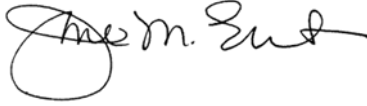





**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
**FROM:** Jhone M. Ebert   
**SUBJECT:** Revision to Charter Authorized by the Board of Regents  
**DATE:** June 1, 2017  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Decision**

Should the Regents approve the proposed revision to the charter of the following school authorized by the Board of Regents?

**Buffalo Academy of Science 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 June 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 school. Information about the revision request is provided below.

**Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School**

**Table 1: School Summary**

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Mehmet Demirbas
<b>District of Location</b>	Buffalo City School District
<b>Opening Month/Year</b>	September 2004
<b>Current Charter Term</b>	July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020
<b>Management Company:</b>	N/A
<b>Partner(s):</b>	N/A
<b>Maximum Approved Grade Levels/ Number of Students</b>	Grades 5-12 / 520 Students
<b>Mission</b>	<p>“The mission of the Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School (BASCS) is to fulfill the high demands of students in Buffalo from grades 7 to 12, their parents and the community as a whole by addressing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing an excellent academic educational plan with emphasis on math, science, and technology while providing the opportunity for students to excel in any field of study.</li> <li>2. Providing a rigorous, innovative, challenging and enhanced curriculum focused on preparing students’ per individual basis for college from a community who are not served successfully by public education and cannot afford the private education services.</li> <li>3. Preparing students to become responsible, educated citizens who have the skills and understanding to participate and work productively in a diverse, multicultural, globally oriented environment and who are ready to carry the torch of knowledge, freedom, and prosperity.</li> <li>4. Creating a partnership and participation environment among the student-teacher-parent triad that will provide our youth with the support necessary to reach their highest potential intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.”</li> </ol>
<b>Proposed Revision</b>	<p><b>To add an elementary school program, which will result in the school being approved to serve grades K-2, 5-12 at the end of the current charter term. The school is requesting a corresponding increase in their maximum authorized enrollment from 520 students to 784, an increase of 264 students by the end of the current charter term. The school must request an expansion to serve additional elementary school grades at the time of renewal.</b></p>

In January 2004, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School (“BASCS” or the “School”) in the Buffalo City School District. The School’s educational program focuses on math and science.

The School’s Trustees request that the Board of Regents approve a material revision to its charter to allow the school to add an elementary school program. This expansion would allow the school to accommodate younger siblings of currently enrolled students. Incorporating additional grades will enable the school to have a longer time with students; thereby, closing the achievement gap earlier. Additional grades will prepare students to transition smoothly into the program’s middle and high school by fostering the tenants of established school culture, thereby increasing student opportunities for continued academic success.

In addition, the school reports that there is significant demand in the community, as follows:

- Parent and community surveys conducted over two years showed that above 90% of parents surveyed are either very likely or somewhat likely to enroll their child in proposed STEM-oriented K-6 Elementary Charter School and that there is a high demand for a STEM-oriented K-12 charter school.
- The school received nearly 600 applications for 174 available seats for 2016-17 school year.
- The school has received over 200 support letters for its extension plans from community members, parents, community organizations, STEM businesses and higher education, including support letters from County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes, the Buffalo Museum of Science and University of Buffalo School of Engineering.
- The Buffalo Market is undergoing major, progressive changes that bode well for its future residents and especially for those with STEM-related educations. Advanced manufacturing jobs, requiring highly skilled workers proficient in science, technology, engineering and math are going to be in higher demand due to large-scale investments in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

**Table 2: Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School Approved Enrollment  
For the Current Charter Term**

	<b>Year 1 2015-2016</b>	<b>Year 2 2016-2017</b>	<b>Year 3 2017-2018</b>	<b>Year 4 2018-2019</b>	<b>Year 5 2019-2020</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 7-12	Grades 5, 7-12	Grades 5-12	Grades 5-12	Grades 5-12
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	400	460	520	520	520

**Table 3: Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School Proposed Enrollment  
For the Current Charter Term**

