



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

TO: EMSC Committee

FROM: John B. King, Jr.

SUBJECT: Charter Schools: Proposed Charter for Riverton Street Charter School

DATE: January 5, 2010

STRATEGIC GOAL: Goals 1 and 2

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Regents approve and issue the proposed charter for Riverton Street Charter School (New York City)?

Background Information

We have received a proposed charter from the Chancellor of the city school district of the City of New York for the establishment of Riverton Street Charter School (RSCS or “the School”). The School will open in September 2010. Initially, the School will serve 100 students in grades K – 1 in Year One, and grow to serve 300 students in grades K – 5 in its fifth year of operation. The School's mission is “to instill in each student a passion for learning and hard work that will result in significant contributions to our school, our families, and our community. Parents and educators join together in creating a strong academic base in which students will be expected to achieve high academic levels in an environment that values compassion and respect.”

The School does not have a management partner. RSCS will provide instruction from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. for 190 days per academic year. The School will focus on the development of the whole child with an emphasis on family involvement, cultural and community relationships, and values and social responsibility.

The New York City Department of Education held a public hearing in CSD 29 on August 4, 2009 regarding this proposed charter application. There were two written comments at the hearing. Both comments emphasized the lack of seats for middle school students within the district. One comment requested that the enrollment plan for RSCS be changed to provide instruction to middle school students.

Additional information concerning this initial application may also be found on the Board of Regents website at <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/>

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approves and issues the charter of the Riverton Street Charter School as proposed by the Chancellor of the city school district of the City of New York, and issues a provisional charter to it for a term of five years, up through and including January 11, 2015.

Reasons for Recommendation

(1) The charter school described in the proposed charter 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; and (3) approving and issuing the proposed 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.

Timetable for Implementation

The Regents action for the Riverton Street Charter School is effective immediately.

New York State Education Department

Summary of Proposed Charter

Name of Proposed Charter School: Riverton Street Charter School (RSCS or “the School”)

Address: 118-34 Riverton Street, St. Albans, NY

Applicant: Rochelle Noel

Anticipated Opening Date: September 7, 2010

District of Location: New York City Community School District 29, Queens

Charter Entity: Chancellor of the city school district of the City of New York

Institutional Partner(s): N/A

Management Partner(s): N/A

Grades Served:

2010-2011: K – 1
2011-2012: K – 2
2012-2013: K – 3
2013-2014: K – 4
2014-2015: K – 5

Projected Enrollment:

2010-2011: 100
2011-2012: 150
2012-2013: 200
2013-2014: 250
2014-2015: 300

Proposed Charter Highlights

Applicant

The lead applicant, Ms. Rochelle Noel, is an employment attorney, parent, resident of the St. Albans community, and member of the St. Catherine of Sienna Church. Ms. Noel has been admitted to the bar of the State of New York and has nearly fifteen years of experience as an attorney. Ms. Noel earned a juris doctor and a B.A. degree from St. John’s University. She completed her undergraduate studies *magna cum laude*.

