



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee
FROM: Cosimo Tangorra, Jr. *Cosimo Tangorra Jr.*
SUBJECT: Revisions to a Charter Authorized by the Board of Regents: Great Oaks Charter School
DATE: April 6, 2015
AUTHORIZATION(S): *Elizabeth R Berlin*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve the proposed revision to the charter of Great Oaks Charter School?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by New York State law.

Proposed Handling

This issue will be before the Board of Regents P-12 Education Committee for discussion and action, and before the Full Board for action at the April 2015 meeting of the Board of Regents.

Background Information

The Board of Trustees of the Great Oaks Charter School has submitted a request to amend the School's charter, proposing a change in location. Information about the revision request is provided below.

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| Name of Charter School | Great Oaks Charter School |
| Board Chair | Susan Akselrad |
| District of Location | New York City CSD 2 |
| Opening Date | September 2013 |
| Current Charter Term | November 5, 2012 – June 30, 2018 |
| Facility | Currently in leased space at 1 Monroe Street, NY, NY 10002 |
| Current Grade Levels/Number of Students | Currently serving 198 students in grades 6 through grade 7 (growing up to 495 students in grades 6 through 10 in 2017-2018) |
| Mission | <i>“The mission of the Great Oaks Charter School is to prepare our students to succeed in college by obtaining a four-year degree. We will accomplish this by combining high academic and behavioral expectations for our students with an extraordinary level of individual attention to each student’s needs through tutoring. We believe that this model will be particularly beneficial to English language learners and will target them for recruitment.”</i> |
| Proposed Revision | Seeks to relocate from their current location in New York CSD 2 to CSD 1 beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. |

On November 5, 2012, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the Great Oaks Charter School (or the “School”), to be located at One Monroe Street, in the New York City School District CSD 2. The School opened for instruction on August 26, 2013, serving 99 students in grade six with a current enrollment of 198 students in grades six and seven.

Pursuant to New York Education Law §2853(3)(e) the School submitted a written request dated June 27, 2014 to the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) requesting co-location space for the 2014-2015 school year. A letter from NYC DOE to the school on December 8, 2014 denied their request for co-located space. This led the school to seek space that would accommodate the school long term, at full capacity. The school filed an appeal to the Commissioner of Education, and on December 30, 2014 the Commissioner found in favor of the school and ordered the NYC DOE to comply with New York Education Law § 2853 (3) (e) (5) and provide rental assistance.

The School’s Trustees request that the Board of Regents approve a material revision to its charter to allow the School to change the district of location for the School to New York CSD 1; specifically to the private space obtained by the School on the third floor of 38 Delancey Street. The proposed lease space is approximately 20,000 square feet and has been renovated to house a school. The location is made available through a sublease agreement with Kunskapsskolan Education (KED), a Swedish education company that operates schools internationally.

The School intends to utilize the entire third floor, which includes nine classrooms and four office spaces. Physical education classes will take place at the Chinatown YMCA, three blocks away. The neighborhood is serviced by several subway lines a short distance away. Negotiations have begun to sublease additional space on the second floor as the school expands to serve high school students in the fall of 2016.

Summary of Public Comment

As required by the Charter School Act, the New York City Department of Education held a public hearing about the proposed relocation on Thursday, March 12, 2015. Three comments in support were recorded, with no comments in opposition.

Recommendation

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 Great Oaks Charter School and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for Great Oaks Charter School will become effective immediately.