



**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

**FROM:**

James A. Kadamus

**COMMITTEE:**

Full Board

**TITLE OF ITEM:**

Charter schools

**DATE OF SUBMISSION:**

December 3, 2002

**PROPOSED HANDLING:**

Action

**RATIONALE FOR ITEM:**

Legislative authority to act on charter schools

**STRATEGIC GOAL:**

Goals 1 and 2

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

**SUMMARY:**

Under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998, the Board of Regents is authorized to approve or deny charter applications it receives directly as a charter entity. We have received three such applications that will be presented to you at your December meeting. The applications are for the following:

- Bronx Charter School for Children  
Bronx, New York
- Pinnacle Charter School  
Buffalo, New York
- Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School  
Syracuse, New York

Complete copies of the applications are available for your review by contacting James R. Butterworth at 518-474-4817.

VOTED: that the Board of Regents approve the applications for the following charter schools based upon the information contained in the attachments and upon a finding by the Board of Regents that (1) the charter schools described in the applications meet the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations; (2) the applicants can demonstrate the ability to operate the schools in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and (3) granting the applications 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:

- Bronx Charter School for Children
- Pinnacle Charter School
- Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School

The Board of Regents is also authorized to approve proposed revisions to a charter school's existing charter and certificate of incorporation (also referred to as a provisional charter). On July 19, 2001, the Board of Regents approved and issued a charter and certificate of incorporation to The ReadNet Bronx Charter School at Audrey Cohen College. The charter school seeks a change to its certificate of incorporation and its charter to reflect a change of its name to The ReadNet Bronx Charter School at Metropolitan College of New York. The college has officially changed its name, thereby making it necessary for the charter school to request this revision. The charter school's request to change its name is attached.

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve the proposed revision to the certificate of incorporation (also referred to as the provisional charter) and charter of the following charter school based upon the information contained in the attachment and upon a finding by the Board of Regents that: (1) the revision meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations; (2) the revision (together with the other terms of the charter) will permit the charter school to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and (3) the revision (together with the other terms of 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:

- The ReadNet Bronx Charter School at Metropolitan College of New York

**New York State Education Department**

**Summary of Charter School Review**

***Summary of Applicant Information***

**Name of Proposed Charter School:** The Bronx Charter School for Children

**Address:** 410 East 148<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx NY

**Applicants:** Dr. Patricia M. Cooper and Dr. Eleanor K. Sypher

**Anticipated Opening Date:** September 2, 2003

**District of Location:** New York City

**Charter Entity:** Board of Regents

**Institutional Partner:** Friends of the Bronx Academy Foundation

**Management Partners:** None

**Grades Served:** K-1 (K-5)      **Projected Enrollment:** 132(308)

***Application Highlights***

**Applicants**

Dr. Patricia M. Cooper is an Assistant Professor of Literacy and Language Arts in the School of Education at Hofstra University. Her research and teaching focus is on early childhood development and early literacy education, particularly with regards to the needs of diverse children. Dr. Cooper, a former classroom teacher, is the founding Director of Rice University's School Literacy and Culture Project in Houston, Texas. She is the author of *When Stories Come to School*, and is currently working on a book on writing in the early childhood classroom. Dr. Cooper consults regularly with public and private school teachers, as well as parent groups.

Dr. Eleanor K. Sypher, a former educator, is Executive Director of the Van Ameringen Foundation, which funds clinical programs for the mentally ill and emotionally disturbed, in Northeastern USA. She serves on the Board of the House of the Redeemer. Dr. Sypher holds a Ph.D. in Greek and Latin from Columbia University.

## **Management Partner**

None

## **Institutional Partner**

The Friends of the Bronx Academy Foundation ("The Friends") is the founding organization of the Bronx Charter School for Children and will serve as the primary institutional partner. This organization will support the launch of the School and continue as a fundraising and support organization for the School. The mission of The Friends will be to provide the resources needed to help the charter Schools obtain its goals for student performance. Fundraising will be the primary responsibility of The Friends. The Friends, whose members have experience in the communities in the South Bronx, will use their neighborhood contact network and communication channels to facilitate student recruiting, advertisement, and public relations.

