

Prospectus: The Brooklyn Heart Charter High School For Health Leaders

I. Executive Summary

During President Obama's State of the Union address on January 25, 2010 he stated, "... leading the world in educating our kids, giving each of our children the best opportunity to succeed and preparing them for the jobs of tomorrow."

School Mission

The Brooklyn Heart Charter High School for Health Leaders is an all male high school founded in 2012. The HEART promotes Hope, Education, Achievement, Responsibility and Teamwork. We believe innovative teaching along with inquiry based exploration and learning are the keys to keeping our students engaged, motivated and successful thereby giving them the competitive edge in the 21st century.

Why males?

During our research and discovery it was quite clear and evident that males, specifically males of color, are in dire need of immediate solutions to stay in high school. Research indicates that many times our males are either turned off in 9th grade or drop out by 11th grade causing a high dropout rate for young males of color. "According to the Government Accountability Office, the proportion of students obtaining degrees in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) from American Universities has dropped from 32% to 27% during the past decade."¹ By being able to attain certain health related certifications while attending the HEART, our scholars will be able to attain job security while also enrolled college.

"Beginning in our high schools, females have much more educational success. This difference is amplified as an increasingly disproportionate percentage of females enroll in college, persist in college, and ultimately obtain a college degree or graduate degree."² Our HEART scholars will be more prepared to enter competitive colleges and universities.

Unique Features of The Heart Charter High School for Health Leaders:

- ❖ Uses online courses to support virtual learning and e-books rather than the traditional cumbersome textbooks;
- ❖ Opportunity for students and staff to experience global learning during international trips and staff professional opportunities abroad; teacher exchange through a United States organization;
- ❖ Focus on Health Sciences- ability to attain LPN certification, and EMT certification
- ❖ Single sexed school for boys focusing on health sciences;

¹ Principal Magazine, September/ October 2010 "STEM Reevaluated" pg.58

² Projection of High School Graduates New York State 2007-2008 to 2018-2019

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- ❖ Several courses for foreign languages;
- ❖ Internship programs in the field of health sciences at local hospitals, rehabilitation centers and health profession departments;
- ❖ Small class size 1:20 (teacher to student); one to one tutoring or small group instruction;
- ❖ 196 days of school for students including one Saturday per month and 4 weeks summer school for all students;
- ❖ 200 days of teaching, learning and professional development for teachers;
- ❖ Technology equipment available for all students;
- ❖ Two schedules for students and staff (8am-4pm) or (9am-5pm) during the 8am-9am or 4pm-5pm slot students have tutoring or small group instruction with instructional staff;
- ❖ Interactive and innovative robotics program;
- ❖ Discovery and exploration using our city and tri-state areas as our classroom
- ❖ Data Portfolio on every student enrolled/ Continuous assessments of students every six to eight weeks;
- ❖ Family tea, luncheons and/or dinners for families to collaborate with our school
- ❖ Advisories with Morningside Center for Social Responsibility
- ❖ Collaboration with New York City's top students from Cooper Union and New York University to study and work collaboratively

Capacity to Effectively Launch, Oversee and Govern

The Heart Charter High School for Health Leaders

The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders' founders is a strong team of educators who believe that with community and parent involvement any student especially our males of color can succeed. The Director and a founding member of The HEART has been an administrator for over 7.5 years. As a principal, she redesigned a failing school which would have been closed by NYSED. The principal and other founding members of the HEART redesigned the school, wrote appropriate curriculum and ensured progress for all students. Furthermore, after writing the redesign plan the committee appeared before NYS leaders to have the school's redesign plan approved. Within three years, the school was not only removed from SURR (School Under Registration Review) and SINI (School in Need of Improvement) lists but also attained a progress report grade of an "A" in 2009 and a "B" in 2010. One of the founding members had been a CSR (Comprehensive School Reform) liaison for K-12 schools in NYC and worked closely with writing and funding grants, has vast experience in business management and curriculum writing. The other founding member has a military background, worked as a librarian and as a classroom teacher increasing test scores in an all girls academy. Every founding member has a devotional calling to serve students in need and is confident their qualities will enable males of color to be successful learners, citizens and health leaders.

