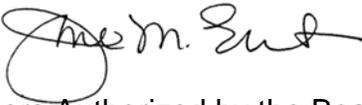




TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: Jhone M. Ebert 

SUBJECT: Revision to Charters Authorized by the Board of Regents

DATE: March 2, 2017

AUTHORIZATION(S): 
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve the proposed revisions to the charters of the following schools authorized by the Board of Regents?

1. American Dream Charter School
2. South Bronx Classical Charter School

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

Proposed Handling

This issue will be before the Board of Regents P-12 Education Committee and the Full Board for action at the March 2017 Regents meeting.

Procedural History

The New York State Education Department made the revision recommendations being presented to the Board of Regents for approval and issuance as required by Article 56 of the Education Law.

Background Information

The Commissioner recommends that the Board of Regents amend the charters of the above listed charter schools. Information about the revision requests is provided below.

American Dream Charter School

Table 1: School Summary

Name of Charter School	American Dream Charter School
Board Chair	Luz Rojas
District of Location	NYC CSD 7
Opening Month/Year	September 2014
Current Charter Term	September 1, 2014 to June 30, 2019
Management Company:	N/A
Partner(s):	N/A
Maximum Approved Grade Levels/ Number of Students	Grades 6-8/ 300 Students
Mission	<i>“American Dream Charter School develops academic excellence in both Spanish and English, preparing students to excel in college and become leaders in their communities.”</i>
Proposed Revision	American Dream Charter School is requesting to increase the school’s current authorized enrollment from 300 students in grades 6-8 to serve 450 students in grades 6-10.

In December 2013, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the American Dream Charter School (“American Dream School” or the “School”) in New York City School District 7. The School is designed to cultivate an environment that is welcoming and encouraging for English language learners (ELL) and immigrant students, and seeks to ensure that students’ learning and language development experience is supported. The model of instruction is designed to help students to achieve academic success in two languages and is based on existing models that support both home language and new language acquisition. The School intends to graduate students who are bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish.

The School is requesting an expansion to serve high school English language learners and/or immigrant students. The School is currently serving middle school students, grades 6-8, and wishes to extend the learning opportunities for target students, through a dual-language approach in order to graduate scholars with a school created “Seal of Biliteracy” upon graduating high school. The School believes biliteracy is as much an aim as full bilingualism, with literacy being acquired in both languages either simultaneously or with an initial emphasis on native language literacy.” It is the hope of the American Dream School to create an environment where English language learners are given an opportunity to be successful and promote academic achievement by way of retaining native language instruction for the target population. The School further believes that this can be accomplished after having English language learners in the school for five to seven years, especially those who are new to the country. The American Dream

School plans to provide learning experiences for new students that are experiential in nature, culturally relative, and supportive of native language development simultaneous with new language development.

The School also believes the revision will be beneficial because:

- 1) The dual language model will raise student achievement for all students;
- 2) The School is located in the Mott Haven section of the Bronx, targeting underserved students who are at risk for academic failure (English language learners and immigrants);
- 3) The School utilizes the innovative Dual Language model which provides linguistic and cultural support. Students are taught to embrace their native culture and heritage as well as the culture and traditions of the community. The School's approach to learning is inquiry based both throughout the regular school year as well as during the June "mini-mester";
- 4) New professional opportunities for teachers and staff are a part of the culture at the School. Teachers are able to engage in a professional learning community during the Teacher Academy in August as well as throughout the school year;
- 5) The American Dream School provides parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities. By having a middle/high school with a dual language program, parents in CSD 7 have an opportunity to choose to enroll their child with an ELL designation into a high-quality charter school in middle school and not worry again about enrolling their child into school until college; and
- 6) The American Dream School seeks to provide the highest quality education for all students by being held accountable for high student achievement.

**Table 2: American Dream Charter School Approved Enrollment
For the Current Charter Term**

	Year 1 2014-2015	Year 2 2015-2016	Year 3 2016-2017	Year 4 2017-2018	Year 5 2018-2019
Grade Configuration	Grades 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8
Total Approved Enrollment	100	200	300	300	300

**Table 3: American Dream Charter School Proposed Enrollment
For the Current Charter Term**

	Year 1 2014-2015	Year 2 2015-2016	Year 3 2016-2017	Year 4 2017-2018	Year 5 2018-2019
Grade Configuration	Grades 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-9	Grades 6-10
Total Approved Enrollment	100	200	300	375	450

Table 4: American Dream Charter School Academic Achievement

	ELA					Math				
	American Dream	CSD 7	Variance to CSD 7	NYS	Variance to NYS	American Dream	CSD 7	Variance to CSD 7	NYS	Variance to NYS
All Students										
2014-2015	17%	11%	+6%	31%	-14%	13%	13%	0%	39%	-26%
2015-2016	23%	15%	+8%	35%	-12%	30%	16%	+14%	38%	-8%

**Table 5: American Dream Charter School Demographics
Compared to District of Location**

	2014 -2015			2015 -2016		
	American Dream	CSD 7	Variance	American Dream	CSD 7	Variance
Economically Disadvantaged	93%	92%	+1%	92%	92%	0%
English Language Learners	27%	18%	+9%	27%	17%	+10%
Students with Disabilities	23%	24%	-1%	22%	25%	-3%

According to the February 2016 ESEA accountability designations, the American Dream School is In Good Standing.

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 revision to the charter of American Dream Charter School on February 1, 2017. There were more than 200 attendees present at the hearing. There were 22 public comments made in support and there were no public comments in opposition to the proposed charter revision.

