening the School for Instruction. The issuance of the charter by the Board of Regents does not indicate final authorization to open the school. During the start-up (or pre-opening) phase of the school, NYSED will work closely with the charter school's founding board and school leaders, to ready the school program and facility to serve students. This work will be guided by

the terms of the charter agreement and the *Pre-Opening Procedures for New York State Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents* (which may be found on the Department website at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/OversightPlan.html). New charter schools will be authorized to open for instruction only upon the issuance of a *Consent to Commence Instruction* letter.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REGARDING CO-LOCATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) welcomes the launch of high-quality schools, including charter schools, across the city of New York. Applicant teams proposing to establish new charter schools within any New York City borough or community school district should be aware that the NYCDOE Division of Portfolio Planning has identified areas of the city where the need for new schools, including charter schools, is the greatest. Applicant teams should plan to work closely with the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office and the Division of Portfolio Planning to secure the Department's and Chancellor's support for the proposed school. Furthermore, if an applicant team seeks to be co-located in a NYCDOE public school facility, they must work with the Division of Portfolio Planning and the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office to determine the most appropriate site arrangement for the proposed school.

For the 2012 application round, Chancellor Dennis Walcott has identified the urgent need for high-quality middle schools across the entire city. The Division of Portfolio Planning has also indicated that there is a general need for high school seats and applications that have a specific focus on English language learners or special education are encouraged as well.

Geographically, the Division has indicated that there is limited public school space in certain districts across the city. Based on the current list of under-utilized NYCDOE public school facilities, new schools may be accommodated for co-location in the following districts for the 2013-2014 school year:[4]

Manhattan: There is need for high quality options in Manhattan but space availability in district buildings is limited in all of the Community School Districts. The NYCDOE will entertain conversations for incubation with specific private facility plans.

Brooklyn: 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 32
Queens: 27, 28
Bronx: There is need for high quality options in the Bronx but space availability in district buildings is limited in all of the Community School Districts. The NYCDOE will entertain conversations for incubation with specific private facility plans.

Schools that are interested in incubation space will be asked to provide the NYCDOE with specific documentation around their plans to move into a private facility. These documents include: milestones of facility plans, detailed proposed construction timelines, program of review, scope of work, space assumptions, budget and fiscal assumptions, lease or memorandum of understanding with property owner. The NYCDOE has convened an internal Private Space Review Committee with cross-functionality from various NYCDOE offices in order

[4] Availability is subject to change. The Division of Portfolio Planning publishes the list of under-utilized DOE public school facilities by borough and district every fall and will work with the Charter Schools Office and all applicant teams to keep them informed of significant changes whenever possible. Additionally, space may become available as a result of school phase-outs – these are decisions made by the NYCDOE based on an extensive review of data and community feedback. We cannot determine that availability for the 2012-13 school year at this time.

to review the submitted documents and make a recommendation on the likelihood and feasibility of the school moving into private space in the proposed timeframe to the Division of Portfolio Planning.

Applicant teams seeking to serve as a "Restart" school in New York City (i.e.: a charter school that will replace a persistently lowest achieving (PLA) school that the NYCDOE has proposed to phase-out) or are interested in turning-around low-performing schools are encouraged to reach out directly to the Division of Portfolio Planning to learn more about this process and the NYCDOE's requirements of charter operators.

For additional information regarding the availability of public space for new charter schools in New York City, please contact Mr. Recy Benjamin Dunn, Executive Director, Office of Charter Schools within the Division of Portfolio Planning, at 212-374-2324, or via email at: Charterschools@schools.nyc.gov.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Format	All submissions should be prepared on plain, 8 ½ x 11" paper, suitable for reproduction, with: • one-inch margins • 12-point font, or larger • a table of contents that includes attachments • page numbers in the bottom right hand corner of each page, including attachments with consecutive numbers tied to the table of contents • Three ring binders are not accepted.
Page Limits	The Letter of Intent is limited to 5 pages of text. The Full Application is limited to no more than 60 pages, excluding the Application Summary, Certification and Assurances Statement, and the required attachments. Attachments are limited to 75 pages, with certain exceptions outlined in the Attachment information. Brevity, specificity, and clarity are strongly encouraged.
How to Submit ***Note: Electronic submission of the full application may be conducted via a secure portal upload process rather than via email. Applicants who submit Letters of Intent will be informed of this alternate submission process, if applicable.***	All submissions (both Letter of Intent and Full Application) must be submitted in **both** of the following formats: • Electronic copy via email: PDF format, with the exception of the Budget and Cash Flow file, which should be submitted in Excel. **Email to:** charterschools@mail.nysed.gov Subject line of the Email: 2012 Full Application: [insert name of proposed school] • Hard copy of the Letter of Intent and the Certification and Assurances Statement of the Full Application requiring the original signature of the lead applicant. **Mail to:** New York State Education Dept. Charter School Office 89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA Albany, New York 12234 Note: These documents, when submitted to the State Education Department, will be made publicly available.
Deadlines	The electronic copy submission must be received electronically in the Charter School Office by **5:00 PM** on the due date, and the hard-copy submission must be postmarked by the due date. Any materials that do not conform to these submission instructions and these deadlines will not be accepted for further consideration.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Application Review Process Activity	Round 1 Dates	Round 2 Dates
Request for Proposals Posted The 2012 Request for Proposals (RFP) and Application Kit posted on the NYSED website at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html	January 3, 2012	January 3, 2012
Phase I: Letter of Intent (*Applicants who do not submit complete Letters of Intent may not submit a Full Application for consideration by the Department and the Regents.)*	**Deadline: January 17, 2012**	**Deadline: June 25, 2012**
Review of Letter of Intent All Letters of Intent are reviewed for completeness and posted at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html.	January 2012	June 2012
Phase II: Full Application Submission must adhere to page limitations and must be received via email by 5:00 p.m. and postmarked by the due date. (*The electronic copy must be received in PDF format. The hard copy must contain an original signature of the lead applicant or authorized contact person*).	**Deadline: February 27, 2012**	**Deadline: July 18, 2012**
Panel Review of Full Application The Full Application will be screened by NYSED for completeness before being accepted and sent for full evaluation by review panels. (*Incomplete applications will not be accepted*).	February - March 2012	July - August 2012
Phase III: Capacity Interviews NYSED conducts interviews with qualified applicant groups and proposed boards of trustees. (*If applicable, CMO representatives may be included in capacity interview).*	Estimated: April 2012	Estimated: Sept. 2012
Phase IV: Request for Modifications Following the capacity interviews, NYSED may request that applicant groups/founding boards make technical modifications to charter applications.	Late April 2012	Early Oct. 2012

Application Review Process Activity	Round 1 Dates	Round 2 Dates
NYSED Recommendation to the Board of Regents NYSED reviews the results of the comprehensive RFP review process and develops recommendations for Board of Regents consideration. NYSED notifies lead applicants of staff recommendation.	Estimated: April 30, 2012	Estimated: October 15, 2012
Reviewer Feedback to Applicants NYSED prepares written recommendations for the Board of Regents and provides applicants not recommended for Board of Regents approval with comments and summative feedback from reviewers.	As soon as practicable	As soon as practicable
Charter Agreement Calls NYSED and the founding boards of the charter schools recommended for Board of Regents approval preview/discuss the terms and conditions of the proposed charter agreement with the Board of Regents.	June 2012	Nov. 2012
Board of Regents Action The Board of Regents will review the recommendations, and vote to approve or deny, at its regularly scheduled meeting. For those applicant groups whose applications are approved, the Board of Regents will issue a charter.	**June 18/19, 2012**	**Dec. 10/11, 2012**

LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY

Note: The submitted Letter of Intent (and all other charter school application material) is a public record, and NYSED will post all Letters of Intent received on its website. Personal contact information will be redacted from the document, but all other information will become public.

All applicants seeking to establish a charter school authorized by the Board of Regents to open in 2013 must submit a Letter of Intent, not to exceed 5 pages in length, by the due date specified for the selected 2012 RFP round. Potential applicants who do not submit a complete Letter of Intent by the deadline will not be permitted to submit a Full Application during the applicable 2012 RFP round. The Letter of Intent must include the following information.