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II. STUDENT POPULATION

A. Student Enrollment

Grades	Projected Enrollment Table				
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2017-2018
K					
1st					
2nd					
3rd					
4th					
5th					
6th					
7th					
8th					
9th	100	100	100	100	100
10th		100	100	100	100
11th			100	100	100
12th				100	100
Ungraded					
Totals	100	200	300	400	400

B. Target Populations

The HEART Charter proposes to be sited in either Community School District 13 or 17; both districts serve communities with a high number of African American students of which more than half live below the poverty level. We believe our site will attract young males interested in the field of health science. “The New York City Geographic District #17 is located in Brooklyn, NY and includes 46 schools that serve 27,529 students in grades PK through 12. There are 86% African American, 11% Latino, 2% Asian/Native American, 1% White. The New York City Geographic District #17 had a grade 9-12 dropout rate of 4% in 2008. The national grades 9-12 dropout rate in 2007 was 4.4%. Free lunch in District #17 is 88% and reduced price 8%. In the New York City Geographic District #17, 19% of students have an IEP (Individualized Education Program). The New York City Geographic District #17 serves 9% English Language Learners (ELL).³ On the other hand, District #13 is located in Brooklyn, NY and includes 45 schools that serve 21,690 students grades PK through 12. 62% of the students receive free lunch and 10% receive reduced lunch. There are 61% African

³ Nystart.gov and Education.com

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American, 15% Latino, 15% Asian, and 7% White. The New York City Geographic District #13 had a grades 9-12 dropout rate of 2% in 2008. The national grades 9-12 dropout rate in 2007 was 4.4%. Free lunch in District #13 is 72%. In New York City Geographic District #13, 4% of students have an IEP (Individualized Education Program). The New York City Geographic District #13 serves 4% English Language Learners (ELL).⁴

Family Outreach and Recruitment

First and foremost, publicizing our new charter will be a major part of our school's success. Our recruitment plan for The HEART is to offer a wide array of opportunities where students and families will be able to meet with staff, and to gain an understanding of the school's mission. We will begin by participating in High School Fairs, Open Houses and Middle School Visits. We will also send out mass mailings, emails and make telephone contact with prospective students. Contacting all middle school guidance counselors and principals will be crucial in our outreach. Using modern technology we will establish a school website and use social networks such as Facebook/Twitter and text messaging to enhance our opportunities to attain interested students. We will have Mass Mailings during the holidays and have door to door recruiters who will speak to families about our school. Additionally, hosting open houses on weekends and evenings is another way to entice students and their families. We will also meet with the Community Education Council (CEC) for that district and present our charter in hopes to attain the support from the CEC and community at large. Due to the large concern regarding our young males and the dropout rate we are confident that our communities will support our school vision and mission.

Supporting and Retaining At-Risk Students

We at the HEART understand our secondary students' needs. We are prepared to embrace their needs and challenges both personally and academically. However, in CSD #13 and #17, many young males face challenges daily. Most of our secondary students live below the poverty level. Many are homeless and/or living in temporary housing. For most, this is generational poverty with some having little or no hope of breaking the cycle. Thus it is our firm belief our small unique HEART Charter will have a multipurpose responsibility like that of the human heart. As we know the heart is an organ found in all animals with a circulatory system. We know it is responsible for pumping blood throughout the blood vessels by repeated, rhythmic contractions. We at the HEART understand "like the heart" we are responsible for ensuring our young males are:

1. Supported and motivated
2. Work as a team
3. Give back to those in need
4. Dream and achieve
5. Focus and set goals
6. Understand their value in society and the world of health science; understand like the heart in a human they are needed, essential and necessary for the existence in society

⁴ Nystart.gov and Education.com

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For example, in CSD #17 according to the 2008 data the females comprised of 58% while the males comprised of 42%, of which 19% were Students with Disabilities and 9% were students considered to be Limited English Proficient. In this cohort only 68% of the students were considered to be proficient (Levels 3 and 4) with the girls outscoring the boys approximately 3:2. These statistics indicated that the percentage of males of color; specifically black males are at-risk of dropping out or failing are greater than the females and any other ethnic group. The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders is an all male high school that will address male issues and gear the manner in which courses are taught toward engaging our male scholars. Through continuous growth and learning from renowned authors, researchers and professors such as Dr. Pedro Noguera, Dr. Alfred Tatum and several experts on males; teaching and learning as well as closing the achievement gap will be our point of reference as a school community of learners. Our goal is learn and open our minds and hearts to our scholars.

According to “The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts”, there is no single reason why students drop out of high school. Nearly half (47%) said a major reason for dropping out was that classes were not interesting. These young people reported being bored and disengaged from high school. Almost as many (42%) spent time with people who were not interested in school. Other reasons are: Nearly 7 in 10 respondents (69 %) said they were not motivated or inspired to work hard, 80% did one hour or less of homework each day in high school, two-thirds would have worked harder if more was demanded of them (higher academic standards requiring more studying and homework), and 70 percent were confident they could have graduated if they had tried. Even a majority of those with low GPAs thought they could have graduated.”

