



# New York State Education Department Charter School Office

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

---

*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:*

**Global Community Charter School**

September 6, 2011

**Summary of the Proposed Global Community Charter School**

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Global Community Charter School
<b>Lead Applicant(s)</b>	Phyllis Siwec
<b>District of Location</b>	New York City Community School District 3 or 5
<b>Opening Date</b>	Summer/Fall 2012
<b>Projected Charter Term</b>	September 13, 2011 - June 30, 2017
<b>Management Company</b>	None
<b>Partners</b>	None
<b>Projected Enrollment and Grade Span during Charter Term</b>	Opening with 150 students in grades K through 1 in 2012-13, growing to 465 students in grades K through 5 in 2016-17.
<b>Maximum Enrollment and Grade Span</b>	465 students in grades K through 5
<b>Mission Statement</b>	“Global Community Charter School serves the Upper West Side and West Harlem communities by providing students in grades K through 5 with an education that is rigorous, inquiry-based, and that teaches students and their families to work successfully together across differences in language, culture, economic background, age, and nationality. Our school prepares students for admission to a competitive high school.”

The focus of the school is to provide a rigorous, comprehensive program for young children, that is responsive to the needs of a diverse, multi-cultural community. Key design elements of the school include:

- International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP)
- A trans-disciplinary model of instruction, whereby learning is framed by inquiry-based, interdisciplinary themes of global significance
- Collaborative team teaching in all classrooms
- Individualized Student Learning Plans for all students, with multiple forms of evidence to document learning
- A school culture that recruits and embraces multiple languages, abilities and traditions
- *Incredible Years* social-emotional education program for students, faculty and families
- Extended school year and day, including a voluntary free after-school program

The school has a well-detailed plan for curriculum and teacher development that will advance the attainment of IB PYP certification. The curriculum framework is supported with academic programs that were chosen for rigor, alignment with NY Common Core State Standards and transition to IB PYP. The programs selected include *First Steps* (reading, writing and mathematics), *Making Meaning* and *Becoming a Writer*, and *Think Math!* The school will also implement *The Incredible Years* social/emotional education program, using a full-time social worker and team of trained teaching assistants, to provide parent and school-wide coaching to strengthen social skills and positive behaviors. Global Community Charter School is committed to multiple opportunities to explore the arts, integrated in the school’s curriculum and also through weekly arts enrichment lessons as well as arts instruction in the free extended day program that will be provided with the Urban Arts Partnership.

Global Community Charter School will establish multiple forms of performance evidence, including projects, portfolios, criterion reference tests, state tests and oral and written tasks, to document progress toward learning goals and to inform instruction. A comprehensive data framework is under development to collect and evaluate student achievement data that will provide information about the progress of individual students, as well as classroom, grade-level and demographic cohort groups, and the school as a whole.

The school's organizational model provides for collaborative team teaching, with a master and apprentice teacher in every classroom. The model is designed to support a full inclusion learning environment and to infuse a school-wide culture of inquiry and learning throughout the school, including faculty. The plan for professional learning includes embedded instructional coaching, daily common planning time, weekly teacher professional development (one afternoon a week) and four weeks of teacher professional development.

The annual school calendar includes 190 days of instruction. The daily schedule is structured to offer a longer school day, beginning at 7:45 a.m. and ending at 4:30 p.m., with a voluntary free after-school program provided through Urban Arts Partnership. There will be a daily 120 minute block of instruction for ELA and a 60 minute block for Mathematics instruction. The schedule will also include a daily 60 minute interdisciplinary ELA/Social Studies or Science inquiry block.

In hiring staff, the school will comply with all requirements of New York State Education Law. All teachers will be New York State-certified in elementary education and special education or ELL and will be "highly qualified" as defined by NCLB and IDEA. Lead teachers will have at least three years of teaching experience and either ELL or Special Education certification or IB PYP experience; apprentice teachers will have the same certifications but fewer than three years of experience. Teacher retention will be promoted by competitive salaries and benefits, as well as educational tuition benefits, opportunities for teacher leadership, exceptional professional development experiences, a desirable teacher/student ratio and assistant support.

Global Community Charter School intends to recruit students from a variety of neighborhoods in West Harlem in order to create and maintain a school culture based on diversity and internationalism. The school presented a detailed, substantive narrative of plans to recruit and serve children who speak other languages and are learning English, and children from families living in poverty or near poverty. Global Community Charter School will not establish new enrollment preferences for students beyond those listed in statute. Enrollment preference will be for siblings and CSD residents.

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 curriculum vitae or resume, a completed statement of assurances, a completed request for information from prospective charter school board member form.

The founding group consists of ten individuals with a range of expertise in the areas of education, school administration, curriculum development, law, finance, data management, not-for profit management, youth/community engagement and parent involvement.

The proposed initial members of the board of trustees are described below:

- **Rachael Beard** is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of LinkEducation. As such, she has developed partnerships with key community organizations related to education. She has experience in fund-raising, event management and marketing and has held positions with various not-for-profit organizations, including Teach for America.
- **Tanya Espy-Disparti** is a parent and family organizer, and a Harlem resident.

- **Peter Prosol** is a senior consultant with IBM, responsible for systems research and analysis to enhance decision-making and strategic planning.
- **Sheronda Rochelle** is employed at JPMorgan Chase and Co. as an attorney with a specialty in intellectual property and technology law.
- **Tasha Young** is a human service professional, employed by Abbott House as a Foster Parent Training Coordinator.

Additional members of the founding group who are proposed school employees are described below.

