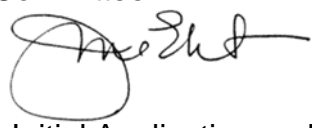





TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Jhone M. Ebert 

SUBJECT: Charter Schools: Initial Application and Charter Authorized by the Board of Regents¹

DATE: December 7, 2015 

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

The Commissioner and Department staff recommend that the Board of Regents consider, approve and issue an initial charter and provisional charter for Growing Up Green Charter School II (proposed to locate in NYC CSD 30).

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 and the Full Board for action at the December 2015 Regents meeting.

Background Information

The Commissioner and Department staff recommend that the Board of Regents issue an initial charter and provisional charter for the above listed new charter school, which will add 504 high quality seats for families in New York City.

- **Growing Up Green Charter School II's (GUGCS II)** will replicate the success of the original Growing Up Green Charter School (GUGCS) and expand educational opportunities in the community. Rooted in a comprehensive vision of healthy development for children, families, and staff, GUGCS II has signified five

¹ A Summary of the 2010-2015 charter school application cycles is included below as Attachment A.

standards from which their academic and non-academic expectations and goals are derived. They are: high academic attainment and improvement; a rigorous and responsive educational program; responsible governance and management, a solid foundation and infrastructure; and a strong culture with supportive relationships.

Additional details about the proposed charter school and how Department staff reviewed the application is included in the attached *Summary, Findings and Recommendation*. The application for this school is available electronically on the Department's website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/startcharter.html>.

Chapter 101 of the Laws of 2010 increased the cap on the number of charters that can be issued in New York State from 200 to 460. The law also designated the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (SUNY) as the authorizers for the additional 260 charters (130 charters to be issued by each, with no more than 57 in New York City) and required that the two chartering entities create competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) processes for applications for the additional 260 charters. The law dictated the timetable for the RFPs that were issued in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 and left the timetable for the release of RFPs in subsequent years to be determined by the Board of Regents and SUNY. The 2015 legislative amendment allows a charter that has been surrendered, revoked, terminated, or not renewed to be reissued by SUNY or the Board of Regents through an application process. There are 178 total charters available. Chapter 20 of the Laws of 2015 imposed a limit of fifty new charters in New York City.

The 2015 RFP and Charter School Application Kit were issued in January 2015, and applications were accepted and reviewed in three rounds (March, August and October). The Board of Regents application and review process is designed to award charters to applicants that demonstrate the greatest probability of creating high quality public schools. The application and review process consists of the following four phases:

- Phase I – Letter of Intent (Rounds 1 and 2 only):
Each applicant group must submit a letter of intent that provides a brief description of the school mission and design, the proposed student population (including plans to meet enrollment and retention targets), evidence of community outreach efforts and community support, a proposed school district and/or proposed facility, information about the founding group, and anticipated members of the initial board of trustees.
- Phase II – Full Application:
Each applicant group must submit a written application that provides the full design of the proposed school, including instructional model and approach, targeted student population, organizational structure, and financial plan. The Full Application is structured to objectively evaluate the proposed school's educational alignment and operational compliance to the requirements and

educational priorities of the Charter Schools Act. Each accepted application is rigorously evaluated through a peer-review process by a five-member expert panel including national consultants, reviewers who are current educators in public schools or universities within New York State and across the nation, and experienced Department staff.

- Phase III – Capacity Interviews:
Each applicant group attends an interview to discuss the application and to demonstrate that they have the skill, knowledge, and capacity to successfully launch and operate the proposed school.
- Phase IV – Request for Modifications:
Each applicant group makes technical modifications to their applications, as requested by the Department.

In addition to the above, throughout the chartering process, the Department reviews the public comments provided through formal public hearings (required to be conducted by the school district of location for the proposed school) and through direct communication with the Department's Charter School Office. Recommendations to award new charters are made to the Board of Regents by the Commissioner. These recommendations are given to groups with a strong educational plan and a presentation that demonstrates their readiness to launch and operate a highly effective public school. Based on a synthesis of information gathered throughout all stages of the process, the Department presents its recommendations to the Board.

In Round 3 of the 2015 application and review process, there were:

- No Letters of Intent were required to be submitted to the Department;
- 15 applicants submitted full applications (due October 5, 2015);
- 1 applicant invited to the Capacity Interview (held in November 2015); and
- 1 applicant recommended to the Board of Regents for approval at the December 2015 Meeting.

