



# New York State Education Department Charter School Office

## **Charter School Application Summary, Findings, and Recommendation**

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*Application in response to the  
New York State Education Department 2011 Request for Proposals to  
Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents  
to establish the proposed:*

**New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II**

September 6, 2011

**Summary of the Proposed New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II and  
New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II**

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II
<b>Lead Applicant(s)</b>	Julia Chun
<b>District of Location</b>	New York City Community School District 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 (The Bronx)
<b>Opening Date</b>	Summer/Fall 2012
<b>Projected Charter Term</b>	September 13, 2011 – June 30, 2017
<b>Not-for-Profit Management Company</b>	New Visions for Public Schools
<b>Partners</b>	Lincoln Center Institute
<b>Projected Enrollment and Grade Span during Charter Term</b>	Opening with 125 students in grade 9 in 2012-13, growing to 600 students (150 students per grade) in grades 9 through 12 in 2016-17.
<b>Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span</b>	600 students in grades 9 though 12
<b>Mission Statement</b>	“The New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II (AMS II) provides all students, regardless of their previous academic history, the highest quality education in an atmosphere of respect, responsibility and rigor. AMS II ensures that its graduates have the skills and content knowledge necessary to succeed in their post-secondary choices by engaging its students, teachers and administrators in coherent learning experiences that allow risk-taking, embrace multiple attempts at learning, cultivate students’ imaginative and creative abilities, and celebrate achievement. Through an intensive study of math and science concepts, students generate research questions, develop the skills necessary to answer those questions, imagine and create products that demonstrate their understanding, and defend their knowledge publicly.”

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II
<b>Lead Applicant(s)</b>	Brad Haggerty
<b>District of Location</b>	NYC CSD 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
<b>Opening Date</b>	Summer/Fall 2012
<b>Projected Charter Term</b>	September 13, 2011 – June 30, 2017
<b>Management Company</b>	New Visions for Public Schools
<b>Partners</b>	Lincoln Center Institute
<b>Projected Enrollment and Grade Span during Charter Term</b>	Opening with 125 students in grade 9 in 2012-13, growing to 600 students (150 students per grade) in grades 9 through 12 in 2016-17.
<b>Maximum Enrollment</b>	600 students in grades 9 though 12

<b>and Grade Span</b>	
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<p>“The New Visions Charter High School for the Humanities II (HUM Charter II) provides all students, regardless of their previous academic history, the highest quality education in an atmosphere of respect, responsibility and rigor. HUM CHARTER II ensures that its graduates have the skills and content knowledge necessary to succeed in their post-secondary choices by engaging its students, teachers and administrators in coherent learning experiences that allow risk-taking, embrace multiple attempts at learning, cultivate students’ imaginative and creative abilities, and celebrate achievement. Through an intensive study of the humanities – the stories, the ideas, and the words that help us make sense of our lives – students generate research questions, develop the skills necessary to answer those questions, imagine and create products that demonstrate their understanding, and defend their knowledge publicly.”</p>

The design of the New Visions Charter High Schools for AMS II and HUM II features paired co-located small charter high schools with a program designed to address the needs for high quality high school seats generated through the closure of persistently low-achieving district schools. New Visions and its flagship enterprise, New Century High School Initiative, have an extensive record of effectively providing school support, school turnaround and school start-up services, in New York City and nationally. New Visions for Public Schools is now seeking to implement and replicate the proposed curriculum, technology, data initiatives and teacher training and leadership development model within a charter school governance structure, with the stated goal of establishing 18 schools over a five year period. The New Visions Charter High Schools for AMS II and HUM II would be the second pair of charter high schools under this design. New Visions Charter High Schools for AMS and HUM were authorized through SUNY in September, 2010 and opened in August, 2011.