Institutional Partner

N/A

Management Partner

N/A

Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction

- The School will focus on the development of the whole child through an emphasis on family involvement, strong cultural and community relationships, and solid student values and social responsibility.
- The School will provide instruction in each subject in the seven general curriculum areas. The proposed curriculum is aligned to all 28 New York State (NYS) learning standards.
- RSCS will use Reading Reform Foundation of New York courses for direct phonics instruction; Reading A to Z and Teacher's College Writer's Workshop, with supplements from Pastore & Allyn's *The Complete Year in Reading and Writing*.
- The School will use Everyday Math supplemented with Marilyn Burns Library for Math and TERC.
- The School will utilize the Scott Foresman science and social studies curriculum. The social studies curriculum will be supplemented with Pearson social studies curricula for maps, charts and graphs. Social studies instruction will also be delivered using multiple types of media including video, computers and Power Point.
- The School's instructional methods include direct instruction, exploration-based projects, hands-on and instructional science, differentiated instruction based on individualized student learning plans, small groups, whole class and 1:1 teacher-student instruction.
- Grade level teachers will create weekly assessments for all subject areas. The School proposes to have weekly, monthly, and annual achievement goals for each grade, and for each student.
- RSCS will administer teacher assessments, CTB McGraw-Hill Fox in the Box (phonics remediation assessment), Waterford Early Reading Lab, and Terra Nova. The School will also administer the Language Assessment Battery-Revised and the New York State Alternate Assessment.
- The School will administer all assessments required by NYS.
- The School will provide instruction to students with disabilities (SWD) using an inclusion model.
- The School will provide instruction to English language learners (ELL) using a structured immersion model.
- A full-time special education teacher/coordinator will dedicate "considerable time with general education teachers in planning, professional development and ensuring the appropriate accommodations are made for special education students."
- The School's data-driven instruction will be based on frequent assessments of students and coordinated communication with teachers and staff about outcomes and expectations.

- The School proposes a 190-day instructional year.
- The School will provide an extended day with instruction from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday. Professional development sessions will be held on Fridays, with student dismissal at 2:20 p.m.

Governance

- The number of Trustees shall not be fewer than five and shall not exceed 13.
- Trustees will be divided into three classes for the purposes of staggering the terms of office. The terms of the first class of trustees will expire in one year. The terms of the second class will expire in two years. The terms of the third class will expire in three years.
- The officers of the corporation will be president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.
- No more than 40 percent of trustees will be affiliated with the School as a compensated employee or contractor or any other single entity; and such persons will not serve as chair or treasurer of the Board.
- Regular meetings of the board of trustees shall be held no less than 10 times each year.
- The initial standing committee of the board of trustees shall be executive and finance.

Students

- The School will serve 100 students in grades K – 1 in the first year of instruction and will grow to serve 300 students in grades K – 5 in its fifth year of operation.
- RSCS will enroll 50 students per grade in its first year of instruction. Each grade will have two classes of 25 students each.
- The School anticipates the ages of students will range from five to 10 years old.
- The School expects the student body to reflect the population of PS 36, which in 2007-2008 was 91 percent Black, five percent Latino, one percent Asian, two percent White, three percent ELL; and 76 percent federal free/reduced lunch program.
- In 2007-2008, the demographics for CSD 29 were 72 Black, 13 percent Hispanic, one percent American Indian, 13 percent Asian, two percent White, seven percent ELL, and 74 percent federal free/reduced lunch program.
- The School expects to serve approximately ten percent SWD and three percent ELL.
- The School's student outreach plan will include mailings to CSD 29 residents, visits to local organizations and canvassing neighborhoods to further reach interested families. RSCS will conduct open houses at public and private elementary schools, after-school programs, and youth centers. Additionally, the School will distribute flyers and notices in local newspapers, supermarkets, community centers and apartment complexes.
- RSCS will provide multilingual documents for all outreach efforts.

