

V.C.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

October 3, 2018

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, accepts the Commissioner's advisory and grants initial certificate of approval for a state charter to Norwalk Charter School for Excellence, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's October 3, 2018, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Approved, by a vote of _____ this third day of October, Two Thousand Eighteen.

Signed: _____
Dr. 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: October 3, 2018

SUBJECT: Approval of Norwalk Charter School for Excellence, Norwalk

Executive Summary

Introduction

Subsection (f) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S) requires that an application for the establishment of a state charter school be submitted to the State Board of Education (SBE) for approval, and filed with the local or regional board of education in the school district in which the charter school is to be located. The SBE may approve an application and grant the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter for the state charter school by a majority vote of the membership. The SBE may condition granting the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter based on the applicant meeting certain conditions determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary, and may authorize the Commissioner to release the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter when the Commissioner determines such conditions are met. Under Section 10-66bb(a) of the C.G.S. (as amended in 2015), if the SBE grants an initial certificate of approval for a charter, the SBE must submit a copy of its approval documents and a summary of comments made at the local public hearing concerning the proposed new charter school to the Education and Appropriation committees of the Legislature. Section 10-66bb(a) further provides that the Legislature may appropriate funds to CSDE to provide operating grants to charter schools, and, if such funds are appropriated, an initial certificate of approval for a charter shall be deemed effective as of July 1st of the first fiscal year for which such funds are appropriated. After an initial certificate of approval for a charter for a state charter school is deemed a charter pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(a)(2), such charter may be valid for a period of time of up to five years. The SBE may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of time of up to one year, in order for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services.

Background

On December 27, 2016, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) released a Request for Proposals for new state and local charter schools. Pursuant to Section 10-66bb(c) of the C.G.S., which requires the SBE annually to consider applications for proposed charter schools located in towns that have one or more Commissioner’s Network Schools or in a town designated as a low-achieving school district. The application for Norwalk Charter School For Excellence (NCSE), a proposed state charter school to be located in Norwalk, CT, was received on August 15, 2017.

NCSE’s proposed mission is a Grades PK-5 elementary school modeled after the Bronx Charter School For Excellence in New York and the Stamford Charter School For Excellence in Connecticut. NCSE indicates it will provide its students with a liberal arts curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The applicant states the curriculum has been developed and refined over the last two years of implementation at the modeled Stamford Charter School For Excellence.

It purports to hold all students to high performance expectations and will use a matrix of school-wide standards and performance benchmarks to guide instruction and monitor student progress throughout their enrollment. The school indicates the educational program was designed to address the needs of diverse learners entering the school with a variance of skills, knowledge, individual assets, and challenges. Teachers will utilize a cooperative learning approach and multisensory, hands-on, and inquiry-based activities to support learning. The school plans to offer a longer school day with additional instructional blocks allowing for differentiation, remediation, and enrichment activities.

NCSE proposes to open in July 2019, with the following growth plan:

	Grade PK	Grade K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Total
Year 1	56	56	56					168
Year 2	56	56	56	56				224
Year 3	56	56	56	56	56			280
Year 4	56	56	56	56	56	56		336
Year 5	56	56	56	56	56	56	56	392

Section 10-66bb(c) of the C.G.S. directs the SBE to give preference to certain applications. NCSE seeks to be considered for the following statutory preferences:

1. Serving high-need students including: students with a history of low academic performance, students who receive free or reduced price meals, students identified as requiring special education and students who are English learners.
2. Opening the charter school in a Priority School District.

Norwalk Charter School For Excellence Application Review Process

Application Review: A team composed of CSDE leadership appointed by the Commissioner of Education with expertise in curriculum, instruction, academics, finance, etc. reviewed the application. The application was evaluated based on the standards and review criteria detailed in the *Application Package for the Development of State and Local Charter Schools*. In the 19 sections of the application that were scored, Norwalk Charter School For Excellence scored 38.0 points out of a total possible 57 points, (Attachment A).

Public Hearing: Mr. Donald F. Harris, Jr., member of the State Board of Education, and two members of the CSDE staff presided over the public hearing on March 14, 2018, for the application on Norwalk Charter School For Excellence. The hearing was held in the City of Norwalk, the district in which the proposed school is to be located. Over 70 people attended the public hearing and 19 individuals including parents, students, educators, nonprofit leaders and community representatives spoke at the hearing: 15 individuals spoke in support of the application and four spoke in opposition of the application.