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 and issues a charter and provisional charter to the **Growing Up Green Charter School II** for a term of five years in accordance with §2851(2)(p) of the Education Law.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action is effective immediately.

Attachments

Attachment A

SUMMARY OF 2010-2015 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION CYCLES

Regents RFP Cycle	Letters of Intent Submitted	Full Applications Submitted	Charters Issued By Regents (# in NYC)	Regents Charters Remaining under 2010 cap of 130 (# in NYC)
2010	39	35 prospectuses were submitted; 16 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 15 full applications were submitted	7 (5)	123 (52)
2011	100	80 prospectuses were submitted; 37 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 36 full applications were submitted	9 (7)	114 (45)
2012 Round 1	30	20 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 14 full applications were submitted	3 (3)	111 (42)
2012 Round 2	54	37 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 25 full applications were submitted	10 (8)	101 (34)
2012 Round 3	24	24 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 12 full applications were submitted	0(0)	101 (34)
2013	99	60 applicants were invited to submit full applications; 55 full applications were submitted	8 (6)	93 (28)
2014 Round 1	31	15 applicants were invited to submit full applications in either Round 1 or Round 2; 11 full applications were submitted in Round 1	2 (1)	91 (27)
2014 Round 2	51	18 applicants were invited to submit full applications 15 full applications were submitted	3 (3)	88 (24)
Regents RFP Cycle	Letters of Intent Submitted	Full Applications Submitted	Charters issued by SUNY or BOR (# in NYC) ²	Charters remaining to be issued by SUNY or BOR (# in NYC) ³
2015 Round 1	38	15 applicants were invited to submit full applications 15 full applications were submitted	Regents: 0(0) SUNY: 0(0) Total: 0(0)	181(50)
2015 Round 2	51	17 applicants were invited to submit full applications 11 full applications were submitted	Regents: 3(1) SUNY: 0(0) Total: 3(1)	178(48)
2015 Round 3	0	No Letters of Intent required 15 full applications were submitted	Pending Approval in December 2015	Pending

² The 2015 legislative amendments to the Charter Schools Act takes the cap remaining under the 2007 and 2010 legislation (159) and provides for the reissuance of 22 charters, for a total of 181 charters. These 181 charters can be used by either Regents or SUNY. Chapter 20 of the Laws of 2015 imposed a limit of 50 new charters in New York City. SUNY totals are provided as of the date of the corresponding Board of Regents Round.

³ See note 2, above.



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 2015 Round 3 Request for
Proposals to Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of
Regents to establish the proposed:

Growing Up Green Charter School II

December 2015

Table 1: Summary of the Proposed School in the Growing Up Green Charter School II

Name of Charter School	Growing Up Green Charter School II
Lead Applicant(s)	Jeff Mueller
District of Location	CSD 30
Opening Date	September 2016
Projected Charter Term	September 2016 to June 2021
Management Company	None
Partners	None
Facility	Private or public co-location space
Projected Enrollment and Grade Span during Charter Term	Year 1: K-1, 166 Year 2: K-2, 249 Year 3: K-3, 336 Year 4: K-4, 420 Year 5: K-5, 504
Planned Grade Span (beyond Initial Charter Term)	The school plans to request an expansion to serve grades 6-8 after the initial charter term.
Mission Statement	<i>“The Growing Up Green Charter School empowers children to be conscious, contributing members of their community through a rigorous curriculum and an engaging green culture. Graduates of GUGCS will be prepared to attend high-performing schools where their interdisciplinary academic foundation, knowledge of sustainability, and strong sense of self sets them apart as leaders of the future.”</i>

GUGCS II will adopt the original school’s interdisciplinary approach to education, which combines and balances hands-on, project-based learning with rigorous direct instruction and a focus on the teaching of arts and sciences throughout the school day.

