

V.B.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

June 1, 2016

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the distribution of 9,572 seats in state charter schools and 126 seats at a local charter school for the 2016-17 school year and, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, grants enrollment waivers for seven schools, as delineated in the June 1, 2016, memorandum to the Board, "Approval of Charter School Enrollments," and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved by a vote of _____, this first day of June, Two Thousand Sixteen.

Signed: _____
Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 1, 2016

SUBJECT: Approval of Charter School Enrollments

Introduction

In accordance with Section 10-66bb(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) seeks the State Board of Education's (SBE) approval of charter school enrollments for the 2016-17 school year. Consistent with C.G.S. §10-66bb(c), the CSDE requests, within the confines of the state budget enacted by the Connecticut General Assembly, to apportion available seats based on each school's capacity and demonstrated record of achievement.

Background

The CSDE seeks the SBE's approval of charter school enrollments on an annual basis. There are currently 23 state charter schools in Connecticut serving 9,201 students and one local charter school serving 102 students. The CSDE proposes allocating a total of 9,572 seats in state charter schools and 126 seats in a local charter school during the 2016-17 school year. In May 2016, the CSDE asked each school to confirm its 2016-17 enrollment projections. The 9,572 state charter seats represent an increase of 371 seats compared to the 2015-16 SBE-approved enrollment levels. Applying the statutory per-pupil rate for state charter schools of \$11,000 for 2016-17, these totals are within the state budget appropriation for state charter schools. Enrollments are disaggregated and detailed in Table 1 (attached).

Elm City Montessori School (ECMS), a local charter school, will enroll 126 students from the City of New Haven (through the local charter school program) and 14 students from suburban districts (through the Open Choice program) during the 2016-17 school year. Using the appropriate statutory per-pupil rate of \$3,000 for local charter schools, the seat request for ECMS is within the state budget appropriation during the 2016-17 school year. In accordance with C.G.S. § 10-266aa, New Haven Public Schools and ECMS entered into an agreement in 2014 to enroll ten percent of ECMS' students from suburban districts through the Open Choice program.

State Charter School Seat Proposals

Charter schools are listed below in two categories: (A) schools requesting waivers to increase enrollment beyond the statutory limit; and (B) schools not requesting enrollment waivers. This information is also summarized in the attached table.

A. Schools Requesting Waivers to Increase Enrollment

C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(1) places an enrollment cap on the number of students that a state charter school may enroll (300 seats for schools serving Grades K-8 and 250 for all other grade levels). The cap may be waived by the SBE pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(2) for those schools that have a demonstrated record of achievement. Schools must apply to the SBE for permission to expand enrollment beyond the statutory limit. CSDE staff reviewed the applications and schools' records of achievement. Applications were received from: (1) Achievement First Bridgeport Academy; (2) Achievement First Hartford Academy; (3) Amistad Academy; (4) Elm City College Preparatory School; (5) Great Oaks, (6) Highville Charter School; and (7) Odyssey Community School. The tables below show the 2014-15 Next Generation Accountability Index for each charter school seeking a waiver, the host district and the state.

1. Achievement First Bridgeport Academy (AFBA) (host district: Bridgeport)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 27 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 1,015 students for a total of 1,042 seats. The requested seats are for expansion across existing Grades K-12. AFBA draws 100 percent of its students from the host district. AFBA's index outpaces the host district and falls 3.6 percent below the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Achievement First Bridgeport Academy	72.5
Bridgeport, the host district	59.3
State Accountability Index	76.1

2. Achievement First Hartford Academy (AFHA) (host district: Hartford)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 5 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 1,120 students for a total of 1,125 seats. The requested seats are for expansion of Grade 7. AFHA draws 100 percent of its students from the host district. AFHA's index outpaces the host district and falls 5.9 percent below the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Achievement First Hartford Academy	70.2
Hartford, the host district	61.0
State Accountability Index	76.1

3. Amistad Academy (host district: New Haven)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 27 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 1,037 students for a total of 1,064 seats. The requested seats are for

expansion across existing Grades K-12. Amistad draws 100 percent of its students from the host district. Amistad Academy’s index outpaces the host district and the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Amistad Academy	79.7
New Haven, the host district	62.0
State Accountability Index	76.1

4. Elm City College Preparatory School (ECCP) (host district: New Haven)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 14 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 705 students for a total of 719 seats. The requested seats are for expansion across existing Grades K-12. ECCP draws 100 percent of its students from the host district. ECCP’s index outpaces the host district and the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Elm City College Preparatory	77.1
New Haven, the host district	62.0
State Accountability Index	76.1