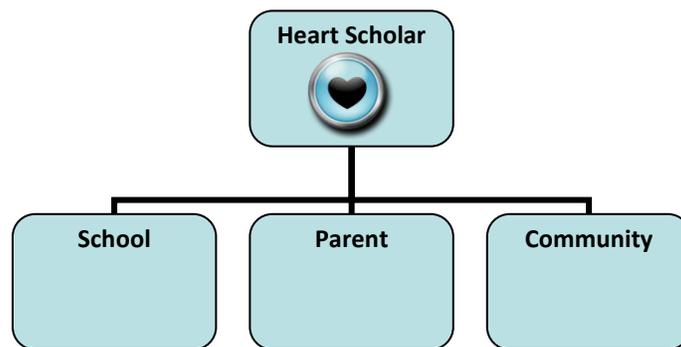
Many students gave personal reasons for leaving school. A third (32 %) said they had to get a job and make money; 26 % said they became a parent; and 22 % said they had to care for a family member. Many of these young people reported doing reasonably well in school and had a strong belief that they could have graduated if they had stayed in school. These students also were the most likely to say they would have worked harder if their schools had demanded more of them and provided the necessary support. It is clear that some dropouts, but not the majority, leave school because of significant academic challenges. Thirty-five percent said that “failing in school” was a major factor for dropping out; three out of ten said they could not keep up with schoolwork; and 43% said they missed too many days of school and could not catch up. Forty-five percent said they started high school poorly prepared by their earlier schooling. Many of these students likely fell behind in elementary and middle school and could not make up the necessary ground. They reported that additional supports in high school that would have made a difference (such as tutoring or after school help) were not there. Thirty-two percent were required to repeat a grade before dropping out and twenty-nine percent expressed significant doubts that they could have met their high school’s requirements for graduation even if they had put in the necessary effort. The most academically challenged students were the most likely to report that their schools were not doing enough to help students when they had trouble learning and to express doubt about whether they would have worked harder if more had been expected of them.

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When creating the concept of The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Learners the founders researched ways in which they would be able to meet the goals. The HEART in our name is an acronym for Hope, Education, Achievement, Responsibility, and Teamwork. Through each of these components we will be able to address the concerns of students who previously may have believed that there was no hope and that they had no choice but to give up. Every HEART scholar will participate in an advisory period at least once a week. This period will allow for students to speak about the concerns that are affecting their learning and issues in their lives as well as set goals and enable success keeping motivation at the forefront, learning, personal progress and academic achievement.

Most courses will be technology based and interactive. Teachers will work as facilitators of learning and will differentiate their instruction based on a student's learning style and interest. Using RTI, (Response to Intervention) every student will receive Tier I intervention be it remedial support or enrichment. Those who are found to be at risk will receive Tier II or Tier III intervention. As a small school, it is expected that every teacher will know every student and choose students for each to mentor.

- **Hope** –The courses they are taking will help them achieve their dreams and lead to internships and career development; careers
- **Education**- Teachers will work as facilitators of learning and will differentiate their instruction based on a students learning style and interest
- **Achievement**-The courses will be relevant to their life and support will be offered to every student
- **Responsibility**- At risk students are expected to work alongside their teachers who will motivate and identify their areas of strength and areas of need
- **Teamwork**-The first and last period of everyday will be tutorial periods. Tutoring will be done by teachers and peers.



As depicted in the diagram above we at The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School believe it takes a village; not solely the parent, nor the school, nor the community. We know that a strong pillar foundation can and will hold up a HEART Scholar. As a community, a school and as a parent member we are on a mission to uphold each and every young male to ensure they are successful, prepared and ready to enter the work force and college. When a HEART Scholar dreams, they dream of holding positions such as the Board of Director of a major hospital

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facility, head of the physical therapy rehab center or senior health policy director. Our scholars' dreams are our dreams and within the four years of high school we know we will build a young male scholar who will become a leader in the health field and in society. We strongly believe we are all accountable and responsible for the success of our young males.

The Brooklyn HEART Charter is a school concerned with the whole student, with their life inside and outside of school. We are committed to working with each student in order for them to graduate with high expectations, confidence and high achievement in order to attend a center of higher education and for each to graduate with a certification in the health field. The founders of The Brooklyn Heart Charter High School for Health Leaders believe wholeheartedly in preparing our students and holding them to the highest standards and level of expectation. We also believe success is possible for all students not for some, not for a few, but all. According to the 2010 report, "Yes We Can, *The Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males*". "Only 47% of black males graduate from high school. It indicates that systematic disparities evident by race, social class, or zip code are influenced more by the social policies and practices that WE put in place to distribute educational opportunities and resources and less by the abilities of black males. Currently, the rate at which black males are being pushed out of school and into the pipeline to prison far exceeds the rate at which they are graduating and reaching high levels of academic achievement. A deliberate, intense focus is needed to disrupt and redirect the current educational trajectory for black males. Research shows that from one generation to the next, equitable access to high performing public educational system can break down the barriers to success and change the future trajectory of historically disadvantaged students. Providing all students a fair and substantive opportunity to learn is critical for our goals of systematic education reform, transformation, innovation, and consistent progress, increased participation in our democratic society and global leadership in a knowledge-based economy."⁵

The founders of The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders believe in our young males though daunting statistics of young males of color are shared throughout the statistics and data formulated around race, gender and closing the achievement gap. We know that we can close the achievement gap at The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders. However, we at the HEART are founders with hope, education, achievement, responsibility and teamwork. We believe if our inner city young males are afforded the opportunity to excel and have access to tools and resources they will be better equipped, confident and secure in competing in the global market.

