



Department of Education Approves Six Charter Schools to Open in September

For Immediate Release

Contact: Mike Yaple
Rich Vespucci
609-292-1126

Date: July 19, 2013

Trenton, NJ – Focused on increasing the number of high-quality school options for high-need students across the state, the Christie Administration today approved six new charter schools to open in September. Today's action, along with the five charter schools closed this year through the Department's strengthened accountability system, brings the total number of charter schools in New Jersey to 87. Each of the schools approved today was previously approved in one of the Department's new application rounds, and received final approval after completing a "preparedness review" this month.

"Though they serve only a small percentage of New Jersey students, we are strongly committed to expanding the number of high-quality public school options for all New Jersey students, especially those who are struggling academically," said Commissioner Chris Cerf. "While they are not right for all students, recent studies show that New Jersey charter school students make larger learning gains in both reading and math than their traditional public school peers, and so we must continue to encourage the expansion of high-quality charter schools."

In December, Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) released a comprehensive report on charter school performance in New Jersey. Using a matched student comparison, CREDO found that, on average, students in New Jersey charter schools learned significantly more than their virtual counterparts in traditional public schools in reading and mathematics. The achievement is especially pronounced in Newark.

The CREDO report states: "On average, charter students in New Jersey gain an additional two months of learning in reading over their traditional public school counterparts. In math, the advantage for charter students is about three months of additional learning in one school year. Charter students in Newark gain an additional seven and a half months in reading and nine months in math."

The Department conducts a multi-stage approval process to ensure that all charter applications approved will become high-quality schools. Each year, the Department of Education conducts a "preparedness review" to evaluate whether a charter applicant approved in a previous round has the academic and operational components in place to offer a strong educational program. Applicants submit information to the Department by June 30, and the Commissioner reviews that information to determine which approved charter applicants will receive their final charter to open their doors in September.

"We must hold a high bar for any school that serves New Jersey students, and we are confident that these schools have the academic and operational components in place to provide a high-quality choice on day one," said Commissioner Cerf.

Over the past two years, the Department has increased its oversight and accountability for charter schools. Through a partnership with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), the Department during that time has opened 31 new charter schools, closed 10 schools for poor academic performance or organizational and fiscal issues, and put another 21 schools on probation.

"Accountability is important, and we have and will continue to hold every charter school accountable both for the quality of its educational program and for equality of access to all students," said Commissioner Cerf.

Charter Schools Approved to Open September 2013				
School Name	District(s)	County	Year 1: Grades/ Enrollment	Year 4: Grades/ Enrollment
Camden Community Charter School	Camden	Camden	K-5/150	K-8/950
Compass Academy Charter School	Millville, Vineland, Pittsgrove	Cumberland	K-2/114	K-5/228
Hope Community Charter School	Camden	Camden	K-1/132	K-4/330

Jersey City Global Charter School	Jersey City	Hudson	K-2/240	K-6/486
Paterson Arts and Science Charter School	Paterson	Passaic	K-3/306	K-6/486
Philip's Academy Charter School	Newark, Irvington, East Orange	Essex	K-8/300	K-8/300