



**TO:** P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** Jhone M. Ebert 

**SUBJECT:** Charter Schools: Transfer Application: From the New York City Department of Education Chancellor/ Trustees of the State University of New York to the Board of Regents

**DATE:** March 28, 2018

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

#### **SUMMARY**

#### **Issue for Decision**

The Commissioner and Department staff recommend that the Board of Regents consider and approve the request of **Williamsburg Charter High School** to have the Board of Regents serve as the charter entity, with authority to oversee and supervise such charter school.

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by State statute.

#### **Proposed Handling**

This issue will be before the Board of Regents P-12 Education Committee and the full Board for action at the April 2018 Regents meeting.

#### **Procedural History**

Under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998, the Board of Regents is authorized to approve applications from charter schools currently authorized by another charter entity but seeking to be authorized by the Board of Regents.

## **Background Information**

Education Law §2851(5), which was enacted on June 23, 2016, allowed charter schools authorized by the Board of Regents, the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, the Buffalo Board of Education and the New York City Department of Education to apply to another charter entity for oversight and supervision. However, also pursuant to Education Law §2851(5), charter schools were only permitted to request a transfer of authorizer between the enactment of the law (June 23, 2016) and June 23, 2017, one year later.

A charter school seeking to change its charter entity must have met all requirements in Article 56 of the Education Law and could not be in violation of any legal requirement, in probationary status, or slated for closure. All standards and requirements established in the original charter agreement shall remain in effect until the scheduled expiration of such charter agreement. All obligations of the previous charter entity to oversee and supervise the charter school shall terminate upon the transfer of authorization of such charter school to a new charter entity. The previous charter entity is required to provide, in a timely fashion, information relevant to the charter as requested by the new charter entity.

The Williamsburg Charter High School submitted an Application for Change of Charter Entity within the required deadline and met the required criteria. Therefore, the Commissioner and Department staff recommend that the Board of Regents approve the school's application.

### **Related Regents Items:**

#### **[February 2004 Initial Charter](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2004Meetings/February2004/0204emscvesida3.htm)**

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2004Meetings/February2004/0204emscvesida3.htm>)

#### **[June 2005 Grade Level and Name Change](https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/June2005/0605emscvesida3.htm)**

(<https://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/June2005/0605emscvesida3.htm>)

#### **[February 2009 First Renewal](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009Meetings/February2009/0209emsca2.htm)**

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2009Meetings/February2009/0209emsca2.htm>)

#### **[May 2014 Second Renewal](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/514p12a4.pdf)**

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/514p12a4.pdf>)

## **Recommendation**

VOTED: That the Regents find that: (1) the proposed charter school meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the application 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) granting the application will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the request of **Williamsburg Charter High School** to have the Board of Regents serve as the charter entity for the school, with authority to oversee and supervise such charter school, in accordance with §2851(5) of the Education Law.

**Timetable for Implementation**

The Regents action is effective July 1, 2018.

Attachments

**Williamsburg Charter High School**

**Table 1: School Summary**

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Williamsburg Charter High School
<b>District of Location</b>	NYC CSD 14
<b>Facility</b>	198 Varet St, Brooklyn, NY 11206 (private space)
<b>Opening Month/Year</b>	Fall 2004
<b>Current Charter Term</b>	July 28, 2014 – June 30, 2019
<b>Management Company</b>	None
<b>Partner(s)</b>	None
<b>Current Approved Grade Levels/Number of Students</b>	Grades 9-12/ 963 students
<b>Mission</b>	<p><i>The Williamsburg Charter High School unites youth, families, staff, teachers and the community at large in providing young people with the tools necessary to make sense of the world and prepares them in their journey to become skilled workers in and literate citizens of the world community.</i></p> <p><i>Young people will accomplish this through their participation in a rigorous and demanding liberal arts education that includes language, literature, writing, science, history, mathematics, the arts, technology and explorations in disciplines designed to teach fairness, justice, respect and compassion for themselves and others as well as the skills of critical thinking, communication and research.</i></p>

In February 2004, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the Williamsburg Charter High School (“WCHS” or the “School”) in New York City School Community School District (CSD) 14. The school is currently authorized by the New York City Department of Education Chancellor and is seeking to have the Board of Regents serve as its authorizer.

The school provided the following rationale for requesting the authorizer change:

The school stated that they know the culture of the New York State Board of Regents encourages direct and open dialogue, and believe they would greatly benefit from being able to transfer authorizers from the New York City Department of Education to the New York State Board of regents. The school also articulated in its application that the Board of Regents engages in a partnership with the Charter Schools they authorize and the school would value building this relationship with the Board of Regents.

