



It's about great public schools.

# Creating Effective Community Engagement

## New Charter Law: *A11310 Section 2852, Subdivision 9-a*

“That the applicant has conducted public outreach, in conformity with a thorough and meaningful public review process prescribed by the Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, to solicit community input regarding the proposed charter school and to address comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students.”

# Community Engagement Steps

1. Know and believe in your proposed school model well- represent it clearly and make sure that it is relevant to the community you want to serve
2. Identify community concerns & educational needs unmet currently in the community
3. Conduct thorough research & data-gathering of community demographics and statistics
4. Hold in-person meetings with community leaders and community based organizations to establish relationships
5. Seek out best-practice sharing with local schools

\*\*\*\*Documentation of all outreach\*\*\*\*

# Authorizer Criteria: Community Partnerships

- Demonstrate vision/strategy for community involvement tied to the school's mission and program
- Identify specific organizations with which you proposed school is already working or likely to partner
- Provide evidence that planned partnerships are realistic and achievable (i.e. letters of support or commitments to provide or share resources)
- Understanding and formalizing the roles & responsibilities of your partnering organization and your proposed school
- Meeting with groups of local parents and interacting with community members in their native language

# Authorizer Criteria: Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Evidence of Demand

- Strategies on how the school will be publicized & marketed throughout the community to a broad cross-section of families and prospective students
- Strategies you will use to reach families that are traditionally less informed about educational options (i.e. parent signatures, letters of intent to enroll, or documentation of community or family demand for the proposed school)
- Deliberate & sustained plan to reach out to parents in the community for whom English is not the primary language, including strategies for communication
- Provide evidence of: desire for alternatives in proposed district, waiting lists at other charter schools in same geographic vicinity, insufficiency of available alternatives

# Authorizer Criteria: District Support

- District's willingness to develop ongoing relationship with the proposed charter school
- If no letter from district, provide evidence of attempts to establish a relationship with district and the results of the outreach

# Authorizer Criteria: Community Feedback

## \*\* SUNY Specific

- Communicate to community how educational program for students to be served
- Comment & feedback process to proposed plan will be collected & reviewed
- Procedures for comments & suggestions will be evaluated and revision to proposed program deemed appropriate
- How comments & decisions will be documented
- How are you going to collect and what are you going to do with the comments/ information once you get it? How does it inform your school design?

# Goals of Community Engagement

- Partnering effectively with parents, community-based organizations, elected officials, district schools, and other charter schools
- Build an effective parent base
- Understand fully the needs of the community the proposed school will be serving and establish the need for your school
- Inform all stakeholders of your interests in creating a school in order to engender support
- Lay the groundwork for comprehensive and fair student recruitment



# Community Engagement & Advocacy Allies

- New York Charter Schools Association
- National Alliance of Public Charter Schools
- Democrats for Education Reform (Education Reform Now)
- Center for Innovative Education- Public Education Association
- Democracy Builders
- Charter Schools and Charter School Networks