## **Curriculum / Assessment / Instruction**

- The primary mission of the Bronx Charter School for Children is to provide academic curriculum supplemented with enrichment activities and services that meet a broad range of student needs. The three major areas of focus are creation of academic skills; establishment of a strong foundation of knowledge; and development of personal and human values. The school will provide a supportive and academically challenging place where children will have the opportunity to attain strong skills in language arts and mathematics. Students, teachers, parents, and community members will work together to create a learning environment that emphasizes academic achievement, builds positive self-esteem and healthy living habits, and develops resourceful, responsible, thoughtful citizens.
- During the early years, the academic program will place particular emphasis on comprehensive literacy, development of English language learning while honoring the languages of the community, integration of reading and writing skills with content, and promotion of independent and curious learners.
- The Bronx Charter School for Children will administer the New York State Board of Regents Test (4<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies, the CTB McGraw Hill Tests (3<sup>rd</sup> Grade English Language Arts, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Mathematics, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics) along with qualitative and quantitative teacher assessments.
- The Bronx Charter School for Children will administer the Home Language Identification Survey to obtain information about students from homes where languages other than English are spoken. The school will provide a program of English as a Second Language to address the needs of LEP students. An English Language Learning Coordinator/Teacher who is part of the program will be responsible for teaching children, assisting other professionals to adapt curriculum and provide appropriate strategies and resources, while working closely with parents of these children.

- The School will provide equal access and will comply with IDEA regulations and guidelines with regard to accommodating the disabilities of the students. The School will have an "inclusion" policy. A full-time Special Education Coordinator/Teacher will be responsible for teaching children and adapting curriculum, coordinating services, leading staff development for other teachers and staff, working closely with the CSE to ensure that the students' IEPs are in place, ensuring compliance with Child Find and FERPA, and working closely with parents.
- A special education teacher will be hired as the school expands.
- In addition to four weeks of staff development before school opens in August 2003, the School intends to conduct frequent and ongoing staff development sessions once the school opens. All teachers will be expected to meet together with the School Director from 4-4:45pm, two times per week. At least one of the meetings will be devoted to staff development. Five days of staff development have been included in the school calendar
- The school day will be open for eight hours each day for academic programs and will operate 191 days per year.

### **Governance**

- The Board of Trustees will have the final authority for policy and operational decisions regarding the charter school.
- The Director, a non-voting member, will have overall responsibility for all aspects of the School. His/her primary responsibility will be to ensure that the School fulfills its mission and vision as described in the charter.

### **Students**

- In the first year of operation, the school will enroll 132 students (66 in Kindergarten and 66 in grade 1). By the fourth year of operation, the student population will equal 308 students.

### **Budget/Facilities**

- Approximately \$892,849 in start-up funds is required.
- The school will be located in Bronx, New York. The proposed site will be ADA compliant. The proposed facility is under construction and is available. Approximately 15,000 square feet of rentable space, as well as basement level, is available with a price of \$18 per rentable square foot per annum, plus utilities.
- The school will use six classrooms in the first year of operation.
- A proposed budget, in the amount of \$1,423,285 for the first year, is provided.

### **Personnel**

- In the first year of operation, the school will employ one Director, one Assistant Director, one Administrative Assistant, one Arts/PE teacher, one English Language Learner Coordinator/Teacher, six teachers, one Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, and 3 paraprofessionals. The nurse, custodian, psychologist/social worker will be employed on a half-time basis with a total of 16.5 employees for the first year of operation .

- The school will strive to maintain the ratio of not more than 22 students per teacher throughout the five years of the charter.

### **Fiscal Impact**

- The proposed budget represents less than .01% of the budget of the New York City school district
- Programmatic and fiscal audits will comply with all requirements made of public schools. The School will employ a New York State licensed public accountant or certified public accountant to perform the fiscal audit. In addition, the School will ensure that it is conducted in accordance with GAAP issued by the U.S. Comptroller General.

### **Community Support**

- Signatures of 127 parents who reside in the community supporting the school were submitted.
- Letters of support have been received from local politicians and business people including Senator Charles Schumer, Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion, and Ronnie Eldridge.

### **Recommendation**

Approve the application.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

1) The charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations; (2) the applicants can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and (3) granting the application 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.

**New York State Education Department**

**Summary of Charter School Review**

***Summary of Applicant Information***

**Name of Proposed Charter School:** Pinnacle Charter School

**Address:** TBD

**Applicant(s):** Judith Schiffert, Heidi Rotella, Kathleen Wilson, Hans Schiffert, Sherrie Quagliana, and James Notaro

**Anticipated Opening Date:** September 8, 2003

**District of Location:** Buffalo City School District

**Charter Entity:** Board of Regents

**Institutional Partner(s):** None

**Management Partner(s):** None

**Grades Served:** K-3 (K-8)

**Projected Enrollment:** 160 (540)

***Application Highlights***

**Applicants**

Dr. Schiffert teaches healthcare administration at D'Youville College in Buffalo. Ms. Rotella is the Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction at the Lancaster Central School District. Ms. Wilson is registered dietician and is a Home and Careers teacher for the Buffalo Public Schools. Mr. Schiffert is a special education teacher for the Jefferson-Lewis BOCES. Ms. Quagliana is a parent and is also a certified business teacher. Dr. Notaro is a pharmacist in West Seneca.