Key Design Elements

The key design elements for their program are:

- **Dedication to Academic Rigor.** GUGCS II's curricular team will work to ensure that teachers are delivering both the direct instruction and collaborative components of their academic program with specific intention and rigor based on both Common Core State Standards and student data stemming from internal and external assessments.
- **Expansive Support Services.** At GUGCS II, the Support Services Department will work closely as a collaborative team to provide specialized support and instruction for at-risk students, English language learners, as well as students receiving special education services.
- **Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) and Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS).** GUGCS II will provide each grade level with at least one ICT class and also maintain four learning specialists within the department to support ICT and SETSS needs.
- **Intervention.** With three intervention teachers supporting at-risk students and the implementation of a Response to Intervention (Rtl) model through the use of their "Successful Students Committee"(SSC), GUGCS II will run 6-week intervention cycles to ensure that student progress is monitored regularly and that students who require more intensive support are quickly identified.
- **ELL.** With the help of an ELL coordinator and two ELL teachers, GUGCS II will employ the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model to support ELL students inside and outside of the classroom.
- **Counseling.** GUGCS II believes in supporting students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs. By staffing the school with several school counselors, they can provide individual, small group, and larger group support.
- **Hands-On Learning in the Local Environment.** The school's model uses a multi-sensory approach that is enhanced by weekly visits to the school's science lab and regular field trips in and around the community.
- **Actionable Assessment System.** Aligned to the Common Core State Standards and administered every six weeks, GUGCS II's "Looking Forwards, Looking Back" assessments will provide actionable data that teachers will use to refine their lessons and identify students' needs as well as content areas needing support.
- **Green Education.** Green principles will inform the curriculum, instruction and culture of GUGCS II. Green lessons will infuse GUGCS II's meals, code of

conduct, instructional materials, recycling practices, and facility design and choices. By incorporating their “Green Ambassadors” program, weekly Green Living classes, and daily Explore and Discover (ED) Time, students will be engaged in and develop a more complex understanding of the skills and concepts around green principles.

- **Deliberate School Culture.** GUGCS II’s collaborative environment will sustain a positive school culture for students, staff, and families alike. The school expects that this culture will result in limited faculty and staff turnover, virtually no leadership turnover, and will result in limited discipline issues and no expulsions.

Education Plan

The GUGCS II school day will run from 7:55am to 3:15pm with breakfast available beginning at 7:15am. Their 180-day school calendar will provide for six early release days for teachers to interpret data and 10 additional days for professional development in August. Additionally, the school year will be divided into trimesters.

GUGCS II will use the curriculum developed, tested and refined at the original school, which has led to demonstrable student growth. This school, however, will provide a new perspective on themes and topics through “Explore and Discover” projects where students gain a broader and deeper understanding of subjects by exploring them in different ways. All of the learning experiences throughout the curriculum are designed to encourage the growth of creativity and reflection while incorporating technology and new media.

GUGCS II will use a combination of direct skills instruction and exploration-based projects to help students achieve their highest scholastic potential. By incorporating *Sounds in Motion* (kindergarten), *Wilson Foundations* (K-5), *Words Their Way* (K-5), Teachers College, and LitLife programs with a workshop-based, balanced curriculum that includes teachable moments and a multi-sensory approach, literacy will be reinforced through multiple modalities.

For math instruction, GUGCS II will use a combination of TERC investigations and the envision math program, supplementing with resources from *Math in the City: Contexts for Learning*. Students will investigate mathematical problems within meaningful “real life” contexts while learning to critically think, problem-solve, and explain their thinking and strategies through symbolic representation and mathematical language. Manipulatives, games, and paper and pencil practice will also be integral to the curriculum.

Classroom science instruction will follow a traditional model but will be done in tandem with at least weekly class visits to the science lab. Additionally, each class will have one period of “Green Living” instruction in their classroom per week where Green Ambassadors will plan and carry out long-term projects to benefit the school and greater community.

ED Time will use an interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum, which will provide rich context for skills learned in traditional lessons. During ED Time, students will work on projects that incorporate skills from all subjects while meeting NYS Social Studies standards and CCLS expectations to infuse literacy standards across curriculums. ED Time will be unique to both Growing Up Green Charter Schools and will be where many of the “green” themes like respect for the environment, conscious conservationism, and sustainability emerge.

Technology standards including Engineering Design will be integrated throughout science, ELA, math, language, and ED time, and will be demonstrated through a process of performance indicators, each appropriately implemented by grade level. Individual assignments and projects will be used to gauge student understanding and will be reinforced through group applications.

The GUGCS II pedagogy will have two dimensions: direct instruction and exploration. Math, literacy, and science skills will be delivered through standard, rigorous curriculum by classroom teachers. The “Explore and Discover” time will be used to execute more open-ended student projects that will emphasize discovery and interdisciplinary connections.

The instructional culture at GUGCS II will be a constructivist, holistic, child-centered one. In both the academic blocks and project-based explorations, expectations will be developmentally appropriate for grade levels. They will include mini-lessons followed by differentiated practice time and conferencing in small groups and individually.