I. Applicant Information

a. Applicant(s) information, including mailing address, phone number, and email address, and information establishing that the applicant(s) is a parent, teacher, school administrator or community resident.
b. Media contact: please provide a phone number and/or email address to which public inquiries about the proposed charter school may be addressed.
c. The names of each member of the applicant founding group, including all applicants, along with a very brief description of relevant experience and skills. Please identify the current or prospective role that each member has or will hold in relation to the proposed charter school.
d. The names of proposed members the school's initial board of trustees, which must include a minimum of five members, along with a very brief description of relevant experience and skills if not provided above.
e. Replication or Network Information: If the proposed charter school is a replication of another school model or intended to be part of a network, identify the charter school being replicated (inside or outside New York State) and provide a brief description of the network. Please also indicate if the applicant group, in part or in whole, sits on the board of trustees of an existing charter school, and if the applicant group is submitting other applications during this round.
f. Application History: If you or another member of the current or a previous founding group has ever applied to this or another charter entity to open this proposed school or another charter school, either in New York State or outside of New York State, please indicate the date the application(s) was/were submitted and to which charter entity, and briefly describe the outcome of the charter entity's decision.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. Proposed school name.

b. Proposed school location (school district or community school district in New York City).
c. Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term.
d. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner.
e. Proposed school mission.
f. School overview: A brief description of the school model, especially any innovative design elements that might require specific expertise to evaluate during the review process.
g. Briefly describe the school's target population and the community that the school intends to serve.

III. Enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.

Describe the school's strategies to attract, recruit, and retain its students, particularly those identified in the school's mission and students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

Describe public outreach conducted to date to solicit community input regarding the proposed school, which may include public meetings held, discussions with community parents, stakeholders or organizations, public awareness campaigns, media coverage or results from surveys conducted. In addition, provide an initial assessment of sufficient interest in the proposed charter school to allow the school to reach its anticipated enrollment.

Finally, the letter should be signed and dated by the Lead Applicant(s).

FULL APPLICATION CHECKLIST

The Full Application is limited to no more than 60 pages of text, excluding the Application Summary, Certification and Assurances Statement, and the required attachments. A checklist of key components is provided for reference below.

- ❒ Application Summary
- ❒ Certification and Assurances Statement (signed by applicant)
- ❒ I. Mission, Key Design Elements, Enrollment, and Community
  - ☐ A. Mission Statement and Objectives
  - ☐ B. Key Design Elements
  - ☐ C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention
  - ☐ D. Community to be Served
  - ☐ E. Public Outreach
  - ☐ F. Programmatic and Fiscal impact
- ❒ II. Educational Plan
  - ☐ A. Achievement Goals
  - ☐ B. School Schedule and Calendar
  - ☐ C. Curriculum and Instruction
  - ☐ D. Assessment System
  - ☐ E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards
  - ☐ F. School Culture/Climate
  - ☐ G. Special Student Populations and Related Services
- ❒ III. Organizational and Fiscal Plan
  - ☐ A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity
  - ☐ B. Board of Trustees and Governance
  - ☐ C. Management and Staffing
    - ▪ C1. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)
    - ▪ C2. Partner Organization (if applicable)
  - ☐ D. Evaluation
  - ☐ E. Professional Development
  - ☐ F. Facilities
  - ☐ G. Insurance
  - ☐ H. Food, Health, and Transportation Services
  - ☐ I. Family and Community Involvement
  - ☐ J. Financial Management
  - ☐ K. Budget and Cash Flow
  - ☐ L. Pre-Opening Plan
  - ☐ M. Dissolution Plan
- ❒ Required Attachments

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Charter School Name[5]	
Applicant Name(s)	
Media Contact Name	
Media Contact Email Address	
Media Contact Telephone Number	
District of Location	
Opening Date	
Proposed Charter Term[6]	
Proposed Management Company or Partners	
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span During Charter Term	
Projected Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span	
Mission Statement	

Please provide a brief summary of the proposed school. Include a discussion of the mission, objectives, key design elements, other unique characteristics of the program (if any), identification of student communities to be served or targeted, curriculum and instructional features, plan for instructional staffing and leadership/management design, plans for relationships with management or other partner organizations, and any other relevant information.

The Application Summary is intended to provide the public with a concise description of the proposed school and may be shared to respond to media inquiries and used for documents prepared for the consideration of the Board of Regents. Please limit the Summary to two pages. This section of the application will not count against Full Application page limitations. The Application Summary will not be formally evaluated by peer reviewers, but the information provided must be consistent with information provided elsewhere in the Full Application.

[5] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(k)
[6] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(p). Typically, the charter term requested should be from the date of the issuance of the charter through June 30, 2018.

CERTIFICATION AND ASSURANCES STATEMENT

Proposed Charter School Name _____
Proposed School Location (District) _____

I hereby certify that the founding group/prospective Board of Trustees have all read Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, and understand the relationship between a charter school and the authorized chartering entity as defined in that statute. By submitting a charter school application to the Board of Regents, the founding group/prospective Board of Trustees understands that the Board of Regents is the authorized chartering entity with the authority to approve our application to establish the proposed charter school and enter into a charter agreement setting forth the terms and conditions under which the Board of Trustees will operate the charter school. The applicant founding group/prospective Board of Trustees also understands that this charter school application serves as the first component of an application for a federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation Grant. We understand that if the charter application is approved and a charter is issued by the Board of Regents, the school is qualified to receive a CSP grant, pending available funding and final approval of additional materials – including budget materials - by NYSED and by the New York State Office of the Comptroller. We agree to complete all required budget information and assurances according to forthcoming instructions and a revised timeframe to be issued by NYSED.

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the proposed school shall be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, race, creed, national origin or ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, age, religion, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement. I understand that the Charter Schools Act allows, to the extent consistent with Federal law, "the establishment of a single-sex charter school or a charter school designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English language learners."[7]

The applicant(s) also make(s) the following assurances pursuant to Section 5203(b)(3) of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which will be incorporated into, and made a part of, the Charter School's charter, if granted, and be binding on the Charter School itself:

- An assurance that the charter school will annually provide the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in this application [8]
- An assurance that the charter school will cooperate with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;[9] and,
- That the charter school will provide such other information and assurances as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and the State Education Department may require.[10]

Signature of Applicants:	
Date:	
Print/Type Name:	

[7] N.Y. Education Law § 2854(2)(a)
[8] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(J)
[9] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(K)
[10] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(N)

I. MISSION, KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS, ENROLLMENT, AND COMMUNITY

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

Applicant Instructions: Provide a mission statement that defines the core purpose and key values of the school and informs the public about the students the school intends to serve. It should be consistent with high academic standards and be succinct and meaningful. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the full term of the school's charter. The mission statement should be reflected throughout all sections of the application.

Briefly describe the school's objectives and how the school will implement one or more of the objectives identified in the Charter Schools Act.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will**:**

- Present a mission statement that defines the purpose of the proposed charter school;[11]
- Describe the objectives of the charter school;[12]
- Explain how the school will materially further one or more of the objectives specified in Education Law §2850(2); and,
- Be reflected throughout all sections of the full application.

B. Key Design Elements

Applicant Instructions:

Provide a description of the educational program that implements one or more of the purposes described in Education Law §2850(2), and which describe the school's key design elements. Specifically, the proposal should describe elements of the school's educational or organizational design that are innovative or unique to the school's mission and goals and are core to the school's overall design. The design elements may include a specific content area focus; unique student populations to be served; specific educational programs or pedagogical approaches; unique calendar, schedule, or configurations of students and staff; or innovative organizational structures and systems. In addition, the Charter Schools Act allows, to the extent consistent with Federal Law, "the establishment of a single-sex charter school or a charter school designed to provide expanded learning opportunities for students at-risk of academic failure or students with disabilities and English language learners." [13]

If applicable, please provide a request and justification for waivers of any federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of

[11] N. Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(a)
[12] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(C)(i)
[13] N. Y. Education Law § 2854(2)(a)

the charter school, and a description of any state or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes to be waived, or otherwise not apply to the school.[14]

If the proposed school design is a replication of an existing high-quality charter school model with a track record for success that the founding group has been substantially involved in operating, the applicant should provide an overview of the model being replicated in this section and, if applicable, attach optional information about the replication strategic/business growth plan for the replication strategy involving the proposed school.

Optional Attachment:

- ❑ **Attachment 10**: Replication Strategic/Business Growth Plan

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Set forth an educational program that implements one or more of the purposes described in Education Law §2850(2),[15] and which describes how the program will enable all students to meet New York State student academic achievement standards,[16] and,
- Describe the key features that are core to the school's overall design; and,
- Demonstrate clear alignment with the school's mission and all aspects of the full application, including educational, organizational, and fiscal plans; and,
- Demonstrate group's core beliefs and values about education; and,
- Identify the enrollment preference,[17] if any, for students the applicant group has defined as at-risk of academic failure; and,
- Demonstrate how the key design elements will serve the diverse needs of all students; and
- Present evidence of success if drawing on existing school models or present research or other information that supports the efficacy of the proposed school design if the school design does not have a precedent.

C. Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

Applicant Instructions: Provide information about the number of students and the ages and grade levels to be to be served in each year of the proposed charter term.[18] Discuss the efforts that have been conducted and are planned to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets that are being established by the Board of Regents for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch

[14] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(G)
[15] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(2)(a)
[16] ESEA §5203(b)(3)(a)(i)
[17] N.Y. Education Law § 2854(2)
[18] Please note N.Y. Education Law § 2854(3)(b-1) requirements regarding negotiating unit representation for employees in a charter school that enrolls more than 250 students at any point during the first two years after the charter school commences student instruction.

program. Also provide evidence of adequate community support for and interest in the charter school sufficient to reach its anticipated enrollment.[19]

Required Attachment:

- ❑ **Attachment 1**: Admissions Policy and Procedures

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Provide a projected enrollment table that presents the number of students to be served by the school (the minimum number of students shall be at least fifty at a single site, or, if less than fifty students are to be served by the school, the response must include a compelling justification for the enrollment projection[20]), and the ages and grade levels[21] to be served by the proposed school.

Projected Enrollment Table Over the Charter Term[22]						
Grades	**Ages**	**2012-2013**	**2013-2014**	**2014-2015**	**2015-2016**	**2017-2018**
K						
1st						
2nd						
3rd						
4th						
5th						
6th						
7th						
8th						
9th						
10th						
11th						
12th						
Ungraded						
Totals						

- Explain in detail the rationale for selecting the particular enrollment size as well as the growth strategy for the proposed school;
- Present evidence to indicate that the enrollment projections by grade and school-wide for each year of the charter will meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets established by the Board of Regents; [23]
- Describe the school's recruitment and retention plan, including how the school will publicize its education program to a broad cross-section of prospective students;

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[19] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(q)
[20] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(i)
[21] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(l) and ESEA Section 5203(b)(3)(A)(ii)
[22] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(p)
[23] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(b)(i). Enrollment and Retention targets will be made available as soon as they are available.

- Provide a description of how the applicant group has assessed family and community support within the proposed sending district(s)/region for the proposed school and evidence that this community support for and interest in the charter school is sufficient to reach its anticipated enrollment.[24]
- Describe the school's specific plan to recruit and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program, and students whose families may be less informed about available options;
- Describe how the proposed school will ensure adequate enrollment and allow for full accessibility of the school for all eligible students; and
- Describe the proposed application, admissions and enrollment process, including a plan for a public lottery.

D. Community to be Served

Applicant Instructions: Describe the community to be served by the school and discuss how the school will offer educational opportunities to students and families in the community. The characteristics of the community to be served are essential factors that inform the design of a successful charter school, ultimately driving support for student enrollment in the school. If applicable, discuss how the school will partner with low performing public schools in the area to share best educational practices and innovations.[25]

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will**:**

- Speak to the value of the school in the identified community;
- Describe the student population that the proposed charter school would serve, including identification of student need and how the school will address those needs;
- Discuss briefly the reason for the selection of the community and the applicant group's ability to serve this particular community;
- Provide a specific rationale for how this school will enhance or expand the educational options, including whether the educational program or innovative methods to be used by the proposed school differ from the district or districts from which the charter school is expected to enroll students; and
- Provide a description of how the applicant group has assessed family and community support within the proposed sending district(s)/region for the proposed school.

E. Public Outreach

Applicant Instructions: N.Y. Education Law Section 2852(9-a)(b)(ii) states that the Board of Regents shall not consider any applications which do not rigorously demonstrate that the applicant has conducted public outreach, in conformity with a thorough and meaningful public

[24] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(q)
[25] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(vi).

review process prescribed by the Board of Regents, outlined below, to solicit community input regarding the proposed charter school and to address comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students. Although appropriate to include general letters of support for the charter school from community leaders and members, such letters of support alone are not sufficient.

The public review process should include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- **Informing the community about the proposed charter school including the intended location, the target student population, the grades to be served, and a description of the educational program(s) to be offered**. This should include reasonable notice to stakeholders in the community, and may be achieved through a number of means, including but not limited to: community letters and flyers, news and/or web articles, advertisements, community meetings, meetings with stakeholders, and other means employed by the applicant;
- **At least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located.** Reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders.
- **Providing stakeholders in the community the opportunity to submit comment on the proposed charter schoo**l. This may be achieved through the means listed above, the provision of an email or website for comment submission, as well as other means employed by the applicant; and
- **Addressing comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students**. This may be achieved through discussions at community and stakeholder meetings, interviews, written responses to written comments received, as well as other as well as other means employed by the applicant

Required Attachment:

❑ **Attachment 2**: Evidence of Public Review Process. This attachment should provide a sampling of documentary evidence related to the public review process. Attachments should be limited to documents that provide meaningful and relevant information about the community outreach and public input. Please do not submit photocopied form letters of support or petitions containing signatures and addresses. Examples of evidence may include but are not limited to: copies of letters, community flyers, articles, web posts, etc., that were used to notify community stakeholders about the proposed charter school, and/or which request comments and input about the proposed charter school. Evidence may also include invitations, announcements and/or minutes or summaries of public meetings and meetings with stakeholders (school boards, school district administrators, elected officials, community leaders, parent organizations, etc.); media announcements or articles, editorials, television spots, etc., that inform the community about the proposed charter school and invite comments and input; and responses sent to the members of the public who submitted comments/input concerning the proposed charter school. Provide evidence that comments/input that was received were addressed.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will**:**

- Describe the means employed to ensure, and include evidence that the community has been informed about the proposed charter school, including the intended location (whether in private or public building space), the target student population, the grades to be served, and a description of the educational program(s) to be offered;
- Include evidence that the applicant group held at least one public meeting with stakeholders in the community in the school district in which the proposed charter school is to be located, and that reasonable public notice should be provided to community stakeholders;
- Describe the means employed to ensure, and include evidence that the applicant group solicited community public input or comment on the educational and programmatic needs of students;
- Describe how the applicant group responded to comments received from community stakeholders and ensured that those comments were considered and addressed;[26]
- Describe the ongoing approach the applicant group is taking to continue to engage with the community and to solicit public input about the educational and programmatic needs of students, and how the applicant group has or is using this input to shape the application; and
- Describe how students in the community will (i) be informed about the charter school and (ii) given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school.[27]

Please be aware that if the Board of Regents will not consider an application if the applicant group does not sufficiently demonstrate that the public review process described above has been conducted. Since public outreach activities are expected to be ongoing throughout the application review process, additional information about public outreach activities may be shared at the Capacity Interview or through the NYSED public comment period.

F. Programmatic and Fiscal Impact

Applicant Instructions: Provide an assessment of the projected programmatic and fiscal impact of the proposed school on other public and nonpublic schools in the area.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will**:**

- Discuss the projected programmatic impact of the proposed school on other public and non-public schools in the area;[28] and,
- Present a projected assessment of the fiscal impact of the proposed school on other public and nonpublic schools in the area.[29]

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[26] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(b)(ii)
[27] ESEA Section 5203(b)(3)(I)
[28] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(q)
[29] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(q)

II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The Educational Plan[30] should define what students will achieve; how they will achieve it; and how the school will evaluate student performance.

A. Achievement Goals

Applicant Instructions: Provide a description of student achievement goals for the proposed school's educational program and the chosen methods of evaluating whether students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals, which must meet or exceed New York State student academic achievement standards.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe the student achievement goals for the school's educational program, and
- Describe the chosen methods of evaluating whether students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals.[31]

B. School Schedule and Calendar

Applicant Instructions: Provide a sample weekly student schedule and sample weekly teacher schedule for each level the school intends to operate (upper and/or lower elementary, middle, high). The schedules should demonstrate how the school will provide the number of hours and days of instruction required, and how core instruction and intervention/supplemental or elective instruction are integrated into a cohesive schedule. The length of the school day should be clearly presented. The sample teacher schedule should include core subject teaching requirements as well as any additional assignments with students, such as intervention or tutoring sessions. Teacher planning time and professional development should be addressed in the sample schedule. Provide a calendar for year one of the school's operations that presents the number of days of instruction as well as any dates that are allocated for summer school, teacher professional development or other activities.

