



OFFICE OF SCHOOL INNOVATION
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE
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To: Leaders and Board Chairs at NYS Board of Regents-Authorized Charter Schools¹
From: Cliff Chuang, Director, Charter School Office
Date: September 25, 2012
Subject: 2012-2013 Back-to-School Update

We hope your 2012-2013 school year is off to a great start. Please take some time to review the information and materials in this memo, pass on to others what is appropriate, and respond where requested. Thank you.

1. Messages from Commissioner King:

- Welcome Back Message: <http://engageny.org/news/commissioner-king-welcome-back/>
- Back-to-School Video <http://engageny.org/resource/back-to-school-message-2012/>

2. NYSED Charter School Office Staff

We welcomed several new members to the team over the summer. Please see <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/contact.html> for an updated staff list, as well as a listing of CSO staff members who will serve as liaisons to your charter schools during 2012-2013 and a description of the liaison role. Your liaison should be your first point of contact for questions and concerns.

3. New Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents.

Thirteen (13) new Board of Regents-authorized charter schools opened their doors for instruction for the first time this fall. This represents a 40% increase in the number of schools in the Regents' portfolio, for a grand total of forty-two (42) operating schools. We welcome and congratulate all the school leaders, board members, faculty, staff and families who worked to launch our thirteen newest schools:

- Democracy Prep Endurance Charter School (NYC CSD 5)
- Global Community Charter School (NYC CSD 6)
- KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy Charter School (NYC CSD 6)
- Launch Expeditionary Learning Charter School (NYC CSD 16)
- Mott Hall Charter School (NYC CSD 9)
- Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem (NYC CSD 5)
- New Dawn Charter High School (NYC CSD 15)
- New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II (NYC CSD 7)
- New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II (NYC CSD 7)
- Rochester Career Mentoring Charter School
- Urban Dove Charter School (NYC CSD 13)
- West Buffalo Charter School
- Young Women's College Prep Charter School of Rochester

¹ **Ongoing Request: Update Your SEDREF Information.** If the appropriate persons are not receiving this email, please check that your publicly-displayed information on NYSED's SEDREF system is accurate at [http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/pls/pref/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw\\$.startup](http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/pls/pref/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw$.startup). Instructions for updating this information can be found at <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/sedref/home.html>. Please copy charterschools@mail.nysed.gov on any update requests. Thanks.

Four additional schools in New York City are currently approved to open in the fall of 2013

- Brilla College Prep Charter School
- Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School
- Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School
- South Bronx Classical Charter School II

The Charter School Office is presently evaluating twenty-four (24) new charter school applications that were submitted in 2012 RFP Round Two and twelve (12) applications that were submitted in Round Three. The applications that meet or exceed the criteria outlined in the *2012 Request for Proposals to Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents* will be recommended for action by the Board of Regents by the end of 2012. Schools that are issued charters will join the four schools listed above in preparation for a fall 2013 opening. The CSO New Schools Team will begin working with all 2013 opening schools to support the successful and timely completion of all required prior actions.

4. Performance Framework Update

The Performance Framework that has been in development will be in a draft form worthy of sharing shortly. The framework outlines the standards of performance for Regents-authorized charter schools to earn renewal. We will also clarify policy related to renewal decision making, including how enrollment and retention targets will be considered. We will discuss this further at a sessions at the New York Charter School Association (NYCSA) in NYC on the afternoon of October 12, 2012. More information about the session can be found on the NYSCA website: <http://www.nycsa.org/Events.aspx>. We anticipate presenting an update and items related to CSO activities and policy development at Board of Regents meeting this fall. Please check for these materials at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/>.

5. Performance Oversight for 2012-2013

- The Charter School Office is currently in the process of reviewing six **renewal** applications of Regents-authorized charter schools. While the renewal process takes place near the end of a charter term, it is important to remember that we consider both static and trend data related to the school's performance for the entire term of the current charter. We are conducting renewal site visits during the fall. Evidence from the site visits will be considered (along with the contents of the renewal applications and other sources of evidence on the school) when we make findings and recommendations to the Board of Regents for the meetings in early 2013.
- **Site visits for 2012-2013**, similar to last year, and in accordance to our Monitoring Plan, (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/documents/NYSEDMonitoringPlanSeptember2011.pdf>) will include differentiated visits depending on where a school is in its term and/or whether we have concerns about the school. Every Regents-authorized school will get one type of visit from the Charter School Office —be it a quick Check-in or a Full Program Evaluation visit—at some point this school year. Stay tuned for notification of when we will visit your school.
- Thank you for submitting your **Annual Reports**. As previously noted, we wanted to give you sufficient time to analyze data on **progress toward meeting charter-specific goals**, therefore the due date for submitting this component of the Annual Report is November 1, 2012. Similarly, your school's **2011-12 Independent Financial Audits** is also due on November 1, 2012. Please submit these reports as specified in the 2011-12 Charter School Annual Report Guidelines <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/2011-2012AnnualReportPage.html>
- Your charter school board of trustees, as a public body, is responsible for providing notice, conducting meetings, and making public board minutes in accordance with the New York State's Open Meetings Law. As such, the **board of trustees meetings minutes** should be available within two weeks of a meeting. The CSO needs to have access to your board minutes in a timely manner and you have a few options for ensuring that happens: 1) post the minutes to your website

or 2) send them to your liaison when you send them to your board. In either case, please expect that we will be more closely monitoring the availability and content of board meeting minutes this school year.

- Additionally, I'd like to remind you that when there are **changes to the membership of the board of trustees**, including any resignations, you are required to notify the CSO. When adding members, you must seek our approval. The specific process is laid forth in our website <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/AddingBoardofTrusteeMembers.html>. If you follow the wording for the resolution that we recommend, your board will not need to act twice on adding an additional member.
- For all **charter revisions**, please be sure you follow the process outlined at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/CharterRevisionRequests.html>. As a reminder, please note that charter revision requests for Regents-authorized charter schools involving enrollment increases, changes to grades served, or the district of location for the 2013-2014 school year must be submitted to the Charter School Office no later than December 15, 2012.

6. Making Sure We Can Contact You!

In order to ensure that the appropriate persons at your charter schools receive communications from NYSED, please ensure that your school's SEDREF information is up-to-date. Please check that your publicly-displayed information on NYSED's SEDREF system is accurate at [http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/pls/pref/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw\\$.startup](http://portal.nysed.gov/portal/pls/pref/SED.sed_inst_qry_vw$.startup). Instructions for updating this information can be found at <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/sedref/home.html>. You now also have the option of listing an "Additional Contact" who will receive any communications that go out to chief executive officers via the official charter@listserv.nysed.gov listserv, which is used by many Offices within SED that frequently share important and time-sensitive information related to data reporting and assessments. Please provide "Additional Contact" info in the same manner as other updates described at <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/sedref/home.html>.