The professional development plan focuses on several key components. They are: collaborative professional development demonstrated through the principles of the Responsive Classroom, coaching by instructional administrative leaders, classroom demonstrations to model best practices, and external professional development including attendance at The Responsive Classroom Summer Institute and The Math in the City Math Institute, to name a few. In addition to this ongoing professional development during the school year, each August GUGCS II will hold a two-week Summer Professional Development Institute focusing on topics that center around the mission and key design elements of the school.

The primary assessment tool at GUGCS II will be a six-week, self-developed assessment system that they call “Looking Forward, Looking Back” (LFLB). All students at GUGCS II will take LFLB assessments every six weeks for a total of five times per year. Developmentally appropriate to specific grade level exit standards, these tests will follow a format similar to a NYS standardized test in Grades 2-5 to help students develop confidence and stamina for such tests. In kindergarten and 1st grade, tests will involve other means of developmentally appropriate expression, such as using math manipulatives, written responses, and interview-based questions.

Data collected from these tests will be analyzed quickly so results can be implemented thoughtfully and immediately into classrooms, addressing both specific needs of individual children and larger trends throughout a class or grade.

LFLB assessments will be written by the Assessment Department with oversight from the Director of Curriculum, Math Coordinators, Directors of Upper School and Lower School Instruction and input from grade teams. Skills tested will be dictated by the NYS grade level exit standards, and through data analysis, GUGCS II staff will be able to see which skills the curricula are addressing and which ones need to be supplemented. Additional assessments will include curricular indicators, unit assessments, reading and writing portfolios, periodic evaluation of student work using rubrics, daily shares, and projects.

GUGCS II will designate 75% proficiency as mastery, which will be applied to both classes and individual students. Teachers can determine mastery through both formal assessments and daily informal assessments such as observations or class work. Students who fail to achieve mastery on a consistent basis will be discussed at Successful Student Committee (SSC) meetings with special education team members to develop further strategies.

GUGCS II will have a safe, warm, and inclusive school culture.

Promoting a green culture and an understanding of sustainability are important components of the school's mission. By immersing students in a "green" culture, GUGCS II believes students will internalize these values and carry them into their homes and neighborhoods.

GUGCS II incorporates components of Green Living throughout their academic curriculum and school practices. All areas of the school will demonstrate a holistically "green" approach to living as seen throughout the school including:

- Greenery (plants, gardens)
- Composting in every classroom
- Reusing household objects for classroom use and on walls
- Recycled student materials (crayons, paper, pencils, etc.)
- Organic cotton student uniforms
- Recycled and re-used classroom furniture
- Recycled office supplies
- Toner-less copy machine
- Energy efficient lighting and appliances
- Low energy behaviors (turning off lights, computers, etc.)
- Responsible school waste policy (recycling, composting, etc.)
- Offering a GREEN room where families can donate recyclable materials to be repurposed and reused in classrooms.

In addition to fostering a school culture that promotes green principles, GUGCS II will teach students character development through the acronym GREEN:

- Giving Back (giving back to others and the community)
- Respect (respect adults, friends, and the community)
- Embrace (embrace differences of those around you)
- Empower (empower yourself to make good choices)
- Nurture (nurture those around you with kindness)

These principles will guide the social curriculum of GUGCS II and teachers will be well-versed in these character traits. Throughout the school, grades will focus on these core values by developing and implementing classroom and grade-wide projects and teaching how these core values can be applied to a student's actions towards the school, friends, adults, community, and the environment. Monthly school-wide assemblies hosted by each grade level will further enrich the school culture.

A centralizing force within the GUGCS II community will be the Responsive Classroom. At the core of Responsive Classroom is the belief that children learn best when attention is paid to building their social and emotional competencies. It will accomplish this reliably positive environment by creating a classroom and school-wide culture grounded in routines and universal expectations.

All GUGCS II students are expected to follow school rules and expectations. The school will employ layered interventions to help students take responsibility for their own actions and enforce logical consequences for those unable to follow rules and expectations. Teachers will use positive strategies such as Take a Break or Take a Break in a Buddy Classroom and receive pink slips with additional follow-ups if additional interventions are required.

Special Populations and Related Services

GUGCS II will be developed as GUGCS was, to recruit and serve a diverse student population. GUGCS II hopes to replicate the success of GUGCS due to comprehensive programming that will meet student needs inside and outside of the general education classroom.

