



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Revision Recommendation for a Charter School Authorized by the Board of Regents

DATE: July 2, 2020

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Sharon L. Takee*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents approve the proposed revision to the charter of the following charter school authorized by the Board of Regents?

1. **Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys** (replace the School Empowerment Network (SEN) with BRICK Education Network, Inc. as its institutional partner. The school is currently located in NYC CSD 9 (Bronx) and was approved to relocate to NYC CSD 11 (Bronx).

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the Full Board for action at its July 2020 meeting.

Procedural History

The New York State Education Department (the Department) is making a recommendation to the Board of Regents for approval and issuance of a charter revision as required by Article 56 of the Education Law.

Background Information

The Department recommends that the Board of Regents amend the charter of the Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys. Information about the revision request is provided below.

Statutory Requirements Pertaining to Regents Decision Making

Article 56 of the Education Law created charter schools to:

- (a) Improve student learning and achievement;
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure;
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- (e) Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- (f) Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools established under this article accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

The Board of Regents is bound by law, regulation, and Regents-endorsed internal policies regarding the criteria that can be considered when making decisions pertaining to the authorization of new charter schools, charter school renewals, and charter school revisions. Those criteria are set forth in Section 2852(2) of the Education Law:

- (a) Does the charter school described in the application meet the requirements set out in applicable laws, rules and regulations?
- (b) Does the charter school demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner?
- (c) Will approving the charter school action make it likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the law? and
- (d) In a school district where the total enrollment of resident students attending charter schools in the base year is greater than five percent of the total public school enrollment of the school district in the base year, (i) would granting the application have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school, or (ii) did the school district in which the charter school will be located consent?

The Board of Regents endorsed the Charter School Performance Framework—with its ten academic, organizational, and legal domains—to operationalize the criteria that can be considered when making decisions about the authorization of new charter schools, charter school renewals, and charter school revisions as set forth in Section 2852(2) of the Education Law.

Performance Framework

The Board of Regents Charter School Performance Framework, which is part of the Board of Regents Charter School Renewal Policy and the Oversight Plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school, outlines three key areas of charter school performance:

(1) Educational/Academic Success; (2) Organizational Soundness; and (3) Faithfulness to Charter and Law. The Charter School Performance Framework sets forth ten performance benchmarks in these three areas. The Charter School Performance Framework is designed to focus on performance outcomes, to preserve operational autonomy, and to facilitate transparent feedback to schools. It aligns with the Department's ongoing accountability and effectiveness work under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and holds charter schools accountable to standards set forth in the Education Law. Generally, charter schools are required to demonstrate performance outcomes that exceed those of traditional public schools.

**New York State Education Department
Charter School Performance Framework**

Performance Benchmark	
Educational Success	Benchmark 1: Student Performance: The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).
	Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning: School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the NYS Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.
	Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement: The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.
Organizational Soundness	Benchmark 4: Financial Condition: The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.
	Benchmark 5: Financial Management: The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.
	Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance: The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.
	Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity: The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements: The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.
	Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention: The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.
	Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance: The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.

Related Regents Items

Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys

November 2, 2017 Initial Charter

(<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1117p12a2.pdf>)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents finds that: (1) the charter school meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) the charter school can demonstrate the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) granting the request to amend the charter 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 request to amend the charter will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school, and the Board of Regents therefore approves the charter revision for **Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys** and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for the **Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys** will become effective immediately.

Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys

Table 1: School Summary

Name of Charter School	Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys
Board Chair	Keith Howard
District of Location	NYC CSD 9 (the Bronx)
Opening Date	Fall 2021
Current Term	July 1, 2021-June 30, 2026
Comprehensive Management Service Provider	School Empowerment Network (SEN)
Current Maximum Approved Grade Levels/ Number of Students	Grades 5-8/484 students
Mission Statement	<i>United by our Core Values of Brotherhood, Excellence, Self-Efficacy, Adaptability and Leadership, our school will provide young men of all backgrounds and experiences with a robust academic, character, and social education in a nurturing environment. We will inspire our young men and guide them along the path that leads to independence and greatness.</i>
Proposed Revisions	Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys seeks a material change to replace the School Empowerment Network (SEN) with BRICK Education Network, Inc. as its Comprehensive Management Service Provider to best support the mission and vision of the school as approved by the Board of Regents.

The requested revisions will have no bearing on the number of students being served by this charter school, which will not change, nor will it impact the number of charter schools available for issuance in New York City or the State.

In November 2017, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys (Stradford Prep) in New York City CSD 9 – Bronx. In 2018, the NYSED Charter School Office (NYSED CSO) received and approved the school’s request to use the 2018-2019 school year as a planning year and to delay opening until 2020-2021 due to facility concerns. In 2019, NYSED CSO received and approved the school’s second planning year request to delay opening until 2021-2022, as more time was needed to acquire a facility and to prepare the school’s curricular, financial, and marketing plans. Additionally, pursuant to 8 NYCRR 3.16, the school’s trustees request that the NYSED CSO approve a non-material revision to change the Community School District of location (CSD) from CSD 9 to CSD 11 in the Bronx in private space. The NYSED CSO on behalf of the Commissioner has approved this non-material revision request pursuant to the Department’s [Charter Revision Guide](#).

The school’s trustees request that the Board of Regents approve a material revision to the school’s charter to allow the school to replace the School Education Network, Inc. (SEN) with the BRICK Education Network, Inc. as its Comprehensive Management Service Provider to provide back office and curricular support. SEN no longer provides these services, and this revision would allow the school to open

successfully with the necessary back-office, curriculum and instruction development, and school leader coaching/mentoring supports in place. BRICK Education Network has a track record of working with communities such as NYC CSD 11 to foster academic, operational, and social-emotional supports and success for vulnerable students.

**Table 2: Stradford Preparatory Charter School for Boys Approved Enrollment
For the Current Charter Term**

	Year 1 2021-2022	Year 2 2022-2023	Year 3 2023-2024	Year 4 2024-2025	Year 5 2025-2026
Grade Configuration	Grade 5	Grades 5-6	Grades 5-7	Grades 5-8	Grades 5-8
Total Approved Enrollment	128	249	374	484	484

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held virtually by New York City Department of Education on June 4, 2020. Twelve members of the public attended, and seven members spoke. Founder and School Leader Ms. Dominique Nute presented information about the school, emphasizing the need to create a unique and supportive learning environment to serve young men of color. She discussed her ties to the community and the many partnerships with community organizations that would be brought in to support the scholars. The Community Education Council (CEC) members raised questions which evolved into a robust conversation about the needs in CSD 11. At the end of the conversation, the CEC members expressed their support. Stradford Prep also made a commitment to work closely with the CEC. There were no emailed/hand-written comments which expressed opposition.