## **Institutional/Management Partner**

None

## **Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction**

- The educational program will embrace the principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools, with communication as its focus.
- A year-round calendar will consist of a 187-day cycle from August through July, structured into trimesters.
- Students will stay with the same teacher for two years.
- The school day will run from 8:30 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.
- Extended academic periods will be monitored by appropriately certified personnel, and will involve cross-grade students within an academic focus.
- Coaching will be a prominent pedagogy; teaching and learning are documented and assessed with tools based upon student performance of real tasks.
- The curriculum is aligned with all seven Learning Standard areas.
- The curriculum is integrated into the elementary and intermediate learning standards.
- Multiple forms of evidence of student learning will be used.
- Academic Intervention Services will be provided to students based upon identified need.
- The Reading Recovery, FastForWord, and Breakthrough to Literacy programs will also be used.

## **Governance**

- The board of trustees will consist of between nine and 11 members.
- A parent and the chief academic officer (i.e., principal) will sit on the board of trustees as voting members.
- A School Improvement Team, which is an outcomes advisory group, will be established. Its role is to develop, execute, and monitor the School Improvement Plan.
- A Family Council will be established to represent parents/guardians, and will be headed by a parent volunteer. It will organize activities for fostering school growth (e.g., fundraising).

## **Students**

- The school will serve 160 students in grades K-3 in its first year, growing to 540 students in grades K-8 by the fifth year of the charter.
- Two sections of each grade level will be used.
- The maximum number of students per section is 20, with a 20:1 student/teacher ratio.
- No specific population is targeted.



### **Budget/Facilities**

- The first year's budget is estimated to be \$1,793,280.
- The estimated adjusted expense per pupil for Buffalo students during the 2003-04 school year is \$9,348.
- A final site has yet to be selected from several possibilities. The applicants have provided evidence that several sites are available that will meet the school's budget, location, and size parameters.

### **Fiscal Impact**

- The anticipated payment to be made to the charter school by the Buffalo Public Schools is \$1,495,680 (160 students x \$9,348).
- Based upon a projected adjusted expense per pupil of \$9,348 for the 2003-04 school year, and based upon a projected 2003-04 district budget of \$443,941,834 (which represents a similar percent increase from 2002-03 to 2003-04 as between 2000-01 and 2001-02), the projected fiscal impact upon the Buffalo Public Schools would be 0.34 percent.
- Overall cumulative fiscal impact of all charter schools upon the Buffalo Public Schools for the 2003-04 school year is projected to be slightly above six percent.

### **Personnel**

- All teachers and administrators will be certified.
- In Year 1, 13.5 FTE teachers will be hired.
- By Year 5, 39 FTE teachers will be hired.

### **Community Support**

- The application contains petitions with parent signatures indicating that 71 students would be interested in attending during the 2003-04 school year.
- Additional outreach would commence upon the granting of a charter.
- No comments were received from the Buffalo City School District regarding this application.

### **Recommendation**

Approve the application.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

(1) The charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations; (2) the applicants can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and (3) granting the application 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.

**New York State Education Department**

**Summary of Charter School Review**

***Summary of Applicant Information***

**Name of Proposed Charter School:** Syracuse Academy of Science Charter School

**Address:** 1408 Park Street, Syracuse, NY 13208 (tentatively)

**Applicant(s):** Ehat Ercanli, Yildiray Yildirim, Bulent Cetinkaya, Patricia Coban, and Selami Tezcan

**Anticipated Opening Date:** September 3, 2003

**District of Location:** Syracuse City School District

**Charter Entity:** Board of Regents

**Management Partner(s):** None

**Grades Served:** 7-9 (7-12)

**Projected Enrollment:** 200 (350)

***Application Highlights***

**Applicant(s)**

Dr. Ehat Ercanli is an assistant professor at Syracuse University and the former founder of two charter schools in the state of Ohio. He is a resident of Syracuse.

Dr. Yildiray Yildirim is an assistant professor at Syracuse University and a resident of Ithaca.

Bulent Cetinkaya is a doctoral student in mathematics education, a mathematics tutor at a public high school in Syracuse, and a resident of Syracuse.

Patricia Coban is a teacher in a public school district and a resident of Moravia.

Selami Tezcan is a doctoral student at Syracuse University, a research and project engineer, and a resident of Virginia.

