



TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Revision to a Charter Authorized by the Board of Regents
– School in the Square Public Charter School

DATE: January 2, 2020

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Sharon L. Tabor*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve the proposed revision to the charter of the School in the Square Public Charter School authorized by the Board of Regents?

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 January 2020 Regents meeting.

Procedural History

The New York State Education Department (the Department) is making a recommendation to the Board of Regents for approval and issuance of a charter revision as required by Article 56 of the Education Law.

Background Information

The Department recommends that the Board of Regents amend the charter of the School in the Square Public Charter School. Information about the revision request is provided below.

Related Regents Items

School in the Square Public Charter School

November 2015: Initial Charter

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/1115p12a2.pdf>

April 2016: Revision to move the school to a different borough

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/416p12a5.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 **School in the Square Public Charter School** and amends the provisional charter accordingly.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for **School in the Square Public Charter School** will become effective immediately.

School in the Square Public Charter School

Table 1: School Summary

Name of Charter School	School in the Square Public Charter School
Board Chair	Michael Pollack
District of Location	NYC CSD 6 - Private Space
Opening Month/Year	Fall 2016
Current Charter Term	July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2021
Management Company	None
Current Maximum Approved Grade Levels/ Number of Students	Grades 6-8/324 students
Mission	<i>School in the Square (S2) will engage, educate and empower adolescents to respond mindfully and creatively to life’s opportunities and challenges. S2 draws its name from the concept of the public square, where communities come together to solve problems and celebrate successes. We envision S2 as a place where students, families, and educators are seen, heard, and inspired and where students build the academic foundations, emotional intelligence, and leadership skills necessary to excel in college and professional life. In line with our commitment to equity and diversity, S2 is dedicated to serving the highest needs students, regardless of their academic achievement, English language proficiency, or disability status.</i>
Proposed Revisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the grade levels served in the existing school from Grades 6-8 to one that begins to expand into the elementary school grades beginning with the addition of kindergarten in the 2020-2021 school year; • Increase enrollment from 324 students to 424 students at the conclusion of the school’s current charter term; and • Implement a two-way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion program as a new key design element. The dual language program will begin with the first kindergarten class and expand into each new cohort until fully implemented school-wide.

In November 2015, the Board of Regents approved and chartered the School in the Square Public Charter School (“school”). The School’s educational program focuses on fostering the intellectual and personal growth of students through rigorous instruction and social-emotional development to promote post-secondary readiness and retention. It has implemented assessment-based instructional practices, along with personalized learning approaches and social-emotional support systems to enable students to be successful across multiple domains. The school has created a positive school culture that encourages student voice, student ownership of learning, and development of skills fostering student independence.

The school's trustees request that the Board of Regents approve material revisions to the school's charter to allow the school to complement its middle school with the expansion of its current grade configuration to include elementary students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The material revision request includes adding a new key design element: a two-way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion (DLI) model in the elementary school beginning with students in the first kindergarten class. The school has worked closely with NYSED's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages, as well as local community-based organizations and content experts, to develop the DLI program. The school will gradually expand the DLI to all students enrolled at the school. This revision would allow the school to meet the needs of the community it is serving, support students who are growing up in an increasingly global society, and ensure a commitment to the Board of Regents' strategic priority of culturally relevant pedagogy and opportunities for all students.

An ad hoc school board committee has been exploring elementary expansion for the past two years. It determined there was a need for a high performing elementary school in the community based on broad community input, stakeholder interest, assessment data, and parent demand for the school to consider adding an elementary school to serve the community and younger siblings of those currently enrolled in the school.

Two-Way Spanish English Dual Language Immersion Program. School in the Square will provide the opportunity for students of Community School District 6 to be bi-literate in English and Spanish. School in the Square will provide a side by side 50/50 language immersion program to all students in its K-5 elementary school, with further extensions in Middle School.

Students will spend alternating days in English and Spanish classrooms in four classes of 25 students each. There will be two teachers in each room. Teacher pairs will have ample time to create and adapt curriculum in cohorts to meet the needs of all learners in both languages and provide an inclusive setting for students with disabilities. The curriculum will follow New York State standards while ensuring that each student's culture and identity is affirmed in classwork.

School in the Square is committed to developing partnerships with all families; respecting all cultures; and employing culturally relevant pedagogical approaches. Programs such as parent partnerships will connect English-dominant families and Spanish-dominant families to support their children to become bi-literate. School in the Square believes the benefits of a dual language program include but are not limited to:

- Oral and written proficiency in two languages;
- Cross- cultural understanding and respect;
- Increased Cognitive Dexterity and Problem-solving Skills; and
- Enhanced Communication Skills.