Key design elements of the schools include:

- A coordinated school- and network-wide approach to intensive instruction in writing and literacy, as defined in the NYS Common Core Standards (NYSCCS), in the Lower House. Lower House is considered to include the following instructional terms: Transition to Grade 9 Summer Bridge, Grade 9, Transition to Grade 10 Summer Bridge and Grade 10.
- A differentiated program in the Upper House (Grades 10 through 11) of the paired schools, so as to offer expanded choice of coursework in STEM subjects (AMS II) and history, ELA and the arts (HUM II)
- An instructional inquiry model that uses challenge curricula and anchor projects to address questions relevant to students and their communities throughout all four years of the program
- The systematic use of assessment information aligned to the NYSCCS, to guide all growth and learning
- Ongoing analysis of data by cohort and network inquiry teams composed of teachers and administrators, to review performance, reflect on practice and determine emerging needs of students, cohorts and schools
- Partnership with Lincoln Center Institute for instructional support, school wide language and learning framework to implement the challenge-based curriculum
- Extended school day and year
- A staffing structure in which teacher teams, including special education and English language learner teachers, guidance counselors and Assistant Principals will loop with student cohorts

The Lower House program is designed to accelerate learning and skills through a twelve day (half days) summer bridge program for incoming grade 9 and rising grade 10 students, as well as provide a clear focus on individual learning needs and additional daily instructional time when needed. In order to advance to Upper House, students must demonstrate mastery in writing and literacy (evaluation is aligned with the NYSCCS), Regents credit-accumulation and completion of anchor projects.

The Upper House program offers a small school environment with expanded subject offerings through the build-out of advanced level mathematics/science or humanities focused coursework and will offer cross-registration for students in grades 11 and 12. Students will be able to earn up to 10 college credits in the Upper House.

The proposed school calendar includes 180 days of instruction in a trimester schedule, plus an additional 12 days in July for the bridge program. The daily schedule is structured to offer a longer school day, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m. The schedule includes morning extended day and enrichment activities, all core and required subjects and daily common planning time for teachers.

Teachers of core subjects will loop with students for two years in the Lower House. Assistant principals and guidance counselors will loop with the cohort of students in grades 9 through 12.

New Visions for Public Schools will contract with The New Teacher Project to recruit and hire teachers, based on expertise or interest in project-based learning, teaching of reading and writing, collaborative teaching and looping. When hiring staff, the schools will comply with all requirements of New York State Education Law. The hiring of general education teachers will be in accordance with Article 56, Section 2854(3)(a-1). All special education teachers will be New York State-certified in special education and will be “highly qualified” as defined by NCLB and IDEA. In order to retain staff the schools will offer competitive salaries and benefits, access to the New Visions Urban Teacher Residency Program (a well-established and positive adult learning environment), participation in decision-making committees at the school and network levels; and ongoing professional support.

The schools’ assessment plan is comprehensive and describes multiple types of assessment that will be used to set student-, teacher- and school-level goals and measure growth. These include NYS tests, norm-referenced measures of proficiency, teacher-created measures for information about content mastery, performance-based measures for information about skill progress, anchor projects, portfolios. Assessment data will be systematically provided to all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, students, families, trustees. Teacher evaluation will be based on assessment-based evidence of student learning, as well as evidence of addressing student needs, evidence of effective classroom practice, and student survey information.

The founding group expresses the goal to establish “New Vision umbrella campuses” which would include paired sister charter schools with district schools started within the New Visions Partnership Support Organization. This arrangement will facilitate the sharing of promising practices and allow for campus-wide services, such as clinically rich teacher training and leadership development, technology and data initiatives, that are currently not affordable to any single small school. New Visions for Public Schools commits to the necessary community engagement and outreach to resolve any potential building-specific issues.

