



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,
NY 12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee

FROM: John B. King, Jr.

SUBJECT: Proposed Revision to the Charter of the Harriet Tubman Charter School – Authorized by the Board of Regents

DATE: July 1, 2011

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

I recommend that the Board of Regents approve a revision to the fifth renewal charter of the Harriet Tubman Charter School, which is authorized by the Board of Regents.

The proposed revision would increase the school's enrollment as indicated in the table below.

Name of Charter School	Harriet Tubman Charter School
Terms and Dates of Charter	Fifth Renewal Charter: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2016
Current Grade(s) and Approved Enrollment	2010-2011: Grades K-8: 469 students
Current Year of Operation	2010-2011: Tenth Year of Operation
Lead Applicant(s)	Cliff Frazier, BoT President
Management Company	Edison Schools, Inc./Learn Now, Inc.
Other Partner(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New York Metropolitan MLK Center for Non-Violence, Inc.• Claremont Neighborhood Center
District of Location	NYC CSD #9
Proposed Charter Revision	Increase enrollment in K-8: 2011-2012: from 469 to 575 students 2012-2013: from 469 to 675 students 2013-2014: from 469 to 675 students 2014-2015: from 469 to 675 students 2015-2016: from 469 to 675 students

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Harriet Tubman Charter School (HTCS or “the School”) is located in Community School District 9 in the Bronx and is authorized by the Board of Regents. The initial charter was approved in December 1999 to serve grades Kindergarten through six. In December 2004, the School was approved for a first renewal of two years, to serve grades Kindergarten through eight. The School was approved for a second renewal from January through June 2007; a third renewal through June 2009, and is currently in its fourth renewal through June 30, 2011, all serving grades Kindergarten through eight. In July 2010, the Board of Regents approved a revision to its fourth renewal charter to increase its enrollment from 444 to 469 by adding one Kindergarten class. The School is currently fully enrolled, with two sections of approximately 25 students at each grade level from K through 8 with the exception of grade 3, which has 3 sections.

The School currently leases its primary space from a private proprietor in Bronx, NY. The School also leases additional classroom space from the Claremont Community Center, across the street from the primary school building. Due to space constraints and a desire to serve more students in the community (the school currently has a waitlist of more than 500 students), the School’s Board of Trustees established a Site Committee in February 2010. The School discussed expansion as part of its fifth renewal application submitted in summer 2010, contingent on securing an appropriate facility, but options explored in 2010 were not ideal. However, in January 2011, the nearby St. Augustine’s Catholic School was slated for closure by the NY Archdiocese, and after a discussions with the Archdiocese, a nonbinding Letter of Intent to Lease was signed in April 2011 to initiate due diligence review processes with Edison Learning, the New York City Department of Education, and the State Education Department.

REVISION REQUEST

The School is requesting to expand its maximum enrollment from 469 to 675 students in two phases, adding a total of 106 students to its Elementary Academy in 2011-2012 (an additional section of students in grades K, 1, 2, and 4), and an additional 100 students to its Junior Academy in 2012-13 (an additional section of students in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8). The Elementary Academy will be housed in the school’s current building, with the Junior Academy housed in the new facility.

The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in all areas over the duration of the prior charter term and is in good standing in both ELA and mathematics.

The School is in good fiscal condition with positive cash balances at the end of each school year. The school’s FY10 independent financial audit report was unqualified with no findings. The School presented a five-year budget plan that incorporates the planned expansion with positive cash flow.

HTCS presently has ten Board of Trustees members. The Board of Trustees is providing appropriate oversight, fiscal controls are in place, and revenues are sufficient to cover the School’s short- and long-term expenses.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed revised charter: (1) meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations; (2) will permit the charter school to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; (3) 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 this application would have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the charter school.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approves the revision to the fifth renewal charter of the Harriet Tubman Charter School, and the provisional charter is amended accordingly.

The Regents action on the Harriet Tubman Charter School is effective immediately.