Invitation for Written Comments: The CSDE solicited comments from the Norwalk Board of Education and from the local and regional boards of education in towns contiguous to Norwalk, which include Darien, New Canaan, Westport and Wilton. A letter of comment was received from Dr. Steven J. Adamowski, Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools (Attachment B).

Recommendation with Conditions

I recommend the SBE consider the application and grant *initial certificate of approval* for a state charter to Norwalk Charter School for Excellence, subject to the following conditions:

1. If the initial certificate of approval for the state charter is deemed a charter pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(a)(2) based on legislative appropriation of funds, such charter may be valid for a period of three years.
2. Receipt of all completed documentation relating to facility requirements including safety, liability and insurance certifications prior to school opening.
3. Receipt of required and complete documentation relating to incorporation status and identification of governing board members prior to school opening.
4. SBE approval of a statutorily required contract between the Governing Council of Norwalk Charter School For Excellence and the SBE that sets forth the roles, powers, responsibilities and performance expectations of each party to the contract prior to school opening.

Prepared by: _____
Robert Kelly
Charter School Program Manager
Turnaround Office

Approved by: _____
Desi D. Nesmith, Chief Turnaround Officer
Turnaround Office

APPENDIX G: APPLICATION RUBRIC

Proposed Charter School Name: Norwalk Charter School for Excellence **Date:** 02 / 09 /2018

Directions: Using the rubric below, please apply the Review Standards to score each section of the RFP on a scale of “0 – Does Not Meet” to “3 – Exceeds”; evaluate each of the sub-indicators to arrive at an overall “Total Score” for each section. The total score for each section should reflect an average of the scores for each of the sub-indicators outlined for that section. Enter the total score for each section on the final “Evaluation Summary” page. Lastly, recommend whether to award the applicant preference(s).

Review Standards:	
0	Does Not Meet: The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.
1	Partially Meets: The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information in order to be considered reasonably comprehensive and demonstrate a clear vision of how the school will operate.
2	Meets: The response indicates solid preparation and a grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a reasonable and comprehensive response. It addresses the review criteria with information showing preparation and a clear, realistic picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the ability of the applicant to execute the vision described in the response.
3	Exceeds: The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. The response indicates thorough preparation, expertise, and a clear and compelling picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described in the response.

I. School Vision and Design						
1. Mission and Vision Statements	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Speak to the core purpose and key values of the school.					✓	
Communicate high academic standards for student success.					✓	
Illustrate a compelling vision for the school community.					✓	
Describe the ways in which the school will positively impact stakeholders in the school and community.					✓	
Justifications:						
Solid and clear picture of the vision and values of the school in which every child has the ability to succeed. Planned affiliation with the Stamford Charter School for Excellence.						
High academic standards and a “whatever it takes” attitude are incorporated into the key design elements of the transformative educational model.						
Parents as partners in the education of the students through workshops and trainings, as well as collaborations with the district, other schools, higher education institutions, and other organizations to share resources and best practices.						

2. Educational Philosophy	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Describes the founding group's core beliefs and values.					✓	
Demonstrates the willingness to embrace and serve the diverse needs of individual students.					✓	
Provides a compelling argument that the approach is likely to improve students' academic performance.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Application provides detailed response to the founding group's core beliefs and values of every child having the ability to succeed, have access to a free, high-quality education, and creating life-long learners.</p> <p>Evidence of willingness to embrace the needs of diverse learners through data driven instruction that is differentiated and uniquely tailored to individual students to promote optimal growth.</p> <p>Students academic performance will be encouraged through creative higher order thinking skills utilizing rigorous stem questions, inquiry-based activities, and interdisciplinary learning.</p>						
3. Curriculum	Total Score:	1.71	0	1	2	3
Explains the process to identify or develop curriculum to be used by the school and provides a rationale for the process.					✓	
Provides evidence of alignment to the Connecticut Core Standards for ELA and mathematics and NGSS for Science. Provides evidence demonstrating that the curriculum is likely to improve students' academic performance.					✓	
Provides evidence demonstrating that the curriculum is likely to improve students' academic performance.				✓		
Demonstrates accessibility and appropriateness for students at all levels, including ELs, students with disabilities, etc.				✓		
Provides evidence of alignment to the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for Science and Connecticut State Frameworks.					✓	
Describes a clear plan for the ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum.					✓	
Describes a process for monitoring and assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the curriculum.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>After much preamble to the limits of products, products and approaches seem to be selected without clear purpose.</p>						