- **Phyllis Siwiec** is the lead applicant and is proposed to serve as the Head of School. She has extensive education and urban charter school experience, serving most recently as Assistant Superintendent at Harlem Children’s Zone Promise Academy Charter School.
- **Carlos Aponte** will serve as the proposed Chief Financial Officer. He has expertise in organizational effectiveness, management and coaching teaching and learning, and previously served as Headmaster, Executive Director at Lowell Community Public Charter School in Massachusetts.
- **Alexandra Miletta** is a proposed Professional Developer and Coach for Global Community Charter School. Currently she serves as an Assistant Professor in the Early Childhood/Childhood Education Programs at Mercy College. Her educational experiences include elementary teaching and staff development.
- **Lydia Gutierrez** is a proposed Professional Developer and Coach in the areas of special education and support for English language learners, for Global Community Charter School. She has extensive professional experience in special education and with English language learners in various educational settings.

**Greg Freelon** is a member of the founding group who will not move forward in an official capacity with the school. He is a community organizer and a Harlem resident, who will continue to support the board and school staff in building neighborhood liaisons with the school.

The organizational structure of the school is headed by the board of trustees, with responsibility over the school’s vision, policy and operational decisions, planning and resource allocation and evaluation of the Head of School. The Head of School will manage all daily affairs of the school, provide direct supervision to the Chief Fiscal Officer, Directors of Instruction, Special Education Coordinator and Instructional Coaches, and will work with lead staff to develop consistent protocols for the supervision and evaluation of teachers and to plan and implement professional development.

Global Community Charter School is developing a formal partnership with Urban Arts Partnership to support an arts-integrated approach to learning in the school.

Global Community Charter School will be located in a private facility in West Harlem. One suitable potential site has been identified. The founding group is continuing to explore other locations, sites and renovation and equipment needs.

**Fiscal Impact on District of Location**

The projected fiscal impact of the Global Community Charter School on its district of residence, the New York City School District (“NYCSD”), is summarized below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Students Enrolled in Charter Schools Per Year <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Charter School Basic Tuition Rate <sup>(2)</sup></b>	<b>Total Charter School Basic Tuition Only</b>	<b>Estimated District Special Education Payment <sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Total District General Fund Budget <sup>(3)</sup></b>	<b>Percent of District Budget</b>
2012-13	150	\$13,527	\$2,029,050	\$253,193	\$19,218,074,295	0.012%
2016-17	465	\$17,199	\$7,997,535	\$746,074	\$19,218,074,295	0.045%

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.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School Application.

<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: New York City DOE 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 District 5.<sup>6</sup>

**New York City Community School District 5 Data**

<b>Enrollment Data</b>	<b>CSD 3</b>	<b>CSD 5</b>
<b>Total District Enrollment:</b>	22,411	12,952
<b>Grade K through 5 Enrollment:</b>	8,670	5,723
<b>White:</b>	25%	2%
<b>Black/African-American:</b>	31%	57%
<b>Hispanic/Latino:</b>	36%	38%
<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native:</b>	0%	0%
<b>Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander:</b>	7%	2%
<b>Free/Reduced Priced Lunch:</b>	55%	78%
<b>English Language Learners:</b>	9%	11%
<b>Students with Disabilities:<sup>7</sup></b>	14%	14%

<b>2009-10 State Assessments (% proficient)</b>				
	<b>CSD 3</b>		<b>CSD 5</b>	
<b>Grade level</b>	<b>English Language Arts</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>English Language Arts</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
3	33%	39%	54%	56%
4	28%	38%	54%	63%
5	27%	38%	56%	64%

**Public Hearing and Public Comment**

As required by the Charter Schools Act, the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) conducted public hearings on Wednesday, May 25 in CSD 5 and Wednesday, June 1 in CSD 3, to solicit comments from the community concerning the proposed charter school. Eighteen community members attended the hearing in CSD 5. Five persons spoke in general opposition to charter schools; one person spoke in general favor of charter schools. In CSD 3, 25 persons attended the hearing and six persons spoke, all in opposition to co-location of charter and district schools. The comments were directed toward another proposed school, also on the hearing agenda, which had included the intent to pursue a co-located district facility in the school application. There were no comments made specific to the Global Community Charter School application.

<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).

The Department directly notified the NYCDOE, as well as public and private schools in the region, of the charter school application, and issued an open call for written public comment via the State Education Department Charter School Office website. Chancellor Walcott was contacted by letter and invited to comment directly. The Chancellor provided a letter in support of the Global Community Charter School, noting: “The NYC DOE found this proposal to be well-designed and features a rigorous educational model ...[and] recommends this charter application to support the children of New York City.”

Four letters of support were submitted with the Global Community Charter School application from community members and community organizations, including Geoffrey Canada, President and CEO of Harlem Children’s Zone and the International Youth Leadership Institute.

### **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 application for Global Community Charter School.

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 school described in the application meets the requirements of Article 56 of the Education Law (as amended) and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations.<sup>8</sup> This finding is based on the following (among other things):
  - the applicant has included in the application 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>9</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 applicant has demonstrated the ability to operate the proposed charter school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner<sup>10</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 charter is likely to improve student learning and achievement, will materially further the purposes of the Act,<sup>11</sup> and will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school.<sup>12</sup> This finding is based on the totality of the information presented in the application and during the application review process, as summarized in this document.

---

<sup>8</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(a).

<sup>9</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>10</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(b).

<sup>11</sup> Education Law §2852(2)(c)

<sup>12</sup> As applicable pursuant to Education Law §2852(2)(d),

### **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 Global Community Charter School to open in New York City in 2012.