



## **NJDOE News**

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### **DOE Approves Six New Charter Schools, Renews 12**

Six new charter school applications have been approved and 12 existing charter schools were granted charter renewals, Department of Education officials announced today.

Benchmark Academy Charter High School, Corbin City region, Atlantic County and Central Jersey College Prep Charter School, Franklin Township region, Middlesex and Somerset counties will begin operating in the 2006-07 school year.

The remaining four schools will begin operating in the 2007-08 school year. They are: Bergen Arts and Science Charter School, Hackensack region, Bergen County; TLC Charter School, Cherry Hill, Camden County; Adelaide L. Sanford Charter School, Newark, Essex County; and Foundation Academy Charter School, Trenton, Mercer County.

"Charter schools give our students important choices," said Acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy. "I congratulate the founding members of our newest charter schools and wish them success as they prepare for their first year.

"We expect these charter schools will join an impressive group of schools that give students alternatives in their K-12 education," Davy said. "We know that there are students who benefit from a charter school education, and we're proud to support that opportunity."

Charter schools were established under a state law enacted in 1996 to expand public school choice and encourage school reform.

The law establishes charter schools as laboratories of educational innovation where new practices can be developed and implemented in schools throughout New Jersey. As of the start of the 2005-06 school year, 51 schools are serving approximately 14,900 students throughout the state.

The six applications approved were among 25 applications received by the Department of Education in July. Unsuccessful applicants are invited to reapply in the next round of the selection process. They may also request a meeting with staff from the Office of Vocational-Technical, Career and Innovative Programs to discuss the applications prior to reapplying.

State law permits initial charters to be granted for four years. Two intensive monitoring reviews are conducted during the first contract period: a program review in year two of the charter and a second review during year four in which the Commissioner is charged with determining whether the initial four-year charter should be renewed for another five years.

The 12 charter schools that received renewals for five years are (the first 10 first opened in 1997, the remaining two opened in 2002):

- o Elysian Charter School, Hoboken, Hudson County; Jersey City: renewed and approved to expand its enrollment from 270 to 288 students in 2006-07;
- o Community Charter School, Jersey City, Hudson County;
- o LEAP Academy University Charter School, Camden, Camden County: renewed and approved to expand its enrollment from 702 to 780 students in 2006-07;;
- o Learning Community Charter School, Jersey City, Hudson County: renewed and approved to expand its enrollment from 324 to 342 students in 2006-07;
- o North Star Academy Charter School, Newark, Essex County: renewed and approved to expand enrollment, grade levels and school sites over the next five years. The school currently serves a maximum of 400 students in grades 5-12; it is approved to serve a maximum of 1,281 students in grades K-12 by the 2010-11 school year.
- o Princeton Charter School, Princeton, Mercer County: renewed and approved to expand enrollment from

- 290 to 348 students over the next five years;
- o Robert Treat Charter School, Newark, Essex County;
  - o Soaring Heights Charter School, Jersey City, Hudson County: renewed and approved to expand enrollment from 200 to 220 students over the next five years;
  - o Sussex County Charter School for Technology, Sparta, Sussex County: renewed and approved to expand enrollment, grade levels and facilities over the next five years. The school currently enrolls a maximum of 100 students in grades 7-8; it is approved to expand its facility and add grades 6 and 9 in 2008-09 to reach a maximum enrollment of 200 students by 2010-11.
  - o Trenton Community Charter School, Trenton, Mercer County;
  - o TEAM Academy Charter School, Newark, Essex County: renewed and approved to expand enrollment, grade levels served and facilities. The school currently has a maximum enrollment of 320 students in grades 5-8; it is approved to expand its enrollment at its current facility to 360 students. In addition, the approval was granted for TEAM academy to start a second middle school campus with 90 grade five students in 2006-07; and a high school enrolling 90 grade nine students in 2007-08. The new middle school enrollment can expand to a maximum of 360 students by 2009-10; the new high school enrollment can expand to a maximum of 450 students by 2010-11.
  - o University Academy Charter High School, Jersey City, Hudson County: renewed and approved to reduce maximum enrollment from 450 to 425 in 2006-07 and from 425 to 400 in in 2007-08.

[A complete list of the six new programs and information about them, as submitted by school officials, is attached.](#) For more information, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.