The proposed school will not establish enrollment preferences, beyond those listed in statute. Upon notification of the schools’ placement by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), New Visions for Public Schools will target the feeder middle schools, their principals, guidance counselors and parent coordinators in the district in which the school is going to be placed for effective collaborations and articulations. Wherever feasible, New Visions will work with the guidance counselors, parent

coordinators and youth services coordinators to convene parent information and student recruitment sessions that introduce the New Visions Charter High Schools model to students and families. The New Visions Charter High Schools anticipate that student enrollment will mirror that of the New Visions Partner Support Organization schools in the district of location, with 14.9% Students with Disabilities and 14.7% English Language Learners. The founding group presented a detailed, substantive narrative of how the proposed schools will attract and retain students, in particular those students with disabilities or who are English language learners.

As required, the founding group provided a set of draft by-laws and code of ethics. Additionally, each founding group member proposed for a seat on the board of trustees has provided a resume or curriculum vitae, a completed statement of assurances, and a completed request for information from prospective charter school board members form.

The founding group for both schools consists of the same individuals who have a range of expertise in the areas of education, administration, curriculum development, law, real estate, business management, community engagement and parent involvement.

The proposed initial members of the board of trustees for both schools are described below.

- **Yvette Armstrong** practices residential real estate law and is a former NYC Commissioner of Equal Employment Practices (1991-1997). Ms. Armstrong has held various educational leadership and governance positions in addition to her legal practice.
- **Sheila Breslaw** is a School Coach for the Institute of Student Achievement, where she provides mentoring and support for principals, teachers and guidance counselors in various locations. Ms. Breslaw has extensive experience as a teacher and as a principal.
- **Ronald Chaluisan** (ex-officio) is Vice President, New Visions for Public Schools, Charter School Unit. Since 2002, when he began his work with New Visions, Mr. Chaluisan has overseen a comprehensive program of creating new small schools and has developed and evaluated the supports provided to 76 New Visions Partnership Support Organization membership schools. He has also developed the Scaffolded Apprenticeship Program (SAM), a high school leadership certification that has been earned by over 100 NYC principals to date. Mr. Chaluisan has extensive experience in a range of teaching, administrative and educational policy settings.
- **Robert Menken** is a School Coach for the Institute of Student Achievement, where he provides mentoring and support for principals, teachers and guidance counselors in various locations. Mr. Menken has extensive experience as an English teacher and as a principal.
- **Angel Rodriguez** is the Principal of a highly rated Bronx middle school (MS x302), and has extensive teaching and administrative experience
- **Edna Vega** is an educator who has held a number of leadership positions with a focus on the needs of English language learners. Ms. Vega's most recent position was the National Director of English Language Learner services at EdisonLearning, Inc. Prior to that, Ms. Vega served with the College Board New York Education Initiative, as the Superintendent of the Division of English Language Learners and Parent Outreach for the NYCDOE, as a Local Instructional Superintendent and as a Community School District Superintendent.

Additional members of the founding group, all associated with New Visions for Public Schools, are described below.

- **Julia Chun**, Principal, New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science
- **Brad Haggerty**, Leadership Development Facilitator
- **Genevieve de Gaillande**, Program Coordinator
- **Robert Hiller**, Instructional Specialist

- **Madeleine Holzer**, Educational Director, Lincoln Center Institute
- **Stacy Martin**, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer
- **Lori Mei**, Director of Operations
- **Jennie Soler-McIntosh**, Director, Charter Schools Community Engagement
- **Janet Price**, Director of Instruction, Charter Schools
- **Lewis Thomas**, Principal, New Visions Charter High School for Humanities

New Visions for Public Schools is a charter management organization and will provide academic, programmatic and operational support to the New Visions Charter High Schools, as described in the letter of intent submitted with the applications. The New Visions Charter High Schools Board of Trustees will delegate authority to New Visions for Public Schools to run the daily operations of the school, including the selection and evaluation of the Principals, the professional development of Inquiry Teams, the provision and analysis of data, and the setting of targets and development of action plans to attain the targets. New Visions for Public Schools will also provide administrative start-up support and resources, fiscal management and payroll administration services, support for teacher recruitment and development, community engagement, curriculum support, network collaboration support and other services.