Required Attachments:

- ☐ **Attachment 3a**: Sample Weekly Student Schedule and Sample Weekly Teacher Schedule for at least one grade that is representative of each level the school intends to operate (lower elementary, upper elementary, middle and/or high school). If scheduling structures are unique to each grade, please provide a sample schedule for each grade.
- ☐ **Attachment 3b**: Proposed First Year Calendar

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

[30] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(A) and N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(b)
[31] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(b)

- Present a school calendar and student schedule which provide at least as much core instructional time during a school year as required of other public schools; [32]
- Present clear information about length of school day and year, including summer school and time allocated for teacher professional development;
- Show how core and supplemental, intervention or elective instruction will be integrated into the student schedule and the teacher schedule;
- Describe the way students and teachers will be organized/grouped for instruction;
- Describe supplemental instruction that may be provided and how the proposed school's calendar and schedule will support students with a wide range of needs; and
- Present clear information about how the teacher work day will be organized on a weekly and annual basis, including teacher planning time and professional development.

C. Curriculum and Instruction

Applicant Instructions: The application must include a description of the school's proposed curriculum and instructional practices. [33] Describe the process that will be used to ensure that the curriculum – specifically in the core areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies – aligns with the New York State Learning Standards, inclusive of the Common Core State Standards and the New York State Testing Program. Discuss the specific instructional strategies and practices that will be necessary for successful implementation of the curriculum.

Evaluation Criteria:
If the school intends to use curricula that have already been developed, a response that meets the standard will

- Be consistent with the school's mission and education program design;
- Present a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning -- particularly in the core academic areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies -- and will ensure alignment with New York State Learning Standards, inclusive of the Common Core State Standards and the New York State Testing Program; and
- Describe the curriculum and instructional practices the charter school proposes to use.

If the school intends to develop core curricula following approval, a response that meets the standard will

- Present a viable plan and framework for development of curricula in the core academic areas of English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies which ensures alignment with New York State Learning Standards, inclusive of the Common Core State Standards and the New York State Testing Program;
- Identify a sound research, experience, or theoretical base and foundational materials that will guide curriculum development; and
- Describe the instructional practices the charter school proposes to use.

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[32] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(n)
[33] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(A)(iii)

D. Assessment System

Applicant Instructions: Describe the school's approach to assessment and the use of formative, interim, diagnostic and summative assessments to evaluate academic progress. Provide information about the purpose and use of various assessments, how assessment instruments will be selected and/or developed, and how assessment information will be collected and made available to teachers, administrators, the school's board of trustees, parents and students. Explain how the school will evaluate progress of individual students, cohorts over time, and the school as a whole toward meeting the goal of increased student achievement and college and career readiness.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Align with the school's mission, objectives, and overall educational priorities, and provide a description of the methods by which the proposed charter school will determine its progress toward achieving its objectives;[34]
- Describe clearly how the processes of administering assessments, analyzing assessment information and developing resultant action plans will be managed within the school;
- Explain how the school will use assessment data to inform key decisions aimed at improving academic outcomes;
- Demonstrate understanding of and commitment to assessment requirements applicable to all public schools consistent with state law[35] and relevant policies of the Board of Regents including the New York State Testing Program; and
- Present a clear and credible plan for measuring and reporting the educational performance and progress of individual students, cohorts, and the charter school as a whole including valid and reliable measures of student outcomes.

E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Application Instructions: To assure that the proposed school will meet the same performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Regents for students in other public schools, provide sample promotion or exit standards for English language arts and mathematics for each level the school intends to operate (upper and/or lower elementary, middle, high). If a school intends to serve the twelfth grade, provide the school's requirements to obtain a high school diploma.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Demonstrate that the promotion and graduation standards are aligned with the school's mission, educational program, and assessment system;

[34] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(C)(ii)
[35] N.Y. Education Law § 2854(1)(b)

- Describe the proposed school's policies and standards for promoting students to the next grade, achievement level, or grouping level;
- Provide sample promotion/exit standards for each of the school's grade-level groupings (e.g., lower and upper elementary, middle, high school) in Mathematics and English language arts, and one other subject area that is critical to the school's mission. These standards should provide a clear sense of what students will know and be able to do at the end of the last grade of each school level; and
- Provide diploma[36] requirements, if applicable, for high school graduation.

F. School Culture and Climate

Applicant Instructions: Describe the strategies the school will employ to develop and sustain a safe and orderly school climate that supports the achievement of the educational goals. Explain the school's approach to student behavior management and discipline for both the general student population and for students with special needs. Explain how the school will encourage family involvement and communication to support student learning, and how it will gauge satisfaction with school climate.

Required Attachment:

☐ **Attachment 4**: Student Discipline Policy

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Provide a student discipline policy that is reasonably likely to promote a safe and orderly learning environment and addresses student behavior and discipline for the general student population and for students with disabilities. The policy should include rules and procedures by which students may be disciplined, including but not limited to expulsion or suspension from the school, which are consistent with (a) the requirements of due process and with federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities,[37] and (b) the requirements of the Dignity for All Students Act (Education Law Article 2) relating to the creation of policies intended to create a school environment that is free from discrimination or harassment ; [38] and
- Describe the culture of the school, specifically how the school's discipline policy will be implemented by administrators, teachers, and parents starting from the first day of the school's operation, and the methods by which the school will evaluate that the environment is safe and conducive to learning.

[36] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(u)
[37] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(h)
[38] N.Y. Education Law § 13(1)

G. Special Student Populations and Related Services

Applicant Instructions: Describe the implementation of the school's programs and services for special student populations, such as students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, students who are at-risk of academic failure, and students who are academically advanced or gifted within the context of proposed school design. Discuss how these special student populations will be provided with full and meaningful access to participate and progress in the general educational curriculum, and how the classroom environment and instructional approach will be responsive to the needs of these groups of students. In particular, include information about the school's planned methods and strategies for serving students with disabilities in compliance with all federal laws and regulations and consistent with the individualized education programs (IEPs) developed by the Committees on Special Education (CSE) of the students' school districts of residence. Please discuss programs and services separately for each special student population.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe the plan for a responsive, general education classroom and how the proposed school will provide all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), with meaningful access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum;
- Describe the processes and procedures that the proposed school will use to provide specialized instruction to each student in need of special education services[39] that are consistent with the IEP developed by the CSE of the student's school district of residence.[40] Include information about the settings in which services will be delivered, the qualifications of individuals who will be recruited to deliver services, and how the instructional program will be evaluated;
- Describe how the proposed school will manage IEP record-keeping, including the processes for providing copies of the IEPs to teachers and service providers;
- Provide a description of how the school will support the identification of students suspected of having a disability, Child Find process and teacher participation in CSE meetings;[41]
- Describe the process by which the proposed school will work with the districts of residence to ensure that eligible students receive services consistent with their IEPs, and comparable to those services provided to eligible students in other public schools in the district, and ensure fair financing for those services.
- Describe the processes and procedures that the proposed school will employ to identify, assess, and serve students who are ELLs. Include a description of support services to be offered, the settings in which these required services will be implemented, the qualifications of individuals who will implement these services, and how the program will be evaluated; and

[39] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(s)
[40] N.Y. Education Law § 2853(4)
[41] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(L)

- Describe any ancillary and support services the proposed school expects to offer students and families, for example, counseling, family outreach, and/or relationships with community organizations or service agencies which may benefit community members.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL AND FISCAL PLAN

A. Applicant(s)/Founding Group Capacity

Applicant Instructions: Identify and provide information (as described below) about the applicant/founding group that developed the design and application for the proposed school. Discuss the process by which the school design and application was developed. Provide the names, roles and relevant experience and/or qualifications for each individual member of the applicant/founding group. Identify which members intend to serve on the board of trustees (additional detail is required in the next section for those applicants/founding group members who intend to serve on the school's board of trustees). Describe whether and how any members of the applicant/founding group are anticipating to move into another role or relationship (employee, consultant) with the proposed school, if issued a charter.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Identify and present background information pertaining to the lead applicant(s) and founding group members.[42] Such information should include the name, current employment, and relevant experience and/or qualifications for each founding group member. (*Additional detail is required in the next section for those founding group members who intend to serve on the school's board of trustees)*;
- Describe briefly how the applicant/founding group came together to develop this proposed school;
- Describe briefly how often the applicant/founding group met and how the planning and writing process of the application occurred, and identify the primary author of the final application; and
- Specify whether each individual member of the applicant/founding group is a proposed board member, proposed school leader, or proposed for any other position or role, and indicate the process used to determine that the individual is the best candidate for the position.