Serving Students with Special Needs

The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders is committed to educating all students that come through its doors. As a small school with limited staff, we will be able to accommodate a collaborative team teaching (CTT) model in our school allowing students to have both a general education teacher and special needs teacher in the same class setting. Every

⁵ The 2010 Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males www.blackboysreport.org

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teacher working alongside a student with special needs will receive a copy of the students IEP and attend a mandated meeting to discuss the students need. In this case, the students with special needs will receive the appropriate services and mainstream throughout the day and every member of the team will know exactly how to meet the needs of our scholars.

We will systematically act on providing a quality education for our diverse learners. We will support staff members by providing professional development and equipping them with all the resources needed. Technology will be an integral part of learning for our special needs students. Research shows that the use of technology (computers, smart boards, etc...) engages students in very significant ways.

Furthermore, we will have a full time Social Worker who will enable the families to receive support and guidance. When necessary we will collaborate with the NYCDOE for service providers who are not in our school setting. The HEART is committed to ensuring that we are in compliance with all regulatory special education requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). We will not discriminate in our admission and enrollment process against students that may have disabilities. All civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and other regulations of New York State will be followed.

Identifying and Educating Students with Disabilities

As students enroll in the HEART, we will request the records from the sending school and from the CSE office where a copy is held of every student's IEP. Our school will be able to support the students with special needs by having a staff member who is certified as a K-12 Special Needs teacher and contracting vendors to provide related services for students in other needed services such as physical therapy, speech, or occupational therapy. Our school will conduct monitoring and assessment with the scholar and their parent / guardian every 8 weeks. Our families and students will receive a documented progress monitoring report indicating the areas and goals the student has met and those that are necessary to meet within the next 8 weeks. The review of the student's progress will allow for the goals to be modified and revised if necessary. The 8 week benchmark will begin mid- September through Mid-June. Furthermore, through the practice of RTI and differentiated instruction, interventions will be put in place for the students. As part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act we will ensure we refer and follow this law.

Decertifying Students with IEP's

The HEART believes that every scholar has potential. If a scholar shows their ability to succeed without additional support services, the teachers will be asked to submit for a Type III. Should it be decided by the SAT (School Assessment Team) and parent/guardian that the student has made sufficient progress, met or exceeded their goals and has outperformed the IEP we will corks collaboratively to decertify the student. However, if certain services are necessary we will ensure the student receives additional support. Nevertheless, as an annual, triennial and

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modification period comes forth we will explore and examine the option of decertifying students who no longer require the mandates and/or modifications on their IEP.

Identifying and Educating Students with Limited English Proficiency

The HEART will not turn away any student interested in attending our school and studying the health sciences. The admission and enrollment process at the school will be consistent for all. Based on the population we plan to serve, we expect and will be ready to educate students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). When students are registered, all parents will be required to fill out a Home Language Survey. Should a student be new to the country and/or have a foreign language spoken at home, we will have a staff member administer the Language Assessment and Battery-Revised (LAB-R) exam. Their score will determine the minimum amount of time the LEP student will receive additional English language instruction.

The HEART is committed to recruit and retain our LEP students. Our outreach to the local community districts and CEC will play an instrumental role in our recruiting LEP students. Also, we will contact the middle schools who seem to serve large LEP populations. We will ensure we recruit staff members that are diverse and multi-linguistic to meet the needs of the families and students. Research based strategies that will be specific to serving our English Language Learners will be used. Our outreach program for recruitment LEP students will include the following methods:

1. All material pertaining to recruitment and enrollment will be translated in both English and the language spoken at home.
2. We will visit Middle Schools that serve a significant immigrant population.
3. We will work and reach out to community organizations, CBO's and faith-based organizations to name a few.

Research shows that ELL students succeed when they are educated in a well-structured English immersion program alongside their English-speaking peers. Our ELL students will be fully integrated into the school community. They will participate in extra-curricular activities, and they will never be singled out because of their limited English proficiency.

Utilizing our school's website and ECHALK all letters and documents will be translated in the families' native languages. Information will be mailed and placed online for parents and students. Pull out and push in services will be provided daily as determined by the ESL teacher, classroom teacher and administration. The ESL teacher will work in small groups and individually to accomplish specific language objectives. The use of computers and technology, which will be equipped with research based programs which will be an integral part of learning for our ELL students.