Staff assigned to support these student populations include: a Director of Support Services, an IEP Coordinator, learning specialists, intervention teachers, school counselors, and ELL teachers.

Special education programming will be inclusive with the intent to meet the needs of students within the general education classroom. It will consist of a variety of support levels for students. These include one Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class per grade, four learning specialists who will provide Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) for students who are mandated for intensive small group instruction by a

certified special education teacher, and opportunities for peer collaboration within the support services provided.

Related services like speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and hearing and audiology services will be provided through the various agencies and therapists GUGCS currently works with. Both the Director of Support Services and the IEP Coordinator will work closely with these therapists and communicate with their teaching staff to insure that students are working towards their goals.

A Response to Intervention (RtI) program will be established and consist of three tiers of intervention ranging from differentiated support within the classroom to small group or individualized support outside of the classroom. The 6-week intervention assessments students will take and the Successful Student Committee (SSC) will help to inform the placement of students in the tiers to carry out the RtI model.

English language learners will receive sheltered instruction, also known as SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), at GUGCS II. Content instruction is provided in English with sheltered English instructional methods to make content comprehensible. General education teachers will incorporate sheltered instructional techniques into their own instruction with the ultimate goal of all students reaching required proficiency in English and becoming declassified by the time they begin middle school.

The academically advanced or gifted students will be provided with opportunities for learning and enrichment within the core program through effective differentiation. ED time will be the primary place where students will get to explore their interests and participate in hands-on projects allowing them to use their various skills.

Recruitment

GUGCS II will use a multi-pronged recruitment strategy. The current school has a waiting list of almost 1,000 students interested in attending GUGCS, and information about the new school option will be sent to those parents as well as those currently enrolled students with siblings or other relatives who will be eligible to attend. In addition, GUGCS II will build on the relationships developed by GUGCS, including the Boys and Girls Club of Queens and the Jacob Riis Community Center of Long Island City.

To recruit students with disabilities, GUGCS II will promote the school's inclusion model, special education services, staffing and counseling supports, and will require the Director of Support Services to participate in recruitment activities. In order to recruit English Language Learners, GUGCS II will translate all materials and promote the ELL program as described in the application. The ELL Coordinator and teachers will assist with recruitment. The school's bilingual staff will help families with the application

process. To recruit students eligible for free and reduced lunch GUGCS II will build upon GUGCS' positive reputation in the community. The school will also promote the free nature of its program, extra support services and curricular opportunities, and will utilize preferences to its admissions policy if needed to recruit additional students with disabilities, ELLs and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch.

Retention

To retain students, GUGCS II hopes to replicate the track record of strong student retention achieved by GUGCS. By developing a close, supportive community among students, staff, and families through regular communication and events such as orientations, family workshops, conferences, celebrations, and performances, GUGCS II feels it too can achieve high levels of retention. This includes students with disabilities who they feel will benefit greatly from the scope of services it will offer to serve the variety of student needs. GUGCS II will be like GUGCS in that students and their families will be known well by the faculty and staff and students will not fall through the cracks.

Community Outreach

The decision to open a second school in CSD 30 was informed by a high demand for seats at GUGCS, the need for educational alternatives in the district, and numerous unsolicited requests by parents to serve more students. GUGCS announced plans to open the second school via a letter sent home to all GUGCS families, a posting on their website, and discussion at public meetings. Since then school leaders have held numerous meetings and discussed the proposal with politicians, local community-based, and faith-based organizations, and other community stakeholders. Feedback was solicited and helped to shape with the school model. GUGCS II will continue to exercise an open door policy for parents and community members to share their ideas and concerns with school leaders and teachers. Parents will also be invited to visit, volunteer, and participate in school events and field trips.