Budget/Facilities

- The School is not seeking incubation space in a New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) facility.
- RSCS proposes to lease space from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn in a 31,320 square foot facility. The facility, located in Queens, was formerly used by the St. Catherine of Sienna parochial school, which closed in June 2009. RSCS estimates the rent expense in Year One will be \$187,920 and \$580,673 in Year Five.
- The School's Year One revenue will be \$2,027,167 and will grow to \$4,136,073 by Year Five.
- The Year One budget anticipates total expenses of \$1,887,220, and \$3,586,401 by Year Five.
- RSCS projects carrying forward a balance of \$118,767 from the start-up period.
- The School anticipates an ending fund balance of \$139,947 at the end of Year One and \$549,672 at the end of Year Five.
- The School will reserve in an escrow account \$75,000 by Year Two, making contributions of \$50,000 in Year One and \$25,000 in Year Two towards its dissolution fund.
- RSCS projects receiving the Charter School Planning grant in the amount of \$400,000 in Year One and an additional \$100,000 in Year Two.
- The School anticipates receiving a grant in Year One of \$25,000 from the New York City Charter Center. RSCS estimates receiving a City of New York Start Up Grant in the amount of \$90,100 based on its projected enrollment.
- The School assures that it will perform all programmatic and fiscal audits annually as required by the New York State Charter Schools Act, in accordance with auditing standards and Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.
- The *potential fiscal* impact upon the District is represented below. Please note that these projections are based upon several assumptions, which may or may not occur: that all existing charter schools will also exist in the next five years and serve the same grade levels as they do now; that the charter schools will be able to meet their projected maximum enrollment; that all students will come from NYC and no other districts; that all students will attend everyday for a 1.0 FTE; that the District's budget will increase at the projected rate; that the per pupil payment will increase (and not decrease); and that the per pupil payment will increase at the projected rate.

***Projected Fiscal Impact of
Riverton Street Charter School
(New York City – CSD 29 – Queens)
2010-2011 through 2014-2015***

School Year	Number of Students	Projected Payment*	Projected Impact
2010-2011	100	\$1,281,629	.0071%
2011-2012	150	\$1,980,117	.0107%
2012-2013	200	\$2,719,360	.0142%
2013-2014	250	\$3,501,177	.0178%
2014-2015	300	\$4,327,356	.0213%

* Assumes a 3 percent annual increase in the District's budget from the base of \$18.035 billion in 2010-2011; and a 3 percent annual increase in the average expense per pupil per year from the 2010-2011 rate of \$12,816.

Personnel

- The School will be led by a principal, dean of curriculum, student support dean and operations director. The deans and operations director will report to the principal.
- The dean of curriculum will lead the instructional team comprising two teachers per grade and a "Specials Coach." RSCS will provide instruction in technology education, art, music, physical education, and health using a mixture of full-time and part-time teachers.
- The School will employ the following staff in its first year of instruction: four classroom teachers, two aides, two specialty teachers (art and physical education), one special education teacher, one librarian, a nurse, a part-time ELL coordinator (.5 FTE), a part-time social worker (.5 FTE), a part-time parent coordinator (.5 FTE), a security guard, and a janitor.
- The School will add a part-time guidance counselor in Year Two.
- RSCS will supplement the structured immersion program by providing pull-out instruction with a certified aide, teacher or consultant.
- Professional development priorities include classroom management, engaging diverse student populations (SWD, ELL, at-risk students, gifted & talented students), understanding and organizing subject matter, planning instruction, and using assessment to drive instruction.
- Each teacher will have an individualized professional development plan and will have no less than 100 minutes of planning time each week.
- RSCS has developed a research-based professional development philosophy and will use the Professional Learning Community model to structure sessions around teacher-led teams.

Community Support

- The School provided 114 signatures of parents, with children eligible to enroll in grades K-1, who have expressed interest in RSCS.
- The School has also received letters of support from the following community organizations and leaders: The Presbyterian Church of St. Albans, NY, Leroy Comrie, City Council Member and Deputy Majority Leader representing the 27th Council District (Queens), Malcolm Smith, State Senator and President Pro Tem, Helen Marshall,

President of the Borough of Queens, and from Congressman Gregory Meeks, House of Representatives – 6th Congressional District.

Public Opinion

- NYC DOE mailed a letter and posted a notice on its website, notifying the public and independent schools in CSD 29 of the proposed application for Riverton Street Charter School and inviting comments at a public hearing.
- NYC DOE held a public hearing in CSD 29 on August 4, 2009 regarding the application. Thirty-nine people attended the hearing. Two provided written comments. Public comments submitted to NYSED expressed concern over a lack of middle school space within CSD 29 and affirmed the quality of existing elementary schools in the district. One written comment requested that the grade configuration of the School be extended to grades K – 8.