Applicant(s)/Founding Group

Name	Current employment	Relevant experience/skills and role on founding group	Proposed role(s) if any

[42] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(m)

Note Regarding a Criminal Background Check/Fingerprint Scan: Applicants are required to undergo criminal background checks via fingerprint scans.[43] NYSED will contact the Applicant(s) to schedule an appointment for the required fingerprint scan.

B. Board of Trustees and Governance

Applicant Instructions: Identify the members of the proposed school's initial board of trustees. The proposed initial board must have a minimum of five members and no more than 25 members.[44] Provide information about the skills and qualifications of the members of the proposed board of trustees. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board and its officers, and discuss the administrative relationship between the charter school governing board and the Board of Regents as the chartering entity. Describe the proposed board structure and how the board will fulfill its governance responsibilities. Include information about any critical board seats to be filled in the future (such as a parent representative). Identify board member terms, and provide a copy of the proposed by-laws and code of ethics.

Proposed Founding Board of Trustees

Trustee Name	Voting Y/N	Position on the board (e.g., officer or constituent representative)	Length of initial term

Required Attachments:

- ❒ **Attachment 5a**: Charter School Trustee Background Information (including educational and employment history or attached resume). Form template can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html.
- ❒ **Attachment 5b**: Proposed By-Laws
- ❒ **Attachment 5c**: Proposed Code of Ethics

[43] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(4)
[44] N.Y. Education Law §226(1)

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe and demonstrate a clear understanding of the administrative relationship between the charter school and the Board of Regents as the chartering entity;[45]
- Describe the proposed governance structure of the school, including a list of members of the initial board of trustees, a description of the qualifications (including previous charter school board or employment experience), terms, and method of appointment or election of trustees, the organizational structure of the school, a procedure for conducting and publicizing monthly board of trustee meetings to be held at the charter school, and the processes to be followed by the school to promote parental and staff involvement in school governance.[46] The experience and qualifications of proposed board members should demonstrate the capacity to found and sustain a high quality charter school; manage public funds effectively and responsibly; and to develop and strengthen ties to a broad and diverse community from which the school will draw students;
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a charter school board of trustees and its officers, including a clear understanding of the administrative relationship between the charter school governing board and the Board of Regents as the chartering entity;
- Present proposed by-laws that meet the requirements of Education Law and all applicable laws and regulations governing education corporations in the State of New York ;
- Present a proposed Code of Ethics for the charter school, setting forth the standards of conduct expected of the school's trustees, officers and employees, including standards with respect to disclosure of conflicts of interest regarding any matter brought before the board of trustees;[47] and
- Describe recruitment, selection, and development plans for members of the Board of Trustees and information about any critical board seats to be filled in the future (such as a parent representative)

C. Management and Staffing

Applicant Instruction: Provide a management and staffing plan that presents a thorough understanding of how the school will be operated and managed,[48] and provides a clear picture of the school's operating structure and priorities, delegation of responsibilities or staffing, and relationships with key stakeholders. Describe the primary responsibilities for each key management position and identify critical skills or experiences necessary to fulfill those responsibilities.

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[45] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(D)
[46] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(c)
[47] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(v)
[48] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(B)

Provide the hiring and personnel policies and procedures of the school, including the qualifications to be used in the hiring of teachers, school administrators and other school employees, and a description of staff responsibilities. Give particular attention to the roles, responsibilities, and actual qualifications of the school leader, if already identified. If the school leader has not been identified, discuss the desired qualifications and discuss any plans for the recruitment and selection of the school leader.

In responding to this section, address the following questions:

- What strategies does the school have for recruiting and retaining effective teachers?
- How do the staffing-related budget assumptions align with educational program needs?
- How does the staffing plan reflect the anticipated enrollment and growth of the school?
- How will the school determine appropriate experience, training and skills of non-certified instructional personnel?
- How will the school use student assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at the recruitment, evaluation, retention and support of the leaders, and teaching staff, aligned with the State's approach to incorporating status and growth data?

The response should also provide a clear plan for staffing across the years of the charter term and a narrative that explains the rationale for the staffing structure and numbers. Discuss how the school has budgeted and staffed to meet the needs of the English language learner and special education student population; and how the plan supports sound operation and successful implementation of the school's educational program.

Required Attachments:

- ❑ **Attachment 8a**: Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures of the school, which should include qualifications used in the hiring of teachers, school administrators and other school employees, and a description of staff responsibilities.
- ❑ **Attachment 8b**: Resume for Proposed School Leader if one has been identified.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Provide an Organizational Chart that shows the staffing structure and reporting responsibilities for the board, administration, and staff;
- Describe the organizational structure of the school and its day-to-day operation demonstrating an understanding of management needs and priorities;
- Explain the management roles and responsibilities of key administrators with respect to instructional leadership, curriculum development and implementation, personnel decisions, budgeting, financial management, legal compliance, and any special staffing needs;
- Present a staffing plan that is viable and adequate for effective implementation of the proposed educational program and that includes the number of teachers to be

employed at the school in the first year of operation[49] and over the proposed charter term;

- Provide the hiring and personnel policies and procedures of the school, including the qualifications (experience, professional preparation, training and skills) to be used in the hiring of teachers, school administrators, non-certified instructional personnel and other school employees, and a description of staff responsibilities;[50]
- Present strategies for recruiting and retaining effective teachers that are realistic and reasonably likely to be effective;
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs that are aligned with the budget and with the school's anticipated enrollment and growth;
- Demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs with respect to successful implementation of the educational program;
- Present a plan that is reasonably likely to attract and retain effective staff including information pertaining to the school's working conditions and compensation package(s) that will attract highly qualified staff;
- Explain how individual base salaries and increases will be determined;
- Describe how the school will address potential human resource challenges as the school grows to scale over the course of the charter term; and
- Describe how the school use student assessment data to drive key decisions aimed at the recruitment, evaluation, retention and support of the leaders, and teaching staff, aligned with the State's approach to incorporating status and growth data?

If the founding group intends to enter into a contract with another entity to provide substantially all of the school's educational or management services, such as a charter or educational management organization please submit relevant information in the next section, C1: Charter Management Organization.

C.1. Charter Management Organization

Applicant Instructions:
Select the statement that is applicable and proceed as directed:

☐ We **intend to contract** with a charter management organization. *Continue with completion of this section*.

☐ We **do not intend to contract** with a charter management organization. *Skip to the next section*.

Pursuant to recent amendments to the Charter Schools Act, for-profit business or corporate entities are not eligible to operate or manage a charter school created pursuant to this RFP.[51] If

[49] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(i)
[50] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(g)
[51] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(1)

the school expects to contract for services with a non-profit charter management organization (CMO), discuss the school's decision to work with a CMO, in general, and the selected CMO, in particular. Describe the planned relationship between the school and the CMO and how that relationship will further the school's mission and program. Provide a clear description of the services to be provided by the CMO. Describe the CMO's roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's management and proposed governing board. Describe the school's performance expectations for the CMO. In other words, how will the school evaluate the performance of the CMO?

Required Attachments (if applicable):

- ❑ **Attachment 6a**: CMO information, including:
  - A list of any other schools managed by the CMO in New York and in other states with contact information;
  - Academic performance data from schools managed by the CMO for the past three years;
  - A summary of the CMO's fiscal performance for the past three years and a description of the CMO's current financial plan;
  - A description of CMO-level services to be provided; and
  - A description of the CMO management structure and a summary of key personnel at the CMO.
- ❑ **Attachment 6b**: Proposed Management Contract with CMO

Evaluation Criteria:
The response should present a clear picture of the contractual relationship and accountability between the CMO and the school's governing board that is consistent with the school's mission and educational program. A response that meets the standard will present:

- A persuasive explanation of the reasons for contracting with a charter management organization, in general, and this provider, in particular;
- A sense of how the proposed relationship with the CMO will further the school's mission and program;
- A clear description of the services to be provided by the CMO;
- A coherent delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school's governing board, management and the CMO;
- Evidence of the capacity of the Board to conduct a thorough and independent evaluation of the CMO that is consistent with the school's accountability requirements; and
- Performance expectations for the CMO and the means by which the board will hold the CMO accountable for meeting those expectations.

If the applicant group is submitting the proposed application in conjunction or jointly with a college, university, museum, educational institution, another not-for-profit entity, or any

other partner, please provide specific information requested in the next section, C2. Partner Organization.