School Governance and Leadership

GUGCS II will have the same Board of Trustees as GUGCS. The initial Board of Trustees consists of five voting members and a non-voting parent representative. The board will provide for a maximum of nine members. The current trustees have a broad set of skills with which to govern the school, including knowledge of education, finance, and law. The initial trustees are:

- **Jeff Mueller** is the proposed Board Chair. Jeff has been a New York City prosecutor, the Chief Operating Officer of an international investigative firm, the founder of Granite Intelligence, and an adjunct professor at John Jay College teaching “Courtroom Communication.”
- **Kurt Shuman** is the proposed Secretary. A current owner and operator of a CrossFit Gym, Kurt has been employed as a finance manager for Strang Hayes Consulting, and Senior Vice President at Macquarie Capital.
- **Reid Chase** is the proposed Treasurer. Reid is an entrepreneur who has owned and operated his own business for over 20 years – Cane Simple Liquid Sugar.
- **Kate Hooker** is a proposed trustee member. Kate is a lawyer and a writer who most recently practiced in-house corporate law at Bloomberg LP.
- **Kyla Kupferstein Torres** is a proposed trustee member. Kyla is the Director of Admissions and Outreach at Hunter College Campus Schools and an educational consultant.

The leadership team for the school includes an Executive Director (ED) who will oversee both GUGCS schools and report directly to the board. Reporting to the ED will be the GUGCS II School Leader who will be responsible for the day-to-day life at the school and supervise a site-based management team.

School Staffing Plan

GUGCS II will have a Dean of Students and a full-time school counselor beginning in Year 1 of operation. Both will report to the Director of Counseling. Beginning in Year 3, another Dean of Students and a school counselor will join the staff to focus on grades 3-5. The Dean of Students will work with faculty on implementing Responsive Classroom behavior management and handle some discipline issues. School counselors will provide counseling mandated by IEPs and support other students with social emotional issues.

At full capacity, the school will have the following staff:

- Two directors (one for K-2 and the other for 3-5), who will supervise their respective classroom teachers and associate teachers;
- Curriculum Coordinators at (K-2 and 3-5) to support curriculum development and implementation;

- An Assessment Coordinator to assist with the implementation of the Looking Forward, Looking Back assessment system and analyze and report data within and across schools;
- An IEP Coordinator to manage the special education program at the school, coordinating services for students with disabilities and IEP reviews.
- A Dean of Students, who is responsible for school culture and discipline, who works work closely with students, families, and staff members to ensure a positive learning environment;
- An Operations Manager to handle all non-instructional operational functions such as transportation, health services and food services as well as supervise office staff; and
- A Business Manager to handle all day-to-day business and financial matters, work with a shared Director of Finance, and to help maintain and coordinate information for accounting and audits.

While the ED has already identified existing school talent capable of moving both horizontally and vertically to take on some of the new leadership and other staff positions necessary in the restructured organization managing two schools, other positions will need to be filled externally.

By working with already established relationships with education schools in the area, GUGCS II has developed a strong recruitment, interview, and vetting process in order to ensure to the highest degree possible that new hires will be highly motivated, highly qualified team oriented individuals who will share the values and vision of the school. After undergoing a rigorous hiring process including GUGCS Open House attendance for informal interviews, formulating and delivering a lesson plan to a group of students, interviewing by a hiring committee, and a one-on-one interview with the school leader, the School Leader will make the final hiring decision.

Facility

GUGCS II is seeking public co-location space with the NYC Department of Education (DOE) within CSD 30. If space is unavailable, the school will secure private space that fits the needs of their school and students. Three options for private space include: 40,000 square feet of space on Northern Boulevard that could house them at K-8, 39,000 square feet of leased space from the Diocese of Brooklyn that could also house them at K-8, and 11,500 square feet of space in a building on 29th Street that could house them for K-2.

Projected Fiscal and Programmatic Impact on District of Location

The applicant group provided an analysis of the fiscal and programmatic impact of the proposed school on public and non-public schools in New York City, indicating that the fiscal impact of the Growing Up Green Charter School II on the New York City District public schools is expected to be nominal.

The New York State Education Department also conducted additional analysis on the projected fiscal impact of the School on its district of residence, the New York City District (NYCSD), which is summarized below.

Table 2: Projected Fiscal Impact Upon District of Location, 2016-17 to 2020-21⁴

Year	Number of Students Enrolled in Charter School Per Year ⁵	Charter School Basic Tuition Rate ⁶	Total Charter School Basic Tuition	Estimated District Special Education Payment ⁷	Total District General Fund Budget ⁸	Percent of District Budget
2016-17	166	\$15,717	\$2,609,022	\$362,654	\$543,792,510	0.546%
2017-18	249	\$16,421	\$4,088,829	\$568,347	\$543,792,510	0.856%
2018-19	336	\$17,126	\$5,754,336	\$799,853	\$543,792,510	1.205%
2019-20	420	\$17,830	\$7,488,600	\$1,040,915	\$543,792,510	1.569%
2020-21	504	\$18,535	\$9,341,640	\$1,298,488	\$543,792,510	1.957%

The calculations above assume charter school basic tuition rates in the charter period (2016-17 through 2020-21) based on a trend analysis calculated by the Charter School Office and approved by the Department's State Aid Office. In order to conservatively avoid underestimating the fiscal impact that the charter school will have on the district going forward, the Department is assuming no growth in the NYC budget during the duration of the school's charter.⁹

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

⁴ In order to conservatively estimate the fiscal impact upon the district of location, maximum enrollment figures for each year were used.