The New Visions Charter High Schools will be led by the school Principals, who will be hired by the Board of Trustees. Under the New Visions partnership letter of intent provided with the applications, New Visions for Public Schools will assume responsibility to recruit, train, provide ongoing support, and evaluate the school Principals. The Principals will serve as the instructional leaders and managers of the New Visions Charter High Schools. A Chief Operating Officer will report to the Principal in each school, and will manage the schools' operations team, consisting of an office manager, nurse, parent coordinator and teaching aides. Each school will be staffed with four Assistant Principals, who will work in conjunction with the Guidance Counselors to lead a grade group cohort from grade 9 through grade 12. Teachers and Guidance Counselors will report to the Assistant Principals, who will report to the Principal.

The New Visions Charter High Schools will have a formal partnership with the Lincoln Center Institute, which will provide instructional support to the schools at the direction of the Principals.

The applicants have not yet identified facilities for these schools. In his letter of support for the applications NYCDOE Chancellor Dennis Walcott said, " We have not identified a specific school at this time but see need for higher quality high school seats in New York City and will work with the applicant to identify space where available."

**Fiscal Impact on District of Location**

The projected fiscal impact of the New Visions Charter High Schools on their district of residence, the New York City School District (“NYCSD”), is summarized below.

Year	Number of Students Enrolled in Charter Schools Per Year <sup>(1)</sup>	Charter School Basic Tuition Rate <sup>(2)</sup>	Total Charter School Basic Tuition Only	Estimated District Special Education Payment <sup>(1)</sup>	Total District General Fund Budget <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent of District Budget
2012-13	250	\$13,527	\$3,381,750	\$213,019	\$19,218,074,295	0.019%
2016-17	1200	\$17,199	\$20,638,800	\$964,549	\$19,218,074,295	0.112%

The calculations above assume that there will be no annual increase in the charter school basic tuition rate in year one (2012-13) and a 6.2% average annual increase each year thereafter for the remainder of the charter period (2013-14 thru 2016-17). Per the latest NYCSD Financial Status Report (FSR),<sup>4</sup> dated May 2011 and published on the NYCDOE website, the NYCDOE is projecting its NYCSD budget to increase at a rate of 1.59% over the next three years. In order to conservatively avoid underestimating the fiscal impact that the charter school will have on the district going forward, the New York State Education Department (the “Department”) is assuming no growth in the NYCSD budget during the duration of the school’s charter.<sup>5</sup>

It should be noted that, given the nature of district-based per-pupil funding, the estimates made by the Department in conducting this analysis are subject to unpredictable financial fluctuations. For forecasting purposes, the fiscal impact of this charter school on the district in which it will be located assumes that: there will be no fluctuations in the grade levels served by existing charter schools over the course of the charter term; the charter school will be able to meet its projected maximum enrollment; all students will come from NYCSD; and, all students will attend every day for a 1.0 FTE.

The specifics of the school’s enrollment composition are still unavailable; however, the Department acknowledges that the programmatic and fiscal impact of the proposed charter school on other public and private schools in the same area will also be influenced by the proportion of charter school enrollees that would have attended a same-district public or private school had it not been for the presence of this charter school.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Applications for New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II and Humanities IIMS II.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Education Law §2856(1)(a)(iii) and NYS Education Department Office of State Aid Charter School Basic Tuition Rate Analysis, September 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Source: NYCDOE Financial Status Report May 2011.

<sup>4</sup> NYCSD’s Total District General Fund Budget includes federal special education revenue and other federal grants and/or funds provided.

<sup>5</sup> Additional notes: While the school has included other federal grants and/or funds that may flow through the district to be received by the school in its proposed budget, this analysis does not account for these sources of potential revenue, nor does it include the value of certain services (e.g., transportation) that the district is required to provide the charter school. However, the analysis also does not account for district per-pupil expense and overall resource savings that is likely to result from a significant reduction in the number of students attending district public schools.