An LEP Team will be formed within the school allowing for bi-weekly meetings regarding our LEP scholars' needs and ensuring their needs are met. Additionally, if a scholar shows they are able to function without the services we offer we will provide a level of instruction and support that best meets their needs.

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We fully expect these marketing strategies will attract, and help prospective English Language Learners to our school. On the other hand, our English language immersion program will yield to high achievement that will help retain our LEP enrollment.

The HEART staff will receive professional development on educating students that are limited English proficient. Additionally, consultants and specialists in the field will be hired to support our staff so that our ELL students can achieve to their highest potential.

Exiting the ELL Program

The HEART scholars will exit the ELL program once they score ‘Proficient’ on the NYSESLAT. Understanding that students may continue to require support in English language acquisition, they will continue to receive support within their general education setting.

Depending on the district where The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders, will be sited will determine the minimum number of Students with Disabilities or Limited English Proficient students.

Community School District	% Students with Disabilities	% Limited English Proficient	Title I
# 13	4	4	72
#17	19	9	88

As indicated on the chart above there is a disparaging difference between both districts.⁶

Assessment

Assessment is the most important part of our school. In Ruby Payne’s book “Under Resourced Learners”, she states, “it isn’t possible to educate well just by teaching the “group” and not knowing about the individual students in the classroom. Many students get identified as at risk when the issue is of resources.”⁷ As our young scholars prepare to enter our HEART doors we understand this concept yet we know we must first get to know our scholars. Our first assessment begins with a conversation between a HEART founder or staff and scholar. This is called a data conversation in technical terms but we will simply call it a conversation. During the conversation the student will share their goals and expectations. Next, an essay is submitted regarding the scholar’s hopes, dreams and goals as a health science student and citizen. We will administer the Renzulli Learning Profile which identifies students’ top 3 learning styles, expression styles, and interest areas in under an hour. This is a unique way to assess our learners and prepare our teachers to plan lessons in the manner in which our students learn. This assessment is simply done online and within an hour we attain results. Additionally, there are

⁶ Nystart.gov

⁷ “Under Resourced Learners 8 Strategies to Boost Student Achievement” Ruby Payne, pg.2

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thousands of search engines, independent study and curriculum standards based projects that are accessible after the profile is completed. This data will be the beginning of the scholar's data folders which will develop over time until they graduate. Moreover, we will attain the data from their 3rd-8th grade educational institution which will allow us to assess their scores, learning and state exams over a 5 year period. This portfolio will allow the instructional staff to assess the student and gather longitudinal data.

Furthermore, LEP and Special Needs students will receive a Great Leaps research based fluency exam which will assist in determining the students reading level. We will also use WILSON'S for those who need a more rigorous fluency program. Using the ARIS system through the NYCDOE to attain all student data on students from PreK-present day staff members will get a clearer picture of their students' history. Besides test scores, ARIS offers attendance data, suspensions as well as additional pertinent data. Furthermore, through a high tech data system we will have all student data online in a data base that we can access to keep the continuous information current and secure.

Our students will be assessed every 6-8 weeks through weekly short tests in order to monitor each student's progress. So as to keep all students engaged, these assessments will be taken in a variety of modalities.

Assessments at the HEART are ongoing however mandated assessments will occur as follows:

September	Renzulli Profile Assessment Data Conversations/ Goal Setting Baseline Assessment #1 (All subjects)
October	HEART Created Assessment #2 (Written Component) DBQ
November	HEART Created Assessment #3
December	HEART Created Assessment #4
January	Mid Year Assessments/ Data Conversations/ Goal Setting
February	HEART Created Assessment #5
March	HEART Created Health Science Assessment #6
April	HEART Created Assessment #7