	<b>Year 1 2015-2016</b>	<b>Year 2 2016-2017</b>	<b>Year 3 2017-2018</b>	<b>Year 4 2018-2019</b>	<b>Year 5 2019-2020</b>
<b>Grade Configuration</b>	Grades 7-12	Grades 5, 7-12	Grades K, 5-12	Grades K-1, 5-12	Grades K-2, 5-12
<b>Total Approved Enrollment</b>	400	460	640	712	784 <sup>1</sup>

**Table 4: Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School State Grades 3-8 Exam  
Academic Achievement**

<b>All Students</b>	<b>ELA</b>					<b>Math</b>				
	<b>BASCS</b>	<b>Buffalo CSD</b>	<b>Variance to Buffalo CSD</b>	<b>NYS</b>	<b>Variance to NYS</b>	<b>BASCS</b>	<b>Buffalo CSD</b>	<b>Variance to Buffalo CSD</b>	<b>NYS</b>	<b>Variance to NYS</b>
<b>2014-2015</b>	11%	12%	-1%	32%	<b>-21%</b>	26%	10%	+16%	29%	<b>-3%</b>
<b>2015-2016</b>	31%	16%	+15%	38%	<b>-7%</b>	27%	11%	+16%	31%	<b>-4%</b>

<sup>1</sup> The proposed increase in maximum authorized enrollment is a result of the school requesting to add kindergarten through grade 2 and increasing the section size for grades 5-8 to accommodate high demand and the new elementary students as they move into the higher grades.

**Table 5: Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School Demographics Compared to District of Location**

	2014 -2015			2015 -2016		
	BASCS	Buffalo CSD	Variance	BASCS	Buffalo CSD	Variance
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	77%	79%	-2%	88%	82%	+6%
<b>English Language Learners</b>	7%	14%	-7%	9%	15%	-6%
<b>Students with Disabilities</b>	13%	22%	-9%	11%	22%	-11%

**Table 6: High School Total 4-Year Regents Outcomes for All Students: School, District & NYS Level Aggregates**

4-Yr Cohort: <b>All Students</b>	2010 Cohort			2011 Cohort			2012 Cohort		
	School	Variance	State	School	Variance	State	School	Variance	State
Subject									
ELA	96%	+14%	82%	94%	+10%	84%	91%	+ 7%	84%
Math	87%	+ 3%	84%	94%	+ 8%	86%	95%	+ 9%	86%
Global History	81%	+ 3%	78%	90%	+11%	79%	87%	+ 9%	78%
US History	89%	+10%	79%	92%	+11%	81%	87%	+ 6%	81%
Science	91%	+ 8%	83%	94%	+10%	84%	93%	+ 9%	84%
Graduation Rate	94%	+18%	76%	88%	+10%	78%	95%	+16%	79%

According to the February 2016 ESEA accountability designations, Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School is In Good Standing.

## **Summary of Public Comment**

As required by the Charter School Act, the Buffalo Public Schools held a public hearing about the proposed revision to the charter of Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School on April 19, 2017. There were seven attendees present at the hearing, two from the charter school, three from the Buffalo Board of Education, and two Buffalo City School District staff members. There were no public comments made in support or in opposition to the proposed charter revision. Members of the Board of Education expressed concern about the numbers of students being returned to the district from charter schools.

## **Related Regents Items**

### **Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School**

Initial Charter

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2004Meetings/January2004/0104emscvesidca2.htm>

2006 Revision

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2006Meetings/September2006/0906emscvesidca1.htm>

2007 Revision

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2007Meetings/December2007/1207emscvesida1.htm>

First Renewal

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2008Meetings/December2008/1208emsca1.htm>

Second Renewal

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/documents/meetings/2012Meetings/March2012/312p12a1.pdf>

Third Renewal

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/215p12a3.pdf>

2016 Enrollment Revision

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/216p12a4.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 **Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School** and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

## **Timetable for Implementation**

The Regents action for Buffalo Academy of Science Charter School will become effective immediately.