

Resolution on Proposed New Charter Schools in Buffalo

Introduced by: Sharon Belton-Cottman, President & Ferry District Member & Lawrence Scott, Member-at-Large; Paulette Woods, Central District Member; Dr. Kathy Evans-Brown, East District Member

August 21, 2019

Whereas, the Buffalo Board of Education approved a [Resolution on District-Wide Moratorium on Charter Schools](#), on September 20, 2017 (see attachment);

Whereas, there are seventeen charter schools operating in Buffalo and four new Charter Schools for Buffalo have submitted applications to NYSED, which were presented in a mandatory hearing to the Buffalo Board of Education, on July 17, 2019;

Whereas, the applicants provided minimal information, data, and evidence for particular claims about programming and staffing, particularly related to students with disabilities and behavioral challenges, and had much difficulty providing additional information and clarification to BOE Member questions;

Whereas, the NYSED Charter School Office indicates that an application for a charter “may be submitted by one or more individuals who are teachers, parents, school administrators, or community residents...”;

Whereas, the NYSED Charter School Office indicates that “the Board of Regents will only approve applications that clearly demonstrate a strong capacity for establishing and operating high quality charter school” and “clear evidence of the capacity of the founding group to implement the proposal and operate the school effectively”;

Whereas, all of the applicants were selective in the groups and individuals who they met with in Buffalo as a part of their application and none of the applicants met with Buffalo BOE Members, with the exception of one applicant who met with a former BOE member;

Whereas, the projected expense in the Buffalo Public Schools 2019-20 annual budget for charter schools is \$133.9 million and the Chief Financial Officer of Buffalo Public Schools projects [an additional annual expense of \\$33.2 million](#), after five years, if all of these charter schools are approved (see attachment);

Whereas, the applicants for Buffalo Academy of Science II are affiliated with [Gulen charter schools](#), which have long been [scrutinized in New York and in other states for board members' conflicts of interest, suspect financial dealings, and mandated corrective action plans](#) (see attachment), including ongoing audits from the NYS Comptroller, since 2013;

Whereas, the applicants for Citizenship & Science do not live in Buffalo, had never heard of the Education Bargain- Buffalo’s collaborative vision guiding reform in education in Buffalo- and experienced a great deal of difficulty answering questions from BOE Members;



Whereas, the applicants for Nickel City charter school included a photo of students in a Buffalo Public School in their public presentation, without proper consent from parents to include such photo;

Resolved, the Buffalo Board of Education requests the New York State Board of Regents reject these charter applications due to:

1. not meeting NYSED Charter Office requirements for:
 - a. applicant background/experience
 - b. failure to “clearly demonstrate a strong capacity for establishing and operating high quality charter school” and “clear evidence of the capacity of the founding group to implement the proposal and operate the school effectively”; and
2. impeding on Buffalo Public Schools’ commitment to sustain and grow the Education Bargain with parents and students to ensure access, equity, opportunity, and quality throughout our education system.