South Bronx Classical Charter School

Table 1: School Summary

Name of Charter School	South Bronx Classical Charter School
Board Chair	C. Stephen Baldwin
District of Location	New York City Geographic District # 12
Opening Month/Year	August 2006
Current Charter Term	July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2019
Management Company:	N/A
Partner(s):	N/A
Maximum Approved Grade Levels/ Number of Students	Grades K-8/ 410 Students
Mission	<i>“Classical Charter Schools prepares K-8th grade scholars in the South Bronx to excel in college preparatory high schools. Through a classical curriculum and highly structured setting, students become liberated scholars and citizens of impeccable character who achieve proficiency in and advanced mastery of New York State Performance Standards.”</i>
Proposed Revision	South Bronx Classical Charter School is requesting to increase the School’s current authorized enrollment from 410 students to 470 students in the grades they currently serve.

In December 2005, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the South Bronx Classical Charter School (“South Bronx Classical” or the “School”) in New York City School District 12. The School is designed to provide a classical education, which in the early years will consist of a focus on a core curriculum and the development of strong literacy and numeracy skills, along with knowledge and understanding of elementary facts, with an emphasis on higher level thinking in the later grades. Additionally, in all grades, the School focuses on the development of core knowledge in the basic subjects of reading, writing, math, science, and history. The School’s language-based curriculum is supported through the study of Latin, which helps students improve their English grammar and vocabulary skills as well as learn other languages. The School also utilizes a structured English immersion program for English Language Learners.

As a result of high academic achievement and strong demand for admission into the School, South Bronx Classical is seeking to expand their maximum authorized enrollment within the band allowed them in their current space.

Table 2: South Bronx Classical Charter School Approved Enrollment For the Current Charter Term¹

	Year 1 2015-2016	Year 2 2016-2017	Year 3 2017-2018	Year 4 2018-2019
Grade Configuration	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Total Approved Enrollment	410	410	410	410

Table 3: South Bronx Classical Charter School Proposed Enrollment For the Current Charter Term

	Year 1 2015-2016	Year 2 2016-2017	Year 3 2017-2018	Year 4 2018-2019
Grade Configuration	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8
Total Proposed Enrollment	410	470	470	470

Table 4: South Bronx Classical Charter School Academic Achievement

	ELA					Math				
	SBCCS	CSD 12	Variance to CSD 12	NYS	Variance to NYS	SBCCS	CSD 12	Variance to CSD 12	NYS	Variance to NYS
All Students										
2014-2015	68%	12%	+56%	31%	+37%	79%	14%	+65%	40%	+39%
2015-2016	81%	16%	+65%	31%	+50%	84%	15%	+69%	39%	+45%

According to the February 2016 ESEA accountability designations, South Bronx Classical is In Good Standing.

Table 5: South Bronx Classical Charter School Demographics

¹ Due to high demand, for the past two years, South Bronx Classical has operated with a student enrollment that exceeds its maximum authorized enrollment by approximately 16 students.

Compared to District of Location

	2014 -2015			2015 -2016		
	SBCCS	CSD 12	Variance	SBCCS	CSD 12	Variance
Economically Disadvantaged	88%	75%	+13%	89%	89%	0%
English Language Learners	6%	10%	-4%	10%	19%	-9%
Students with Disabilities	10%	21%	-11%	10%	24%	-14%

South Bronx Classical Charter School’s ongoing recruitment and outreach includes, but is not limited to:

1. Creating marketing materials and student applications in both English and Spanish to encourage SWDs and ELLs to apply to the School through the lottery.
2. Holding several parent orientations at the school, preschools, Headstart programs, and day-care centers, to provide assistance to families of potential SWDs and potential ELL students. The Special Services Coordinator attends all such parent orientations and answers any questions that parents of students with disabilities, ELLs, potential SWDs, or potential ELLs may have.
3. All SBCCS information session are held with a Spanish speaking translator, and additional translators upon request.
4. School representatives attend several student recruitment fairs each year. At both fairs, a bilingual staff member is present for its entirety. Information about SBCCS Special Services is distributed at all fairs.
5. Presentations are given to local community organizations that serve Special Education and ELL populations, including Mott Haven Community Partnership Program and South Bronx Churches.
6. Information about SBCCS, and the special services provided, are sent to seven local NYCHA housing developments in both English and Spanish.
7. The School has a Facebook advertisement translated into English, Spanish, and French.
8. Information pamphlets in English and Spanish are mailed to 12,000+ residents of the South Bronx.
9. The School advertised in El Diario, New York’s largest and oldest Spanish-language newspaper, and the nation’s oldest Spanish newspaper.

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 revision to the charter of South Bronx Classical Charter School on February 15, 2017. There were 4 attendees present at the hearing. There were 2 public comments made in support and no public comments in opposition to the proposed charter revision.

Related Regents Items

American Dream Charter School

Initial Charter

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1213p12a2%5B1%5D.pdf>

South Bronx Classical Charter School

Initial Charter

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2005Meetings/December2005/1205emscvesida5.htm>

First Renewal

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2011Meetings/January2011/111p12a2.pdf>

Second Renewal

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/meetings/May%202015/515p12a1.pdf>

April 2016 Merger

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a3.pdf>

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 **American Dream Charter School** and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

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 **South Bronx Classical Charter School** and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for American Dream Charter School will become effective immediately.

The Regents action for South Bronx Classical Charter School will become effective immediately.