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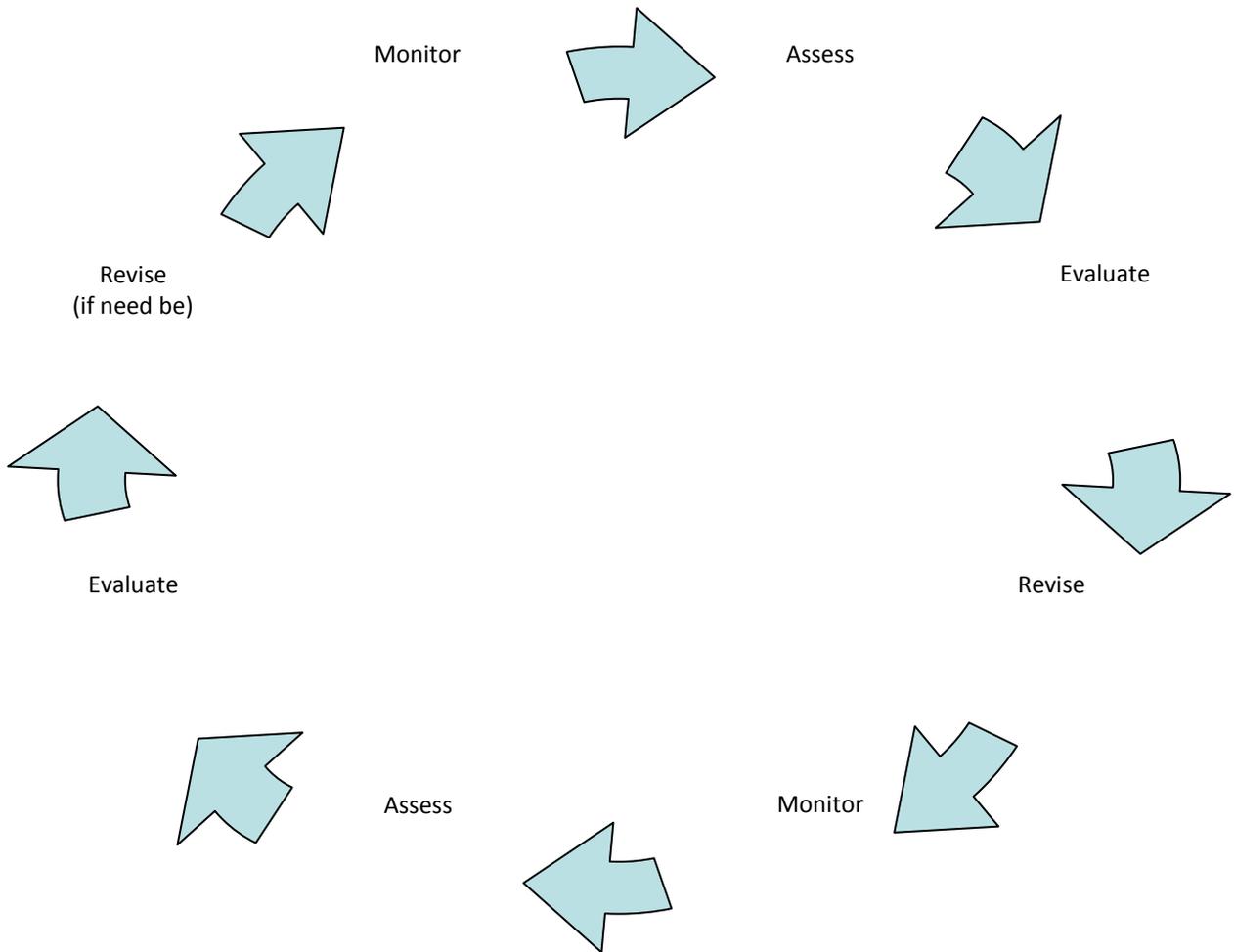
	(Written component) DBQ
May	Data Conversations/ Goal Setting/ NYSESLAT
June	Culminating Projects/ Finals Regents
July	HEART Assessment
August	Summer Assessment (Written component) DBQ

Although the abovementioned indicated the HEART will create assessments, it is essential for teacher made quizzes, exams, assessments, data tracking and data conversations as well as written documentation are generated to continuously assess our learners. However, one of our main assessments is that which the scholar examines their own learning, their level and their next steps. This will occur through data conversations which the founders were trained to do when they attended Harvard's Data Wise Institute. Our entire staff will play an active role on the various data inquiry teams that will be held throughout the year. These large scale data conversations will allow for us to analyze, assess, evaluate, monitor, revise and make immediate changes to student and the HEART's needs. These data conversations are not solely for the students but also the staff and inquiry teams:

- Student to teacher/Teacher to student
- Teacher to data specialist and founding team
- Teacher to Data Inquiry Team
- Teacher to parent/student
- Founder to teacher

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The HEART's Assessment Cycle:



During this process there is constant dialogue, inquiry and discussion. This will take place through every facet of our teaching and learning at the HEART.

III. SCHOOL DESIGN

Students attending The HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders will be immersed in a science and technology programs designed to develop students with substantial experience and proficiency in laboratory based research, project planning, experimentation, problem solving, design, modeling, fabrication, testing, evaluation, documentation, and presentation related to scientific and health related areas.

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Key Design Elements of The Brooklyn Heart Charter High School for Health Leaders

A Successful Model-The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School has its own unique features yet we based some aspects for our model from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology located in Alexandria, Virginia - voted “#1 High School in America” by U.S. Newsweek. Thomas Jefferson High School has been in existence for the past 25 years and was developed by educators and businesses to improve science, mathematics and technology. TJHSST has a comprehensive science and technology department which also has an internship program to enable the juniors and seniors to have experience in their field of study. The school runs on an eight period day where one period is devoted to student activities and activity related coursework including online database. The foundation of the curricular program at TJHS focuses on an interdisciplinary approach aimed at maximizing the full potential of each student’s intellectual, technological and affective skills. The program is designed to develop students’ substantial experience and proficiency in laboratory based research, project planning, experimentation problem solving, design, modeling, fabrication, testing, evaluation, documentation and presentation related to engineering and other technical areas. As part of the graduation requirement the students are given the opportunity to concentrate on research or project development in a specialized field under the leadership and direction of engineers, scientist and other professionals in science. It allows the students to apply their knowledge and aptitude in a real life setting working with profession in their field of expertise. In this case, students become stronger, more confident and self sufficient when applying their critical thinking skills to relevant and stimulated problems. TJHS has continued to supersede the norm and excel in their innovation and high academic standards throughout the past 25 years.