C.2. Partner Organization

This section should be completed if this application is being submitted in conjunction with a college, university, museum, educational institution, or not-for-profit corporation exempt from taxation under paragraph 3 of subsection (c) of section 501 of the internal revenue code,. Applicants that do not plan to have such an affiliation should proceed directly to the next section. Please note that this section is intended only for affiliations with organizations that are committed to providing a substantial benefit to the charter school. It is not necessary to list as institutional partners organizations that will provide the same services to the charter school as the organization provides to other public schools and/or the general public. Please also note that due to recent amendments to the Charter Schools Act, this application may not be filed in conjunction with a for-profit business or corporate entity.[52]

Applicant Instructions: The statute permits an application to establish a charter school to be submitted by teachers, parents, school administrators, community residents or any combination thereof. Such application may be filed in conjunction with a college, university, museum, educational institution, or not-for-profit corporation exempt from taxation under paragraph 3 of subsection (c) of section 501 of the internal revenue code.[53] If this application is being filed in conjunction with one of the entities described above, describe the rationale for the affiliation, the benefit that the school expects to receive from the affiliation, any associated fees that will be assessed to the school, and provide the following information for each affiliated organization:

- Name of the organization;
- Public contact information (name, address, phone number, and e-mail address) for a contact person at the affiliated organization; and
- A description of the nature and purpose of the proposed affiliation including the specific purpose(s) for the affiliation (e.g., teacher training and staff development, curriculum and assessment, access to physical facilities, etc.).

Required Attachment (if applicable):

- ❑ **Attachment 7**: Letter of intent or commitment from a bona fide representative of the partner organization indicating that the organization is undertaking the affiliation and the terms and extent of the undertaking; including evidence that the organization has legal standing to do business in New York and has tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3).

Evaluation Criteria:

[52] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(1)
[53] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(1)

A response that meets the standard will:

- Include complete information about each affiliated partner;
- Provide documentation regarding the terms of the partnership (including fees); and
- Present persuasive evidence that the plan for the affiliation is sound and that the purpose(s) is/are likely to support achievement of the school's mission.

D. Evaluation

Applicant Instructions: Present the school's requirements and procedures for a programmatic audit, at least annually.[54] Provide information about how the implementation and effectiveness of the education program described in the application will be evaluated. Describe the methods and schedule that will be used to assess the school's operational effectiveness and fiscal soundness. Present a description of the approach that will be taken for the review and evaluation of the performance of school leaders, teachers, and the board of trustees. Describe the approach, process and time line that will be used to evaluate family and student satisfaction with the school's overall program.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Discuss the data and process that will be used to evaluate the educational programs, the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving its objectives,[55] and how the school will use this information to improve instruction, student learning and teacher performance;
- Discuss the information and process that will be used to evaluate the school's operational effectiveness and fiscal soundness;
- Present a plan for the evaluation of teaching that is aligned with the State's approach to incorporating student status and growth data in the evaluation and support of teachers;
- Describe how school leaders and administrators will be evaluated and by whom;
- Discuss the plan for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the board of trustees;
- Describe how family and student satisfaction will be gauged and the process for gathering and publicizing family and student satisfaction results; and
- If relevant, discuss how the school will evaluate the effectiveness of organizational partnerships or management service agreements.

E. Professional Development

Applicant Instructions: Describe the school's professional development plan and how the plan will address the diverse needs of administrators and teachers from year to year. Discuss how this plan will be implemented, within the context of the proposed charter school's design.

Evaluation Criteria:

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[54] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(f)
[55] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(C)(ii)

A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe a high quality professional development and training plan that is likely to support effective development and implementation of the education program and effectively address the needs of administrators and teachers;
- Describe how the professional development and training plan will be evaluated and reviewed;
- Describe how the school will ensure that administrators and teachers (new to teaching or experienced) will be prepared to address the needs of all students, particularly those students identified as at-risk of academic failure, students with disabilities, and English language learners;
- Describe how the school intends to establish a professional climate that results in purposeful teaching and learning and leads to reasonable rates of retention for school administrators and teachers;
- Describe any opportunities and frequency of such for teacher planning and collaboration; and
- Describe plans to build organizational capacity, share resources, and best practices.

F. Facilities

Applicant Instructions: Provide information regarding the facility to be used by the school, including the location of the school, if known. If the facilities to be used by the proposed school are not known at the time the application is submitted, the applicant shall notify the Board of Regents within ten business days of acquiring facilities for such school; provided, however, that the charter school must obtain a certificate of occupancy for such facilities prior to the date on which instruction is to commence at the school. [56] If the applicant group is proposing to incubate or locate in NYCDOE public space, the applicant group must provide an alternate plan to secure private facilities.

Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of facilities needs and present information regarding the facilities to be used by the school, including the location of the school, if known;
- Discuss the school's facility needs based on the educational program and anticipated enrollment. If the applicants have identified a facility, provide a description including, at a minimum, the number and size of the classrooms, common areas, administrative areas, recreational space, and any community facilities necessary to implement the program as described;
- Describe any residential facilities to be provided by the charter school; [57]
- Explain how the facility will meet the needs of students and provide an assurance that it will be accessible for students and adults with disabilities;

[56] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(j)
[57] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(w)

- Include evidence that the proposed facility will be adequate *or* present a plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's educational program, anticipated location, and target population;
- Demonstrate knowledge of facilities costs including, as applicable, cost of purchasing, leasing, building, or renovating an educational facility that conforms to applicable health, safety, and occupancy requirements and demonstrate that the school's plan for acquisition of a facility is financially viable. (To the extent that the facility will require renovation or "build out," describe those plans including anticipated timing and cost);
- Present evidence to support facilities-related budget assumptions;
- If the school intends to lease facilities from a school district or co-locate in an existing public school building pursuant to statute, discuss the status of those plans, provide evidence of any district commitment, and provide the school's alternate plan to secure a facility should public space and/or co-location in the school district be unavailable; and
- If a facility has not been identified, specify potential locations that are under consideration and discuss the process and time line for selecting, acquiring, renovating (if appropriate), and taking occupancy of a suitable facility.

G. Insurance

Applicant Instructions: Provide information regarding the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the school, which shall include adequate insurance for liability, property loss and the personal injury of students. Provide evidence of ability and preparation to obtain the appropriate insurance coverage. Include evidence to support the budget expense assumptions related to insuring the school.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Present information as to the types and amounts of insurance coverage to be obtained by the school, which shall include adequate insurance for liability, property loss and the personal injury of students [58]; and
- Provide evidence of ability to obtain requisite insurance coverage.

H. Health, Food, and Transportation Services

Applicant Instructions: Charter schools must meet the same health and safety, civil rights, and student assessment requirements applicable to other public schools, except as otherwise specifically provided in the Charter Schools Act. Provide a description of the health services that will be provided to students attending the school. Provide a description of the food services to be provided to students attending the school. Discuss the school's plans for transportation of students, including how the school will arrange for transportation for

[58] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(o)

students who do not qualify for public school transportation under Education Law Section 3635, and any other supplemental transportation arrangements.[59]

Evaluation Criteria

A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe the health services the school plans to provide students attending the school;[60]
- Describe the food services[61] the school plans to provide to students attending the school, including whether the school will provide breakfast and/or snack in addition to lunch;
- Indicate whether the charter school will participate in the Federal school lunch or school breakfast programs and/or whether the charter school will participate in the local school district's food service programs and whether food will be prepared on or off site;
- Describe the means by which all students will be transported to and from the school, including how the school will arrange for transportation for students who do not qualify for public school transportation under Education Law Section 3635;[62]
- If the school will provide transportation to students, present a thorough, realistic, and cost-effective transportation plan; provide specific evidence of third party readiness and terms for providing transportation services consistent with the school's budget assumptions, including an assurance that it will provide special transportation and accommodations that are included in a student's IEP or 504 plan;
- If the school will not provide transportation to students, present a clear statement of the school's intent not to provide transportation services; describe viable transportation options for students; and describe contingency plans to provide transportation services that are included in a student's IEP or 504 plan.

I. Family and Community Involvement

Applicant Instructions: Discuss the plans for family and community involvement in the planning, implementation, and design of the school. Describe the nature of potential involvement with examples of how family and community partners will play a part in the life of the school, and identify specific organizations with which the school is either already working or likely to partner. Describe your plans for cultivating this involvement and any specific steps you have already taken.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Present a vision and strategy for family and community involvement that is reasonably likely to further the school's mission and program;

[59] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(j); 2853(4)(b);
[60] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(r)
[61] N.Y. Education Law §2851(2)(r)
[62] N.Y Education Law §2851(2)(j)

- Provide a description of how parents[63] and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, implementation, and program design of the charter school; and
- Provide evidence that anticipated partnerships are realistic and achievable.