4. Instruction	Total Score:	1.75	0	1	2	3
Describes the instructional methods or techniques that will be used to facilitate high-quality teaching and learning.					✓	
Demonstrates how instructional methods support high standards and are accessible and appropriate for all students.					✓	
Explains how the school will create a data-driven culture to meet a wide range of student needs.				✓		
Describes how the school will determine and provide for the professional development needs of the staff.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Instructional methods/techniques center on flexible, individualized differentiated instruction that centers on a co-teaching cohort model in order to address a broader spectrum of needs.</p> <p>NCSE will establish a highly accountable culture where all stakeholders are dedicated to the success of the students. The team approach to data-driven flexible groupings allows for targeted differentiated instruction.</p> <p>Application demonstrates a need to develop and capture data points, but does not go further. Data points provided are for the Bronx School of Excellence.</p> <p>The teachers at NCSE will be expected to complete 200 hours of professional growth each year. The professional development outlined in the plan will build teacher capacity and is aligned to the SEED model with teacher specific learning goals. Professional development activities will provide for continual improvement through ongoing professional learning, coaching, mentoring, and feedback cycles.</p>						
5. Student Assessment	Total Score:	1.00	0	1	2	3
Presents a comprehensive assessment system, including formative, benchmark, and summative assessments.				✓		
Indicates how the assessment system ensures the participation of all students on both the state mandated testing and other alternative assessments.				✓		
Explains how assessments will be used to determine, monitor, and report student, cohort, and school progress over time.				✓		
Provides a coherent assessment calendar, allowing opportunities for remediation.				✓		
Shows clear alignment between the curriculum, instructional philosophy, and assessments.		✓				
Demonstrates how assessment data will be used to improve curriculum and instruction.				✓		
Shows a clear process to use assessment data to apply appropriate and timely student interventions and support.				✓		
Presents a clear plan to share learning practices and experiences with the local or regional board of education of the town in which the proposed school is located.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>No clear instructional philosophy to integrate all assessments into a meaning whole. Incorrect reference to Multilingual Academic Support (MAS), discontinued and recently arrived English learners (EL). There is not a purposeful use of the different assessments. No mention of explicit assessment/instruction.</p>						

II. Strength of Organizational Effort						
1. Experience and Expertise of Founders	Total Score:	3.00	0	1	2	3
Demonstrates clear expertise and relevant experiences and/or qualifications of the founders.						✓
Specifies the role of the founding group in the development and launch of the proposed school.						✓
Identifies any organizations, individuals, or consultants that are partners in designing and launching the proposed school, and provide evidence of the partner’s ability to operate a high-quality school.						✓
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>The founders have a wide range of experiences in opening and operating successful school models. Although there is not currently a plan to partner with any other organizations, individuals or consultants, the application demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described.</p>						
2. School Governance and Management	Total Score:	1.71	0	1	2	3
Provides a viable governance structure and organizational chart showing proper oversight of various functions of the school.					✓	
Presents a clear picture of the officers and members, terms, election/appointment processes, and committees.					✓	
Specifies the criteria for selecting officers and members of the governing council.					✓	
Describes how the governing council will exercise its responsibility to oversee the operation of the school including, but not limited to, educational programs, governance and fiscal management, personnel, facility maintenance, and community outreach. Indicates how the governing council will hold the school accountable to stakeholders.					✓	
Provides resumes of initial council membership, showing a wide range of expertise and experiences.		✓				
Defines the roles, responsibilities, and interaction between council membership, committees, and school administration.					✓	
Presents the process by which the governing council will hire and evaluate the school administrator.					✓	
If applicable, provides evidence indicating the CMO’s ability to serve the intended student population; strong student outcomes and success at managing nonacademic school functions.		N/A				
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Application does not list initial members, only mentions term “founding members” who do not want to be on council.</p>						

3. School Leader	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
<i>For applicants with an identified school leader:</i> Provides the name, qualifications, experiences, certifications, and education of the proposed lead administrator; offers evidence to demonstrate whether the individual has a record of leading a high-quality school.		N/A				
<i>For applicants without an identified school leader:</i> Presents a plan for recruiting and hiring a proven school leader and clearly articulates the characteristics and skills that the proposed school will evaluate in selecting a leader.					✓	
Justifications: A solid plan for recruiting and hiring a school leader with some emphasis on a record of accomplishment is presented.						
4. Evidence of Support	Total Score:	3.00	0	1	2	3
Provides evidence that the proposed school is welcomed by the local community.						✓
Justifications: An impressive group of community supporters for the school is presented.						