⁵ Source: Growing Up Green Charter School II Application

⁶ Source: Education Law §2856(1)(a)(iii) and NYS Education Department Office of State Aid Charter School Basic Tuition Rate Analysis

⁷ Based on 2013-14 calculated special education classification rate for the district of location, as collected by NYSED Information and Report Services

⁸ Source: The City of New York 2016 Executive Budget, http://www.nyc.gov/html/omb/downloads/pdf/erc5_15.pdf

⁹ 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 are likely to result from a reduction in the number of students attending district public schools as a result of students attending nonpublic schools located in the school district.

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 fluctuation 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 the district of location; 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.

**Table 3: 2014-15 Demographic Detail for Proposed District of Location:
NYC District #30¹⁰**

	Total District Enrollment: NYC #30	
All Students	41,363	
Economically Disadvantaged	29,078	70%
Limited English Proficient	7,646	18%
Students with Disabilities	6,157	15%

**Table 4: 2014-15 Elementary/Middle School Academic Proficiency Rates on
NYS Assessments Based on Grade Configurations for Proposed School¹¹**

¹⁰ Source: Student Information Repository System (SIRS) 2014-15 Report 303 BEDS Day Enrollment Verification Report by Location of Enrollment & Student Subgroup

¹¹ Source: Student Information Repository System (SIRS) 2014-15 Report 101 High School Accountability Data Verification Report; 2014-15 Report 102 Elementary/Middle-Level Accountability Data Verification Report

Assessments	NYC #30 Proficiency	NYS Proficiency
<i>ELA Grades 3-5 Aggregate</i>	34%	31%
<i>Grade 3 ELA</i>	34%	31%
<i>Grade 4 ELA</i>	33%	33%
<i>Grade 5 ELA</i>	34%	30%
<i>Math Grades 3-5 Aggregate</i>	44%	43%
<i>Grade 3 Math</i>	43%	42%
<i>Grade 4 Math</i>	44%	43%
<i>Grade 5 Math</i>	46%	43%

Public Hearing and Public Comment

As required by the Charter Schools Act, the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) conducted a public hearing on December 1, 2015, to solicit comments from the community concerning the proposed Growing Up Green Charter School II. Fifteen members of the community were present, and four individuals commented on the proposed application. All comments were from parents of Growing Up Green Charter School (authorized by the NYCDOE) and expressed support for the proposed new 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.¹² This finding is based on the following, among other things:
 - The applicant has included in the application the information required by Education Law §2851(2).
 - The proposed charter school would meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets, as prescribed by the NYS Board of Regents,¹³ of

¹² Education Law §2852(2)(a).

¹³ 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.

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 §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.¹⁴ This finding is based on the following, among other things:
- i. The presentation in the application of a sound description of key features that are core to the school's overall design, and which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of mission; key design elements; enrollment, recruitment and retention; and community to be served.
 - ii. The presentation in the application of a sound educational plan, which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of achievement goals; school schedule and calendar; curriculum and instruction; assessment; school culture and climate; and special student populations and related services.
 - iii. The presentation in the application of a sound organizational and fiscal plan, which rigorously addresses the criteria outlined in the Department's RFP in the areas of founding group capacity; board of trustees and governance; management and staffing; evaluation; professional development; facilities; insurance; health, food and transportation services; family and community involvement; financial management; budget and cash flow; pre-opening plan; and dissolution plan.
 - iv. 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 Act¹⁵ and will have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school.¹⁶ 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.

Recommendation

¹⁴ Education Law §2852(2)(b).

¹⁵ Education Law §2852(2)(c).

¹⁶ As applicable pursuant to Education Law §2852(2)(d).

Based on the Department's review and findings, Commissioner MaryEllen Elia recommends that the New York State Board of Regents approve the proposal to establish the Growing Up Green Charter School II to open in 2016 in New York City.