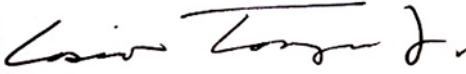





**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Cosimo Tangorra, Jr. 

**SUBJECT:** Charter Schools: Revision to Charter Authorized by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)

**DATE:** February 5, 2015

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

## SUMMARY

### Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve the proposed charter revision for Brownsville Ascend Charter School, which is authorized by the Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)?

### Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

### Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at the February 2015 meeting of the Board of Regents.

### Background Information

Brownsville Ascend Charter School (or "the School") was first authorized by the Chancellor of the NYCDOE as a charter school to open for the 2009-2010 school year. The School is in its second charter term and was issued a short-term renewal in December 2013. The School is authorized to serve 1,004 students in Grades K-8 over the course of its current charter term. The School currently enrolls 791 students in Grades K-6 and is projected to reach its authorized grade span of K-8 in 2016-2017.

The Chancellor of the NYCDOE recommends the following actions:

- change its curricular model.

***The chart below outlines the material terms of the Brownsville Ascend Charter School's charter and the proposed revision.***

Brownsville Ascend Charter School	
Board Chair(s)	Stephanie Mauterstock
School Leader(s)	Erica Murphy (ES), Emily Fernandez (MS)
Charter Management Organization (if applicable)	Ascend Learning
Other Partner(s)	N/A
District(s) of Location	NYC Community School District 23
Physical Address(es)	1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn 11212
Facility Owner(s)	Private
School Opened For Instruction	2009-2010
Current Charter Term Expiration Date	6/30/2017
Current Authorized Grade Span	K-8
Current Authorized Enrollment	1,040
Proposed Changes for Material Charter Revision	Change its curricular model.

## **Recommendation**

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that the proposed revised charter: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will permit the charter school to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes set out in subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty of Article 56 of the Education Law; and (4) will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the above listed charter revision as proposed by Chancellor of the NYCDOE and the provisional charter for the Brownsville Ascend Charter School is amended accordingly.

## **Timetable for Implementation**

The Regents action for Brownsville Ascend Charter School would take effect upon approval by the Board of Regents.

Attachment

School: Brownsville Ascend Charter School I (84K737)  
CSD: 23  
Enrollment/ Grades Served in 2014-2015:1 791/ K-6

#### Revision Background

- Brownsville Ascend Charter School received a short term renewal in December 2013. At the time of renewal, the School partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.
- In its current charter term, the school has only one year of academic performance data and therefore no growth data. Although the school's percent of students' proficient in ELA and math both decreased from school year 2012-2013 to 2013-2014, the school still outperformed its Community School District (CSD) of location, 23. In the 2013-2014 school year, the school outperformed CSD 23 in ELA by 10.8 percentage points, and in math by 14.8 percentage points.
- The school's percent of students' proficient in each ELA and math, in the 2013-2014 school year, placed the school in the 63rd percentile compared to schools in its district.
- The revision sought would not impact grades served or student enrollment.
- The School seeks to change its curricular model.
  - The school seeks to adopt new instructional methods that better prepare the students to meet both the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards and college readiness, moreso than the school's original curricular model.
  - The school's CMO, Ascend Learning (Ascend), licensed from SABIS all curricula used in the Ascend schools. After the shift to the Common Core Learning Standards, Ascend found that it was necessary to supplement the SABIS curriculum with Ascend-developed curricular materials. Ascend was not satisfied with the schools' historical results on the new Common Core-aligned assessments, and concluded that the SABIS program was not aligned to the expectations of the Common Core in the manner desired by the schools and Ascend. Therefore Ascend decided to no longer continue the agreement with SABIS, and to assume the responsibility of identifying or developing all curricula used in the schools.
  - The curriculum will be known as "Version 2" and fully replace the SABIS curriculum. Version 2 curriculum will include the following academic components:
    - For ELA: Foundations (Elementary School [ES] level), Voyages in English: Grammar and Writing (ES level), Ascend-created Literature Circle (ES level), Social Studies/shared text (ES level, Middle School [MS] level), Guided Reading (ES level), Ascend-created Humanities Program (grade 5)
    - For math: Singapore Math (ES level), Math Stories (ES level), Math Facts (ES level), TERC's Investigations in Number, Data, Space (ES level), Connected Mathematics Project 3 (MS level)

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<sup>1</sup> Enrollment reflects ATS data as of October 31, 2014

- For science: A Closer Look (ES level), Science Education for Public Understanding Program (MS level)
- For Spanish: Sube (grades K-1), Descubre (grades 2-5), ¡Avancemos! (grades 6-8)
- For ESL: On Our Way to English

**ES/MS students scoring at or above Level 3 on NYS assessments,  
compared to CSD, NYC and State averages Over the Current Charter Term**

<b>% Proficient in English Language Arts</b>	
	<b>2013-2014</b>
<b>Brownsville Ascend Charter School</b>	22.2%
CSD 23	11.4%
Difference from CSD 23*	10.8
NYC	29.8%
Difference from NYC *	-7.6
New York State **	30.6%
Difference from New York State	-8.4

<b>% Proficient in Mathematics</b>	
	<b>2013-2014</b>
<b>Brownsville Ascend Charter School</b>	28.5%
CSD 23	13.8%
Difference from CSD 23*	14.7
NYC	39.1%
Difference from NYC *	-10.6
New York State **	36.2%
Difference from New York State	-7.7

\* All comparisons to either the CSD or NYC take into account only grades the school itself served. CSD comparisons are particular to the CSD in which the school was sited each year.

\*\* New York State proficiency rates were taken from data.nysed.gov.

<b>Elementary School Progress Report Grades</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>
Overall Grade	Progress Reports were discontinued beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
Student Progress	
Student Performance	
School Environment	

### Enrollment of Special Populations Over the Current Charter Term

Special Population		2013-2014
Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)	<b>Brownsville Ascend Charter School</b>	<b>67.8%</b>
	CSD 23	94.9%
	NYC	82.5%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)	<b>Brownsville Ascend Charter School</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
	CSD 23	23.2%
	NYC	19.7%
English Language Learners (ELL)	<b>Brownsville Ascend Charter School</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
	CSD 23	5.4%
	NYC	16.0%

Comparisons of a charter school's special populations to the CSD and City are made relative only to the grades served by the school. For example, if a charter school serves grades kindergarten through five, comparisons of that school's special populations will only be made relative to grades kindergarten through five in the CSD and citywide. Enrollment rates reflect demographic characteristics as of June 1 and enrollment as of October 31 for each given school year, with the exception of enrollment in the 2012-2013 school year, which is as of October 26, 2012.