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Department of Education Receives [18 Charter School Applications](#)

The New Jersey Department of Education today announced that it has received 18 new applications for charter schools. The applications are for prospective charter schools that would open September 2002 or September 2003. Since the first round of applications was accepted in 1996, the Department of Education has received 204 applications.

The applications received this month will now undergo an extensive review by Department of Education staff and by Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr., who is expected to announce the successful applicants in this round on or about January 15, 2002.

"Charter schools are still going strong in New Jersey," Commissioner Gagliardi said. "They continue to attract individuals and groups who want to seize the opportunity to offer alternative public school choices for our young people. During the next several months, we will review these applications in detail to test the viability of their academic and fiscal plans."

Although the 18 applications received represent the lowest total in any one year since the Charter School Program Act of 1995 was enacted in 1996, Dr. Gagliardi cautioned against offering explanations without conducting an analysis.

"The success of our charter school law will not be measured by the number of applications we receive," Gagliardi said. "The true measure will be in the quality of education they offer to their students."

This September, 57 charter schools, including consolidated charter schools, are expected to open their doors to more than 13,000 students. Another six previously approved schools have opted for a planning year and will open in September 2002. Overall, charter schools now open have a combined waiting list of more than 4,000 students.

A charter school is a type of public school that is given greater flexibility in curriculum and instruction. New Jersey's charter school law establishes charter schools as places where educational innovation with fewer regulations can be carried out for possible use of successful programs and practices in schools throughout the state.

The Commissioner of Education has the authority to grant a charter for a four-year period and to renew initial charters for a five-year-period.

[Attached is a list of the applicants announced today.](#)