



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

DIRECTOR, CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE
ROOM 471 EBA, 89 WASHINGTON AVENUE, ALBANY, NY 12234
Tel. 518/474-1762; Fax 518/474-3209; charterschools@mail.nysed.gov

To: New York State Charter School Leaders and Board Chairs †
From: Cliff Chuang, Director, Charter School Office
Date: June 3, 2011
Subject: May 2011 NYS Charter School Policy Forums Summary

It was great to meet many of you at the NYS Charter School Policy Forums that we held in Niagara, NYC, Albany, and via conference call in May (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/policyforumreg.html>). If you participated, please take a few minutes to complete this very brief online survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VFX7ZLM>. We enjoyed the discussion and Q&A on the various policy issues that face charter schools currently. A brief summary of key topics that came up across the forums is provided below:

- **The NYSED Charter School Office newly-developed mission.** I presented a brief overview of the three major strategies to create and sustain excellent educational options for New York State families on behalf of the Board of Regent: (1) through high quality charter school authorizing, (2) fair and transparent oversight of all charter schools, and (3) the dissemination of innovative school designs and practices. We also discussed some of the protocol and process changes that have been implemented over the past year, including increased performance monitoring for Regents-authorized charter schools, less direct intersection with other charter schools, and closer collaboration with our colleagues at SUNY's Charter Schools Institute and the NYCDOE Charter Schools Office. Full details about priorities for NYSED's work with charter schools will be available later this summer once we finalize our strategic plan.
- **Lottery Regulations.** Participants discussed the definition of "sibling" and how to apply sibling preference, how to ensure access to high quality charter schools for students "at-risk of academic failure" through the design of the school's educational program and admissions policies and waitlist management, among other issues. In addition, participants discussed how these front-end admissions issues relate to the new requirement to recruit and retain comparable numbers of English language learners, students with disabilities, and low income students. We hope to release draft lottery regulations within the next month or so for formal public comment, and appreciate your on-the-ground perspective.
- **Annual Reports.** We briefly discussed the format and timing of annual reports, including the availability of data (particularly state testing data) for the report. We are collaborating with SUNY and NYCDOE to finalize the format for the 2010-11 school year and we plan to post these guidelines by June 15, 2011, with a due date of August 1, 2011. In the meantime, please feel free to begin the collection of financial disclosures forms from trustees, as that part of the annual report format will not change. Over the next school year, we will continue to examine format and possible timing changes to maximize the utility of these reports.
- **New Regulations for Evaluating Teacher and Principal Effectiveness.** There were questions raised about how charter schools would be impacted by the new regulations related to teacher and principal evaluation passed by the Regents at their May 2011 meeting, and whether this impact differed based on participation in Race to the Top. Guidance on this topic is forthcoming in the next several weeks.

As always, please feel free to contact us at charterschools@mail.nysed.gov or 518-474-1762. For future reference, these update messages are posted at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/DirectorsMessages.html>. Best wishes for the successful completion of the 2010-11 school year.

† **Ongoing Request: Update Your SEDREF Information.** If the appropriate persons are not receiving this email, please check that your publicly-displayed information for "CEO" and Board Chair 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). Information about how to update this information can be found at <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/sedref/>. Please copy charterschools@mail.nysed.gov on any update requests. Thanks.