The key design elements for the school are:

- *Student Centered and Therapeutically Supportive Environment*  
The school is focused on the academic, social, and emotional development of students and aims to provide an environment that fosters the feeling of a second home. Each student is supported by a grade team comprised of a Grade Leader, School Guidance Counselor, Dean and Advisor. Additional social-emotional support is provided by two Social Workers and a Clinical Counselor. This unique structure provides personalized attention to every student with the goal of ensuring all students are on track to graduate and are prepared for a College or Career path.
- *Rigorous, Responsive Educational Program*  
WCHS students are prepared to identify their goals post high school, including achieving acceptance into higher education for successful and productive careers as professionals.
- *College and Career Readiness Culture*  
WCHS offers the opportunity for students to take AP and College credit bearing classes with the school's partner, the NYC College of Technology. WCHS teaches students information about post-secondary options that are available to them, scholarship opportunities, financial aid and college preparatory programs they can attend.
- *Community Oriented*  
The school has sibling and district enrollment preferences, parent representatives on the board, partnerships with local businesses, schools and community organizations, and an alumni association of 1,300 people.
- *Literacy Across the Content Areas and Support for Struggling Readers*  
As part of the school's Keys to Literacy initiative, ninth grade teachers participate in monthly workshops where they learn how to implement literacy strategies in their content area.
- *Interdepartmental Collaboration*  
The school's master schedule provides a common planning across the departments. Teachers engage in department meetings, professional learning teams, or co-planning during that time. Department leaders engage teachers in utilizing data to make informed instructional decisions.
- *Collaborative, Data-Driven Academics*  
WCHS has adopted a four-year partnership with Renaissance Learning to ensure high-quality, norm referenced, computer adaptive assessments that will be used to monitor student growth through his or her entire high school experience. Administered quarterly, the ELA and Math assessment data will be used to personalize individual learning, dictate academic intervention and determine appropriate programmatic structures.
- *Multifaceted Learning Opportunities and Experiences*  
WCHS offers a range of student opportunities (during the school day and after school) to engage students in a variety of experiences. Students have access to fully functional facilities: dance studio, an industry standard ceramics studio, and professional grade recording studio. Students also have access to a variety of intervention supports, courses, electives, and academic pathways: Honors and AP courses, comprehensive special education program, sports teams, learning abroad

opportunities, on-site speech pathologist, career development and occupational studies courses, work-based learning experiences and APEX Learning.

- *Course Sequence and Academic Program Diversity*  
Members of the Instructional Leadership Team delve into work around building a more rigorous, more culturally relevant and more twenty-first century course sequence and academic program by restructuring classes to increase student interest and better equip them for a technologically diverse society.

The school's Board of Trustees includes the following individuals:

Board Member Name	Role on Board
Lourdes Rivera-Putz	Board Chair
Samuel Rivera	Vice Chair
Charles Hobson	Secretary
John Witherspoon	Treasurer
Manny Morales	Trustee
Evans Barreau	Parent Representative
Karl Richards	Staff Representative

**Table 2: Williamsburg Charter High School Approved Enrollment For the Current Charter Term**

	Year 1 2014-2015	Year 2 2015-2016	Year 3 2016-2017	Year 4 2017-2018	Year 5 2018-2019
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	963	963	963	963	963

**Table 3: High School Diploma Types Awarded**

4-Yr Cohort: <b>All Students</b>	2011 Cohort (265 Students in the Cohort)			2012 Cohort (172 Students in the Cohort)			2013 Cohort (252 Students in the Cohort)		
	School	State	Variance	School	State	Variance	School	State	Variance
Graduation Rate	78%	80%	-2	84%	82%	+2	83%	82%	+1
Local Diplomas	4%	4%	0	9%	5%	+4	5%	5%	0
Regents Diplomas	67%	44%	+23	73%	46%	+27	66%	44%	+22
Advanced Regents Diplomas	8%	32%	-24	2%	31%	-29	12%	33%	-21

**Table 4: High School Total 4-Year Regents Outcomes for All Students:  
School, District & NYS Level Aggregates**

4-Yr Cohort: All Students	2011 Cohort			2012 Cohort			2013 Cohort		
	Subject	School	Variance	State	School	Variance	State	School	Variance
ELA	89%	+5	84%	81%	-4	85%	88%	+3	85%
Global History	82%	+3	79%	75%	-3	78%	83%	+5	78%
Math	86%	0	86%	85%	-1	86%	80%	-5	85%
Science	89%	+5	84%	84%	0	84%	90%	+6	84%
US History	85%	+4	81%	86%	+5	81%	90%	+9	81%

**Table 5: Williamsburg Charter High School Demographics  
Compared to District of Location**

	2015-2016			2016-2017		
	Williamsburg CHS	CSD 14	Variance	Williamsburg CHS	CSD 14	Variance
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	17%	21%	-4	17%	21%	-4
<b>English Language Learners</b>	8%	12%	-4	7%	12%	-5
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	84%	78%	+6	83%	78%	+5