Following TJHS’s success the HEART runs on a nine period day with two periods dedicated to tutorials and enrichment projects. We will be using an interdisciplinary approach to teaching so that students understand the connections between math and all other subjects and reading to promote critical thinking skills. Students will be offered on line courses so as to advance their studies. They will also be encouraged to do independent studies to allow them to study their passions and areas of interest. HEART scholars will participate in internships based on their areas of interest in the health field.

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

The HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders’ staff member believes in and contributes to the school’s vision and mission. She/he believes that our students will develop into leaders, giving them a competitive edge for the 21st century’s global market. Every community member sets high expectations for themselves and students. All staff members see themselves as part of a community that works together. The staff collaborates within themselves and alongside others that are innovative and think creatively.

Achievement is the A in HEART; the core of our school. Teachers acting as facilitators of learning using differentiated assignments support students that are struggling get a clearer

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understanding of the their learning. Every teacher understands their responsibility to be a reading and mathematics teacher as well as a content area teacher so that students are able to understand and process the reading and/or mathematics they are doing to be able understand the content. Teachers will no longer strictly teach out of a textbook they must be innovative in their meeting the needs of our students. Students that are at-risk need access to supports be it additional tutoring, interactive activities or just a quiet place in which to study. The HEART will offer many of the needed supports to help students achieve. Our scholars will be predominately Black and Latino thus our achievement gap will focus in this area.

We will offer our special needs and ELL students additional support to raise their achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics. However, we have found that there are many students that have not been classified as either special needs or LEP that have the same deficits as those that are classified. Therefore, each student will be seen as an individual and teachers will work with them as required to meet their needs.

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

Comparing the graduation rates of black and white males in New York City to those in the USA and New York State we found that: Black Male and White Male, non-Latino students in New York City graduated at lower rates in 2007/8 than the national average.³ Nearly three-quarters of the Black Male students were unable to graduate with Regent or Advanced Regent diplomas with their cohort. The racial achievement gap is less than the national average due to the low graduation rate of White Male students.

Location		Graduation Rate 2007/8			GAP	Graduation Rate 2005/6		Change	
		Black Males	Black Male	White Male		Black Male	White Male	Black Male	White Male
USA	4.2 mil	47%	78%	31%	47%	75%	0%	3%	
New York	274,659	25%	68%	43%	39%	75%	-14%	-7%	
New York City	167,277	28%	50%	22%	32%	57%	-4%	-7%	

New York City enrollment and diploma data has been reported to the National Center for Education Statistics irregularly and are not considered as reliable as data from other districts. The

⁸ The 2010 Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males www.blackboysreport.org

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data presented here are best estimates. That for 2007/8 does not include “local diplomas,” a non-college preparatory certificate that is in the process of abolition.

Studying these numbers had the founders inquiring as to how our school can overcome these statistics and encourage our students to stay in school and graduate. “The Silent Epidemic” interviewed students from around the country and found that: Eighty-one percent of survey respondents said that if schools provided opportunities for real-world learning (internships, service learning projects, and other opportunities), it would have improved the students’ chances of graduating from high school. Other studies have noted that clarifying the links between school and getting a job may convince more students to stay in school. At The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Learners we are offering every student the opportunity to graduate ready to receive NY State certification as an LPN, EMT or a paramedic. Students will participate in internships (they will be arranged by the school) as a graduation requirement.

Other requests to keep students in school were:

- Improve Instruction and Access to Supports for Struggling Students
- Build a School Climate that Fosters Academics
- Ensure Strong Adult-Student Relationships within the School
- Improve the Communication between Parents and Schools
- Improve Teaching and Curricula to Make School More Relevant and Engaging and Enhance the Connection between School and Work

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

Utilizing our community outreach team and founding body we will ensure principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors and parents collaborate to support our new admits. In Year 1 Summer of 2012 possibly late August or early September we will have a meet and greet as well as half day sessions where students are slowly immersed into our small yet unique high school. Furthermore, with the support of the social emotional team and all staff we will have the entire month of September and October as a way for students to get to know one another and participate in team building events, activities and simply building their self esteem and confidence for success within the next four years of their educational career.