Table 2: School in the Square Public Charter School Approved Enrollment for the Current Charter Term

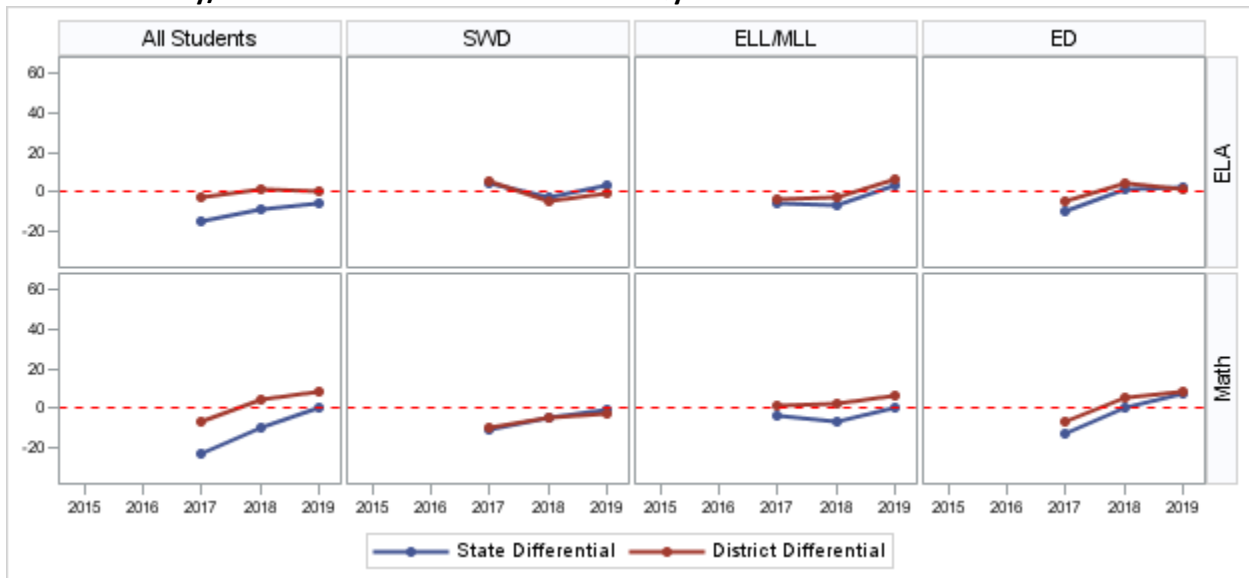
	Year 1 2016-2017	Year 2 2017-2018	Year 3 2018-2019	Year 4 2019-2020	Year 5 2020-2021
Grade Configuration	Grade 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8
Total Approved Enrollment	108	216	324	324	324

***Table 3: School in the Square Public Charter School Proposed Enrollment**

	Year 1 2016-2017	Year 2 2017-2018	Year 3 2018-2019	Year 4 2019-2020	Year 5 2020-2021
Grade Configuration	Grade 6	Grades 6-7	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8	Kindergarten, Grades 6-8
Total Proposed Enrollment	108	216	324	324	424

*The proposed chart was submitted by the School in the Square Public Charter School. It is subject to change pending the final revision recommendation and approval by the Board of Regents.

Figure 1: School in the Square Public Charter School Academic Achievement Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time



**Table 4: School in the Square Public Charter School Academic Achievement
Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District and NYS**

		ELA					Math				
		School In The Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	School In The Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2016-2017	17%	20%	-3	32%	-15	17%	24%	-7	40%	-23
	2017-2018	36%	35%	+1	45%	-9	33%	29%	+4	43%	-10
	2018-2019	39%	39%	0	45%	-6	42%	34%	+8	42%	0
SWD	2016-2017	11%	6%	+5	7%	+4	0%	10%	-10	11%	-11
	2017-2018	11%	16%	-5	14%	-3	8%	13%	-5	13%	-5
	2018-2019	16%	17%	-1	13%	+3	12%	15%	-3	13%	-1
ELL/MLL	2016-2017	0%	4%	-4	6%	-6	11%	10%	+1	15%	-4
	2017-2018	13%	16%	-3	20%	-7	15%	13%	+2	22%	-7
	2018-2019	22%	16%	+6	19%	+3	23%	17%	+6	23%	0
ED	2016-2017	13%	18%	-5	23%	-10	15%	22%	-7	28%	-13
	2017-2018	36%	32%	+4	35%	+1	31%	26%	+5	31%	0
	2018-2019	37%	36%	+1	35%	+2	40%	32%	+8	33%	+7

**Table 5: School in the Square Public Charter School Demographics
Compared to District of Location**

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District	School In the Square Public CS	NYC CSD 6	Differential to District
2016-2017	17%	23%	-6	18%	33%	-15	86%	86%	0
2017-2018	19%	24%	-5	24%	39%	-15	85%	90%	-5
2018-2019	24%	23%	+1	22%	38%	-16	79%	88%	-9

Summary of Public Comment

The required public hearing was held by the New York City Department of Education with the New York State Charter School Office on Tuesday, December 17, 2019. Eight people attended, and six people spoke. All six were in favor of the revision, and none were opposed.