Below, for your reference, please find additional data on New York City Community School Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 (Bronx).<sup>6</sup>

**New York City Community School Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 (The Bronx) Data**

<b>Enrollment Data</b>	<b>CSD 7</b>	<b>CSD 8</b>	<b>CSD 9</b>	<b>CSD 10</b>	<b>CSD 11</b>	<b>CSD 12</b>
<b>Total District Enrollment:</b>	18,526	31,184	34,694	55,419	38,163	22,111
<b>Grade K through 5 Enrollment:</b>	8,013	13,769	17,296	24,462	18,817	11,100
<b>White:</b>	1%	6%	1%	6%	7%	1%
<b>Black/African-American:</b>	29%	27%	33%	20%	45%	29%
<b>Hispanic/Latino:</b>	69%	63%	64%	67%	41%	68%
<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native:</b>	0%	0%	0%	9%	1%	1%
<b>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander:</b>	1%	4%	1%	7%	6%	2%
<b>Free/Reduced Priced Lunch:</b>	91%	85%	91%	84%	77%	93%
<b>English Language Learners:</b>	19%	12%	25%	22%	11%	19%
<b>Students with Disabilities:<sup>7</sup></b>	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	<b>CSD 7</b>	<b>CSD 8</b>	<b>CSD 9</b>	<b>CSD 10</b>	<b>CSD 11</b>	<b>CSD 12</b>
<b>Graduation Rate for 2005 Cohort:</b>	54%	46%	64%	64%	60%	53%

<b>2009-10 State Assessments (% proficient) for 2006 Cohort, Grades 9-12</b>						
<b>CSD</b>	<b>CSD 7</b>	<b>CSD 8</b>	<b>CSD 9</b>	<b>CSD 10</b>	<b>CSD 11</b>	<b>CSD 12</b>
<b>English Language Arts</b>	63%	60%	70%	68%	65%	60%
<b>Mathematics</b>	58%	59%	68%	70%	64%	55%

<sup>6</sup> Source: 2009-2010 New York State School Report Card (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/reportcard/2010/home.html>) and Special Education School District Data Profile for 2009-10 (<http://eservices.nysed.gov/sepubrep/>).

<sup>7</sup> This figure is the available city-wide classification rate: the ratio of the count of school-age students with disabilities (ages 4-21) to the total enrollment of all school-age students in the school district, including students who are parentally placed in nonpublic schools located in the school district. The numerator includes all school-age students for whom a district has Committee on Special Education (CSE) responsibility to ensure the provision of special education services. The denominator includes all school-age students who reside in the district. In the case of parentally placed students in nonpublic schools, it includes the number of students who attend the nonpublic schools located in the school district. Source data are drawn from the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) and from the Basic Education Data System (BEDS).

### **Public Hearing and Public Comment**

As required by the Charter Schools Act, the NYCDOE conducted public hearings in CSD 7 (May 19, 2011), CSD 8 (May 18, 2011), CSD 9 (May 17, 2011) to solicit comments from the community concerning the proposed charter school. The New Visions for Public Schools Director of Community Engagement presented information about the proposed schools and took questions from the audience. No comments, either in favor or in opposition, were made.

The Department directly notified the NYCDOE, as well as public and private schools in the region, of the New Visions Charter High School applications, and issued an open call for written public comment via the State Education Department Charter School Office website. The NYCDOE Chancellor was contacted by letter and invited to comment. Chancellor Walcott submitted a letter of support, recommending the New Visions Charter High School applications, noting: “These applications are proposing to turn-around an existing school that has been slated for phase-out/closure. New Visions has proved to be a great partner in developing, supporting, and sustaining quality school models.”