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

When students apply to attend the HEART they will be asked to write an essay explaining why they would like to attend our school and what branch of the health field they are most interested in studying. Every student will take baseline assessments in ELA, mathematics, science, history and will complete an expectation/interest survey. The academic assessments will allow teachers to quickly evaluate each student's strengths and areas of need while the expectation/interest survey will give us a better view of the students' expectations of the school experience and their areas of interest. As it is important to keep our students engaged and to raise the bar academically, the more information we have about the students, the better we can keep them attending school and become leaders in the school environment. This will become the basis upon which we will begin to build our data.

There are many types of assessment, formative, summative, paper pencil, formal, informal and ones of application. We will be using a variety of assessment depending on the purpose of the assessment. Some assessments will be purchased, some teacher made, and some developed through NYSED.

Students will be assessed every 6-8 weeks with standards driven assessments using the Common Core standards as revised by New York State. These assessments will be developed by the administration and teachers thereby assuring that all staff members understand the standards and use them as a basis for their curriculum.

It is expected that all students regardless if they are classified or not, will take the appropriate regent exams. To that end we will assess previous regent exams in addition to a variety of other assessments to determine progress. We will not only assess the knowledge of content material but the ability to apply these concepts to other applications. Using the African proverb, "If you give a man a fish he will eat for one day but if you teach a man to fish he will eat for the rest of his days.", we intend on teaching students to understand and apply many concepts so that they will always be able to continue to learn what is not directly taught. If you teach students where

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and how to gather information or to think creatively, learning has no boundaries. At the HEART our goal is for our students to become leaders and not feel restricted by assessments or strictly by course content.

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

The Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders will implement local instructional improvement systems to assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making and effectiveness. These will include data inquiry teams that will study student performance and various methodologies to improve student achievement. These teams will include student representatives whose job it will be to bring the students' point of view on how to improve student interest, engagement and achievement.

The School Leadership Team will include student representatives elected by the student population whose voice will be one of the most important voices to hear. Teachers know the pedagogy, parents have a greater insight into home life however, it is the students' voices that are able to inform the adults of the students' point of view of and how engagement and instruction can be improved in order to help students learn.

The founders of the Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders envision every member of the school community having a stake in the success of the school. This includes the Board of Directors, all staff members, parents, community members and most importantly the students.

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

There are not too many high schools in New York City where the primary focus of the school is the training of their students to become members of the health field upon graduation and to give students the basic background needed to enter a college or university to study one of the many medical fields. However, those in which we will have contact with may include but not limited to Clara Barton High School, Brooklyn Technical High School and Midwood High School. Members of the Brooklyn HEART Charter High School for Health Leaders will partner with each of these schools in order to share information and best practices. We will also contact the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, V.A. to learn about their successes and challenges in improving student achievement. Moreover, partnering with public schools that have an interest in the sciences, technical career oriented focus or males will benefit our communities. As we indulge in best practice we will invite colleagues and schools to a best practice share as we understand our students progress and achievement is our responsibility.

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

Each of the founders has had experience as a leader. Due to the mere fact that one of the founders redesigned a school and has reorganizing skills, structure and leadership it is without question that starting up a new school is possible. The founder who will become the school's leader redesigned a failing K-8 school labeled as SURR and Title I designation of SINI - Redesign and turned it into a 'school in good standing' in less 3 years. Both of the other founders worked very closely with the principal to help turn the school around.

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Through this experience the founders learned to work with a single goal in mind – improve student achievement, improve parent involvement, improve student engagement and believe that it is important to look at the whole child and believe that every student can learn and it is our responsibility to teach students can and will succeed. The Board of Directors must be open to success and willing to help the school’s leadership open and maintain a successful school.

The founders have been contacting various resources so as to be able to open the school’s door by July 2012. The planning began prior to the advertising of this RFP. We are anxious to begin the journey with our students and the successes they will encounter.

Staff members will be hired based on their knowledge of their content area and the willingness to become a member of the community and live the mission. When students, parents and the surrounding community hear one mission statement and see one vision, carried out by leadership and staff, they will know there is a united front with a strong belief in the success of the school and its community.

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

As leaders in the community we will establish a good working relationship between the Superintendent of District 13 or 17 however, as a leader who currently works within District 17 the community building and relationship with both the Superintendent and CEC17 is well established. They will play intricate roles in supporting and providing feedback to the founders. The more positive a relationship between the HEART and the district the more cohesive and positive the community will respond.

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

We at the HEART believe a zip code, race or economic status should not prevent a student from attending our school. We will ensure any student outside the range of the district who wants to attend the school will receive an opportunity to attend while we provide the necessary transportation documents, metro card and support needed on all levels for a scholar to come to school daily. We believe if this charter is that oasis that captures a potential surgeon’s heart and motivates their desire to attend our school the doors are open at all times for future our health leaders.