J. Financial Management

Applicant Instructions: Describe the systems and procedures for managing the school's finances and identify the staff position(s) that will be responsible for financial oversight and management. Describe how the school's finances will be managed and who will be responsible for the protection of student and financial records.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Describe the school's process for have independent fiscal audits conducted at least once annually, with such audits being comparable in scope to those required of other public schools[64];
- Demonstrate understanding of the school's financial management obligations;
- Present evidence that the school is prepared to adhere to generally accepted accounting practices; and
- Present evidence that the school will have or has capacity to develop adequate policies and processes for tracking enrollment and attendance eligibility, eligibility for free- and reduced- priced lunch; special education services and other services for special populations of students.

K. Budget and Cash Flow

Applicant Instructions: The statute requires the applicant to include a proposed budget and fiscal plan for the school, including supporting evidence that the fiscal plan is sound and that sufficient start-up funds will be available to the charter school. The plan should provide an understanding of how the applicants intend to develop and manage the school's infrastructure and finances. The plan should present a clear picture of the school's revenue projections; expenditure requirements; facilities needs; transportation and food service plans; and pre-opening plan.

Use the Budget and Cash Flow Template to detail the school's estimated revenues and expenditures for the proposed term of the charter including the pre-operational start up year, as well as a cash flow analysis for the start up year. An active version of the template (including accompanying worksheets) may be downloaded from NYSED's website at http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html. Templates may not be amended.

[63] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(E).
[64] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(f)

Include an explanation and discussion of key budget assumptions underlying the budget projections and explain how the budget aligns with and supports implementation of the educational program. If the school anticipates incurring debt for any reason, such as for acquisition of its facility, the budget must address the schedule for debt repayment and the budget discussion should elaborate on the repayment assumptions and plan.

As discussed in Overview of the Application Process on page 10, applicants are eligible, upon Board of Regents approval and issuance of a charter and based upon the availability of funds, to receive a ***Charter School Program (CSP) Planning and Implementation Grant***. The charter authorization process serves as the substantive review process for CSP grant funds. Applicants, except *those affiliated with CMOs that have received federal CSP funds through the Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CFDA 84.282M) (accessing both CSP funding streams is not permitted by the U.S. Department of Education)*, may include a grant amount of between $500,000 and $750,000 over a three year period (planning year, implementation year 1, implementation year 2) in the overall charter school budget and cash flow template. Inclusion of CSP grant amounts greater than the $500,000 base award should be considered carefully, as enhanced funding levels are not guaranteed.

Discuss the school's contingency plans for cash flow challenges, a budget shortfall, lower than expected student enrollment or other financial challenges that you may foresee in the early years of operation.

Required Attachment:

- ❑ **Attachment 9**: Budget and Cash Flow Template. Microsoft Excel Template can be found at http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html.

Evaluation Criteria:

A response that meets the standard will:

- Present a proposed budget and fiscal plan for the school, including supporting evidence that the fiscal plan is sound and that sufficient start-up funds will be available to the charter school[65];
- Present budget priorities that are consistent with and support key parts of the plan, including the school's mission, educational program, staffing and facility;
- Provide for the establishment of an escrow account of no less than $75,000 to pay for legal and audit expenses that would be associated with dissolution should it occur. The school may provide for the full amount in its first-year budget, or provide for a minimum of $25,000 per year for the first three years of its charter term;[66]
- Present realistic, evidence-based revenue and expenditure assumptions, including any plan to incur and repay debt;
- Present viable strategies for meeting potential budget and cash flow challenges, particularly for the first year of operation;

[65] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(e)

[66] This escrow account is a requirement included in the charter agreements with the Board of Regents.

- Demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school; and
- Describe the school's plan for sustainability beyond the start-up period and demonstrate understanding of the funding environment and the authorizer's role for charter schools in New York State.[67]

L. Pre-Opening Plan

Applicant Instructions: Provide a Pre-Opening Plan that documents key tasks to be completed between approval of the application and the opening of the school. Include a schedule for initiation, development and completion of those tasks, identify primary responsibility by individual or position, and document anticipated resource needs.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Demonstrate understanding of key pre-opening responsibilities consistent with the school's education, organizational and financial plans.

M. Dissolution Plan

Application Instructions: Discuss the procedures to be followed in the event of closure or dissolution of the school.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will:

- Identify procedures to be followed in the case of the closure or dissolution of the charter school, including provisions for the transfer of students and student records to the school district in which the charter school is located and for the disposition of the school's assets to the school district in which the charter school is located or another charter school located within the school district[68]; and
- Provide assurance that the school will follow any additional procedures required by NYSED to ensure an orderly closure and dissolution process, including compliance with the applicable requirements of Education Law §§ 219 and 220 and any Closing Procedures specified by SED.

[67] ESEA § 5203(b)(3)(F)
[68] N.Y. Education Law § 2851(2)(t)

IV. TABLE OF REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

Note: Attachments are limited to 75 pages, excluding those marked with an asterisk (*). Page limits are suggested for each attachment to help applicants keep within the total 75 page limit.

Attachment #	Title	Suggested Page Limits
Attachment 1	Admissions Policies and Procedures	5 pages
Attachment 2	Samples of Evidence of Community Outreach	15 pages
Attachment 3a	Sample Daily Schedules (ES, MS, and/or HS)	5 pages
Attachment 3b	First Year Calendar	2 pages
Attachment 4	Student Discipline Policy	5 pages
Attachment 5a*	Charter School Trustee Background Information	No limit, excluded from total attachment page limit
Attachment 5b	By-Laws	10 pages
Attachment 5c	Code of Ethics	5 pages
Attachment 6a*	If applicable: CMO Information	No limit, excluded from total attachment page limit
Attachment 6b*	If applicable: Proposed Management Contract with CMO	No limit, excluded from total attachment page limit
Attachment 7*	If applicable: Partnership Information	No limit, excluded from total attachment page limit
Attachment 8a	Hiring and Personnel Policies and Procedures	15 pages
Attachment 8b	Resume for Proposed School Leader, if identified	5 pages
Attachment 9*	Budget and Cash Flow Template	No limit, Excel Template
Attachment 10*	If applicable: Replication Strategic/Business Growth Plan	No limit, excluded from total attachment page limit

APPENDIX A: REVIEWER EVALUATION GUIDANCE AND SAMPLE RUBRIC

Reviewer Information: The evaluation rubric is designed to guide the review of charter school applications submitted to the Board of Regents. The evaluation rubric is aligned to each section and subsection of the application, and list the criterion by which the reviewers are to evaluate each section and sub-section. Throughout the evaluation, reviewer will be asked to rate how well the applicant's responses address the evaluation criterion. Reviewers are to rate the responses as **Inadequate**, **Approaches**, **Meets**, or **Exceeds**. These ratings are defined as follows:

Rating Definitions

Inadequate	The response lacks meaningful detail; demonstrates lack of preparation; or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant's understanding of the issue in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.
Approaches	The response addresses most of the selection criteria, but lacks some meaningful detail and requires important additional information in order to be reasonably comprehensive.
Meets	The response indicates solid preparation and grasp of key issues that would be considered reasonably comprehensive. It contains many of the characteristics of a response that excels even though it may require additional specificity, support or elaboration in places.
Exceeds	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and indicates capacity to open and operate a quality charter school. It addresses the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate.

At the end of each sub-section, reviewers will note key strengths and concerns, and will identify questions that are important to getting a full understanding of the plan. Reviewers are directed to explain and elaborate on their respective ratings. Reviewers will also be asked to provide summative ratings and comments regarding each section of the application and the application as a whole. Reviewer comments are essential and will be used to prepare feedback to the applicants, to prepare for the capacity interviews, and to inform final recommendations.

Reviewer Instructions:

- Read the relevant sub-section of the application and the corresponding evaluation criteria and mark the box that best fits your assessment of the response (*Inadequate*, *Approaches*, *Meets* or *Exceeds*). In those instances where the criteria are *bulleted*, you are expected to evaluate the criteria as a whole.
- Using appropriate text boxes to identify key strengths and concerns, and to identify questions that are important to getting a full understanding of the plan. Reference specific sections and page numbers.
- Use the summary boxes at the end to highlight the key strengths and concerns that you have for that section of the application as a whole.