5. Great Oaks Charter School (GOCS) (host district: Bridgeport)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 100 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 225 students for a total of 325 seats. The requested seats are for expansion of Grade 8. GOCS opened in the fall of 2014 serving Grade 6 and is completing its second year of operation serving Grades 6 and 7. The school draws 100 percent of its students from the host district. Currently, the school serves 114 Grade 6 students. The charter school’s index falls below the state and Bridgeport. However, it is important to note that GOCS operated for only 6 ½ months prior to administering the state assessments. Without SBE approval of an expansion of seats, GOCS will only be able to serve 25 incoming Grade 6 students without exceeding its cap, thereby compromising the continued viability of the school. CSDE’s expectation is that GOCS will, in the coming year, continue to focus on its mission which will result in an increase in 2016-17 student performance levels.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Great Oaks Charter School	50.5
Bridgeport, the host district	59.3
State Accountability Index	76.1

6. Highville Charter School (host district: New Haven)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 42 seats to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 460 students for a total of 502 seats. The requested seats are for expansion across existing Grades PK-12. Highville draws 53 percent of its students from New Haven, 34 percent from Hamden and 13 percent from 12 area towns. Highville's index outpaces the host district and the second largest district it serves but falls 1.2 percent below the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Highville Charter School	74.9
New Haven, the host district	62.0
Hamden	74.2
State Accountability Index	76.1

7. Odyssey Community School (host district: Manchester)

The CSDE recommends granting an enrollment waiver to add 1 seat to the 2015-16 SBE approved enrollment of 327 students for a total of 328 seats. The requested seat is for expansion across existing Grades K-8. Odyssey draws 80 percent of its students from Manchester, 9 percent from East Hartford and 11 percent from nine area towns. Odyssey's index outpaces the host district, the second largest district it serves, and the state.

Charter School/Host District/State	Accountability Index
Odyssey Community School	80.6
Manchester, the host district	69.8
East Hartford	64.3
State Accountability Index	76.1

B. Charters Not Requesting Enrollment Waivers

Seven state charter schools requested seats under the statutory enrollment caps and do not require waivers for the 2016-17 school year. They include: Booker T. Washington, Brass City, Common Ground High School, Explorations, Stamford Academy, Stamford Charter School for Excellence and Trailblazers Academy.

Recommendation

The CSDE recommends that the SBE approve the distribution of 9,572 seats in state charter schools and 126 seats in a local charter school for the 2016-17 school year and, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes grant enrollment waivers for seven schools, as delineated in this report.

Prepared by: Robert E. Kelly, Charter School Program Manager
Bureau of Choice Programs

Reviewed by: Mark Linabury, Chief
Bureau of Choice Programs

Approved by: Charlene Russell-Tucker
Chief Operating Officer

Table 1

Charter School Name	Host District	2015-16 SBE- Approved Enrollment	2016-17 Enrollment Proposed	Enrollment Increase vs. 2015-16 SBE- Approved Enrollment	2015-16 Grade Levels	Approved New Grade Expansion
*Achievement First Bridgeport	Bridgeport	1,015	1,042	27	K-12	None
*Achievement First Hartford	Hartford	1,120	1,125	5	K-12	7
*Amistad	New Haven	1,037	1,064	27	K-12	None
Booker T. Washington	New Haven	180	242	62	K-2	3
Brass City	Waterbury	182	216	34	PK-3	4
The Bridge	Bridgeport	280	280	-	7-12	None
Capital Prep Harbor	Bridgeport	250	250	-	6-12	None
Common Ground	New Haven	185	195	10	9-12	None
*Elm City College Prep.	New Haven	705	719	14	K-12	None
Explorations	Winsted	90	92	2	9-12	None
*Great Oaks	Bridgeport	225	325	100	6-7	8
*Highville	New Haven	460	502	42	PK-11	12
Integrated Day	Norwich	330	330	-	PK-8	None
ISAAC	New London	270	270	-	6-8	None
Jumoke	Hartford	795	765	(30)	PK-12	None
New Beginnings	Bridgeport	497	497	-	PK-8	None
*Odyssey	Manchester	327	328	1	K-8	None
Park City Prep	Bridgeport	360	360		5-8	None
Path	Windham	200	200	-	9-12	None
Side by Side	Norwalk	236	236	-	PK-8	None
Stamford Academy	Stamford	149	160	11	9-12	None
Stamford Charter School for Excl.	Stamford	168	224	56	PK-1	2
Trailblazers	Stamford	140	150	10	6-8	None
Total State Charter Schools	--	9,201	9,572	371		--
**Elm City Montessori School (Local Charter School)	New Haven	102	126	24	PK-1	2

*Enrollment waiver requested

**Local Charter School