### **Application Review Process**

On January 3, 2011, as required by the New York State Charter Schools Act, the New York State Education Department released the *2011 Request for Proposals (“RFP”) to Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents*. In this cycle, the Department could legally award 58 new charters per Education Law subdivision 2852(9), 25 of which reflect charters that were available but not awarded during the 2010 RFP cycle. The charter school application process utilized by the Board of Regents and the Department during the 2011 RFP cycle is multi-stage, and designed to ensure that any charter school applicant presented to the Board of Regents for possible approval demonstrates four essential competencies:

1. The applicant demonstrates clear understanding of the New York State Charter Schools Act and what it means to comply with the Act.
2. The applicant’s proposed school demonstrates clear alignment with the educational priorities stated in the law.
3. The applicant presents a coherent and practical design for the proposed school.
4. The applicant demonstrates the necessary experience, skill and will to manage the challenging and dynamic process of opening and operating a public charter school.

During this 2011 cycle, 100 letters of intent were received in January 2011, 80 charter school prospectuses were submitted by January 31, 2011, and, after an initial review process, 37 applicants were invited to submit full applications. The Department received 36 full applications, including the applications for the New Visions Charter High Schools.

To assess all four necessary competencies, the Department reviewed and evaluated a letter of intent, a prospectus, and a full application. The prospectus and the educational, organizational, and fiscal plan presented in the full application were evaluated by Department and external reviewers. After determining that the written materials submitted sufficiently met application criteria, the Department staff also conducted a two-hour capacity interview with the founding group and proposed board members for the school.

## Findings

Based on the comprehensive review of the application and of the applicant, founding group, and proposed board of trustees, the Department makes the following findings:

1. The charter schools described in the application meet the requirements of Article 56 of the Education Law (as amended) and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations<sup>7</sup>. This finding is based on the following (among other things):
  - the inclusion in the application of the information required by §2851(2)
  - the proposed charter school would meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets, as prescribed by the NYS Board of Regents<sup>8</sup>, of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the federal free and reduced price lunch program as required by Education Law subdivision 2852(9-a)(b)(i)
  - the applicant has conducted public outreach to solicit community input regarding the proposed charter school and to address comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students in conformity with Education Law subdivision 2852(9-a)(b)(ii).
  
2. The applicants have demonstrated the ability to operate the proposed charter school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner<sup>9</sup> and the four essential competencies prescribed by the Regents for charter approval noted above. This finding is based on the following (among other things):
  - the presentation of a sound educational plan in the application, which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of curriculum and instruction, school calendar and daily schedule, target population, assessment, and school climate and discipline.
  - the presentation of a sound organizational plan in the application, which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of governing body, founding group, management and operation, staffing and human resources, student recruitment, enrollment and evidence of demand, community involvement and partnerships.
  - the presentation of a sound financial plan in the application, which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of budget and cash flow, financial management, facility, transportation, food service, facility, and pre-opening plan.
  - an understanding of the New York State Charter Schools Act, and the skill, will and capacity to successfully launch and operate a high quality public charter school.
  
3. Granting the proposed charters is likely to improve student learning and achievement, will materially further the purposes of the Act<sup>10</sup>, and will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter schools<sup>11</sup>. This finding is based on the totality of the

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<sup>7</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(a)

<sup>8</sup> Note, the data upon which to base the enrollment and retention targets mandated by the amendments to the Act was not available at the time the statute mandated the RFP be issued. As a result, the Department evaluated the plans for student enrollment, recruitment, and retention plans of each class of student referenced in the amendments to the Act such that the Department could make the determination that the applicant would meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets when developed. During the first year of the charter term, the Department will develop such targets and incorporate these targets into the school's charter agreement performance expectations.

<sup>9</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(b)

<sup>10</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(c)

<sup>11</sup> As applicable pursuant to Education Law S2852(2)(d)

material and information presented in the application and during the application review process, as summarized in this document.

**Recommendation**

Based on the Department's review and findings, Commissioner John B. King, Jr. recommends that the New York State Board of Regents approve the proposal to establish the New Visions Charter High School for Advanced Math and Science II and the New Visions Charter High School for Humanities II, to open in New York City in 2012.