### **Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction**

- The charter school proposes for all its students a rigorous academic education with a college preparatory focus.
- The charter school would inculcate productive and positive attitudes, provide individualized instruction through individual education plans for every student, promote learning through community service, and involve tutoring that features different instructional methods than those used in regular classrooms.
- Through tutoring, counseling, mentoring, apprenticeship programs, and family outreach, the school proposes to eradicate achievement gaps for students who may be academically at-risk.
- Students will have opportunities to participate in student exchange programs.
- The school expects that its students will exceed the State Learning Standards.

### **Governance**

- The school would have a minimum of five trustees.
- The applicants would be the initial trustees.

### **Students**

- The school would serve 200 students in grades 7-9 in the first year.
- The school expects to have three classes in grades 7 and 8 and two classes in grade 9, with 25 students per class.
- The school expects to expand by adding one grade per year; its student population would expand by 50 per year with the admission of 50 new seventh graders.

### **Budget/Facilities**

- The proposed facility was previously used as a parochial school.
- To prepare the facility and educational program for start-up, the applicants will rely on commitments from private donors and will apply for federal and state grants.

### **Personnel**

- The school would have thirteen teachers and two classroom aides.
- One teacher would be a special education coordinator/teacher.
- Three of the teachers would teach art, music, and physical education.

### **Fiscal and Programmatic Impact**

- The estimated fiscal impact on the Syracuse City School District would be \$1,392,400 the first year, which is approximately 0.6 percent of the district's expenditures.

- Over the five years of the proposed charter school, assuming increases of 3 percent per year in AEP and 3 percent per year in the district's budget, the cost of the charter school as a percentage of the district's budget would increase to 1.0 percent in its fourth and fifth years.
- The cumulative fiscal impact of charter schools on the Syracuse City School District for the 2003-04 school year would be between 4.5 – 5.0 percent, depending upon the actual number and cost of students attending charter schools as compared with the actual 2003-04 district approved operating budget.
- The applicants suggest that possible collaborative projects with school districts, including science fairs and science Olympiads, will be inspirational and that the charter school will model quality schooling.

### **Community Support**

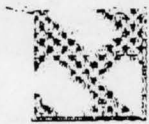
- The application contains ten letters of support from community leaders.
- The applicants surveyed community residents door-to-door and received indications of support from 176 parents expressing interest in SACSCS.
- The Syracuse School District did not submit any comments concerning the proposed charter school.
- The Department did not receive any correspondence from the community opposing the charter school.

### **Recommendation**

Approve the application.

### **Reason for Recommendation**

(1) The charter school described in the application meets the requirements set out in Article 56 of the Education Law, and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations; (2) the applicants can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner; and (3) granting the application 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.



READNET™

THE READNET BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL  
AT METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

*Jo*  
*11/14/02*  
*Copy sent to Lisa*

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER

NOV 17 2002

OFFICE OF COLLEGE AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

November 7, 2002

Ms. Shelia Evans-Tranum  
Associate Commissioner  
Office of New York City School and Community Services  
55 Hanson Place, Room 400  
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Dear Ms. Evans-Tranum:

Pursuant to our comprehensive plan that we sent you at the end of October, we would like to update you on other changes with the ReadNet Bronx Charter School (RBCS):

1. You may have noticed that our letterhead has changed to the ReadNet Bronx Charter School at Metropolitan College (formerly Audrey Cohen College) of New York. The college officially changed its name, however, this change does not in any way affect our partnership agreement or the charter. Stephen Greenwald and I continue as co-founders, to collaborate on the mission of RBCS.

Therefore, we would like to request a material change in the name of our school to be officially the ReadNet Bronx Charter School at Metropolitan College of New York, should this be necessary.

2. Currently, Gregory Freelon will be unable to continue as Co-Director of RBCS. This may be temporary; however, to be assured of consistent leadership, we are in the midst of a job search and are interviewing candidates to replace Mr. Freelon and will keep you informed. Until the RBCS Board of Directors makes a final decision on the best suitable candidate, I will assume responsibility for all areas originally handled by Mr. Freelon. Correspondence will be sent to our offices at 116 E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.
3. Since we are entering a period of heavy construction at our new site at 429-431 E. 148<sup>th</sup> Street in the Bronx and until the construction is completed and we are able to set-up our administrative offices in the new building, again please re-direct all RBCS mail to our offices at 116 E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Thank you for your continued support of our endeavors at the ReadNet Bronx Charter School. We are confident in the plan that we have outlined and look forward to our opening next Fall. If you would like more information with regards to any of the above items, please contact me at (212) 838-2344.

Sincerely,

Robin Hubbard  
Co-Founder

☐ The ReadNet Bronx Charter School  
429-431 E. 148<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bronx, NY 10451  
212 838-2344  
212 980-1741

☐ The ReadNet Foundation  
116 E. 63<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10021  
212 838-2344  
212 644-0871