Sample Evaluation Rubric

Each section and its corresponding evaluation criteria will appear as follows on the reviewer evaluation rubric.

Proposed School Name: _____

Reviewer Name: _____ **Review Date:** _____

A. Mission Statement and Objectives

Applicant Instructions: Provide a mission statement that defines the core purpose and key values of the school and informs the public about the students the school intends to serve. It should be consistent with high academic standards and be succinct and meaningful. A school's mission statement provides the foundation for the entire charter application and for the full term of the school's charter. The mission statement should be reflected throughout all sections of the application.

Briefly describe the school's objectives and how the school will implement one or more of the objectives identified in the Charter Schools Act.

Evaluation Criteria:
A response that meets the standard will**:**

- Present a mission statement that defines the purpose of the proposed charter school;
- Describe the objectives of the charter school;
- Explain how the school will materially further one or more of the objectives of the Charter Schools Act; and
- Be reflected throughout all sections of the full application.

Inadequate	Approaches	Meets	Exceeds

Strengths	Reference	Concerns & Questions	Reference

APPENDIX B: FEDERAL CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM (CSP) GRANTS

As part of New York State's $113 million federal CSP grant award, NYSED can provide grant funds to all applicants who are issued a charter by the Board of Regents, *except those applications affiliated with CMOs that have received federal CSP funds through the Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CFDA 84.282M), since accessing both funding streams is not permitted by the U.S. Department of Education.* All successful applicants can expect to receive a base amount of $500,000 over the planning period and first two implementation years of the school's first charter term, though this is contingent on the completion of additional grant-specific budget information and other requirements that will be requested from those applicants who are granted a charter. For reference, information about the current CSP Implementation and Planning Grant can be found at: http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/CSPNewFY12PlanningandImplementationGrants.html

In addition, New York State has incentivized the development of high-quality charter schools that meet specific needs—especially those of educationally disadvantaged students—by awarding significantly increased start-up funding amounts. NYSED will provide additional funding to charters schools that meet two types of incentive priorities:

1. **Underserved student populations priority.** New York State will provide awards of up to $625,000 total to those charter schools that, by the Oct. Basic Education Data System (BEDS) student data reporting date in their first year of operation, have met one or more of the enrollment targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program prescribed the by Board of Regents as required by §2852(9-b) of the Act.

2. **Authorizer program design priority.** As part of the integrated charter authorization and grant review process, NYSED will provide awards of up to $750,000 total to those charter schools that have met one or more program design priorities specific below. (Schools that meet both incentive priorities may not receive more than $750,000 of total CSP grant funding). Continuation funding at the enhanced incentive level during the implementation years of the 3-year start-up grant may be dependent on the NYSED's assessment of a charter school's success with implementing the program design priority. Applicants must meet one of the following program design priorities outlined below in order to qualify for the $750,000 enhanced CSP funding level.

    - The charter school is specifically designed to meet the learning needs and raise the achievement of students who are **English language learners, students with disabilities** and/or **over-age, under-credited students**.

      Key evidence that this priority has been met includes:
      - Mission is specific to the needs of the priority student group(s).
      - Recruitment and retention strategies are specific to the priority student group(s).

- The academic program (curriculum, instructional design, pedagogy) has strong potential to be effective with the priority student group(s).
- The staffing plan, including teacher qualifications and skills, is likely to support the learning needs of the priority student group(s).

- The charter school will serve students who are at-risk of academic failure because the school will be established to provide a high quality educational option for students in at least one a **Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) school** in the district (see http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/APA/SURR/SURR_home.html). This program design priority must be documented by a letter of support from the school district indicating support of the charter school application to serve as a high quality educational option for students in at least one of the district's Persistently Lowest Achieving school. This letter should be included as part of Attachment 2: Evidence of Community Outreach.

- The charter school will be located in a rural school district (see http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/RuralDistricts.html for a list of rural school districts in New York State).

APPENDIX C: NEW YORK STATE STATUTORY PRIORITY SCORING RUBRIC

Priority Objective (1 – 4 Points Each)	Weight	Key Indicators	Primary Evidence Sources
1. The school will increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics. [69]	1	• The academic program (curriculum, instructional design, and pedagogy) has strong potential to build student mastery in reading, literacy and mathematics concepts and skills. • The academic program explicitly defines strategies to identify and accelerate the achievement of students who are below-level in reading and mathematics. • The school's assessment framework supports the implementation of accelerated instruction with valid and reliable information about student need and progress. • The organizational structure of the school provides strong student support services.	I. EDUCATIONAL PLAN A. Achievement Goals C. Curriculum and Instruction D. Assessment
2. The school will increase high school graduation rates and focus on serving specific high school student populations including, but not limited to, students at risk of not obtaining a high school diploma, re-enrolled high school drop-outs and students with academic skills below grade level. [70]	2	• Recruitment and retention strategies are specific to students who are at risk of dropping out or have dropped out of school. • The core content and pedagogy of the academic program has the potential to meet the learning needs of at risk high school students. • The school culture and student support services have the strong potential to engage and meet the needs of at risk high school students.	IA. Mission IB. Key Design Elements IC. Enrollment, Recruitment II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN III.C. Management and Staffing III.E. Professional Development III.I. Parent and Community Involvement
3. The school will focus on the academic achievement of middle school students and prepare them for a successful transition to high school. [71]	1	• The school will serve middle school students. • The academic program (curriculum, instructional design and pedagogy) has strong potential to engage and increase the academic achievement of middle-school students. • The school culture and program supports the social-emotional needs of young adolescents. • The proposal includes explicit programs and approaches that are likely to support the effective transition to high school.	IA. Mission IB. Key Design Elements IC. Enrollment, Recruitment II. EDUCATIONAL PLAN III.C. Management and Staffing III.E. Professional Development
4. The school will use high quality assessments designed to measure a student's knowledge, understanding of and ability to apply critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats. [72]	1	• The school's assessment framework is comprehensive and includes a variety of screening, diagnostic, formative and summative measures of student learning. • The assessments selected are valid and reliable measures. • The proposal describes how assessments will provide student and classroom level information to teachers and administrators and how this information will be used to inform instruction. • The proposal describes how assessment information will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational	II.A. Achievement Goals II.D. Assessment II.E. Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

[69] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(i)
[70] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(ii)
[71] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(iii)
[72] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(iv)

Priority Objective (1 – 4 Points Each)	Weight	Key Indicators	Primary Evidence Sources
		program by school leaders.	
5. The school will acquire, adopt and use local instructional improvement systems that provide teachers, principals and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making and overall effectiveness. [73]	1	• The proposal describes a process for review and revision of curriculum. • The proposal describes a systematic process by which student achievement information will be presented, analyzed and reviewed at classroom, grade and school levels. • The proposal describes a process for teacher and administrative performance evaluations based on objective information about instructional effectiveness. • The proposal describes the process for the development and ongoing evaluation of a professional development plan, on the basis of objective student and school performance information. • The proposal describes an objective process for evaluation of progress toward achievement of school mission and goals.	II.A. Achievement Goals II.C. Curriculum and Instruction II.D. Assessment III.D. Evaluation III.E. Professional Development
6. The school will partner with low-performing public schools in the area to share best educational practices and innovations. [74]	1	• Low-performing public schools in the geographic area are identified. • The applicant demonstrates understanding of factors that contribute to low academic performance including feeder school patterns. • The proposal describes concrete partnership initiatives to share best practices and innovations. • Evidence is provided that plans to share best practices and innovations have been collaboratively developed with the low-performing public school.	I.D. Community to be Served III.E. Professional Development III.I. Parent and Community Partnerships
7. The school will have the management and leadership techniques necessary to overcome initial start-up problems to establish a thriving, financially viable charter school. [75]	1	• Founding team members provide evidence of experience in charter school launch and operation. • Founding team members provide evidence of expertise in charter school finance. • A qualified school leader is identified to launch and lead the school. • The board by-laws embed a systematic approach by which the board of trustees will oversee school leadership and operation.	III.A. Applicants and Founding Group Capacity III.B. Board of Trustees and Governance III.J. Financial Management III.K. Budget and Cash Flow
8. The application demonstrates that the school has the support of the school district in which the school will be located and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district. [76]	2	• Concrete evidence of school district support is provided. • Promising efforts and plans to establish an ongoing relationship with the school district are described.	I.D. Community to be Served I.E. Public Outreach III.I. Parent and Community Partnerships

[73] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(v)
[74] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(vi)
[75] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(vii)
[76] N.Y. Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c)(viii)