III. Student Composition, Services, and Policies						
1. School Demographics	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Describes the needs and demographics of the community and student population to be served by the proposed school.						✓
Explains how the proposed school model meets the needs of students and will likely increase student achievement.				✓		
Provides a sound enrollment plan, including a clear rationale for grades served, enrollment, and growth.					✓	
Describes sound procedures for encouraging involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making.					✓	
Justifications: Purposed school model appears general in nature. Needs more specifics regarding programming and outcomes.						

2. Special Education	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Includes a comprehensive plan for educating students with disabilities.					✓	
Plans for adequate staffing to address the needs of students with disabilities and Section 504 Plans, including properly state-certified special education teachers(s).					✓	
Articulates a clear system to monitor student data and consider a student's eligibility for Section 504 services.					✓	
Presents a plan to engage the parents of students with disabilities.					✓	
Justifications: Application meets criteria and demonstrates the ability of the applicant to execute the vision described.						
3. English Learners (EL)	Total Score:	2.50	0	1	2	3
Provides a plan to identify and meet the learning needs of all EL students (e.g., screenings, assessments, exit criteria).						✓
Describes how the school will provide EL students with access to the general education curriculum.						✓
Describes how the school will involve the parents of EL students in the school, including through translation services.					✓	
Plans for adequate staffing to address the needs of EL students, including properly state-certified staff.					✓	
Justifications: Meets or exceeds rubric criteria.						
4. Admission Policy and Criteria	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a clear and coherent admissions policy and plan that complies with C.G.S. § 10-66bb.					✓	
Provides a viable plan to attract students and families, form a diverse student body and avoid discrimination.					✓	
Shows a commitment to reduce racial, ethnic, and/or economic isolation.					✓	
Justifications: Meets the standard – adequate response reasonably calculated to be successful.						

5. Student Discipline Policies	Total Score:	3.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a clear behavior management system that encourages positive behaviors and applies consistent sanctions and interventions in response to severe infractions.						✓
Offers educational alternatives for students who are expelled or suspended.						✓
Provides due process safeguards for all students, including those with disabilities.						✓
Justifications: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policies reference several CSDE guidance and memos. 2. Policies differentiate grade level sanctions per CSDE guidance. 3. Clarification needed regarding PK sanctions and needs revisiting no (Out of School Suspensions OSS). 4. General restorative approaches embedded. 						
6. Human Resource Policies	Total Score:	1.57	0	1	2	3
Defines competencies and professional standards necessary for hiring teachers, administrators, and all other school staff.					✓	
Creates processes for dismissing staff for conduct and performance issues.				✓		
Provides a sample job description that clearly articulates necessary staff competencies, expectations, and qualifications.					✓	
Provides clear and effective procedures to document efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff.					✓	
Describes a targeted staff size and plans for staff recruitment and retention.				✓		
Presents a system to evaluate and develop teachers and administrators.					✓	
Provides human resource policies around salaries, benefits, hiring, personnel contract, and affirmative action that align to the school mission, educational philosophy, students served, and budget.				✓		
Justifications: Provides methods of recruiting and hiring staff. Dismissal is at-will. Teacher evaluation is based on the SEED model.						

IV. School Viability						
1. Building Options	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a plan for identifying and acquiring a suitable facility to support the proposed school.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Facility search has sufficient details, including area of the city best suited to meet mission and vision, square footage, building amenities to satisfy needs, and planning for future growth of the school.</p>						
2. Financial Plan	Total Score:	1.75	0	1	2	3
Provides a thorough budget that reflects all commitments outlined in the application through the proposed school's fifth year of operation, and shows sound financial planning and the fiscal viability of the school.					✓	
Includes financial projections that account for all sources of revenue (e.g., state per-pupil grant; other federal, state, and private grants; donations and fundraising).					✓	
Provides a detailed budget narrative that explains budget line items and short- and long-term projections, offering a clear rationale for calculations and assumptions.				✓		
Presents a pre-opening budget statement detailing and explaining estimated start-up activities.					✓	
Provides a cash flow projection for the first year of operation that shows a sophisticated understanding of expenditures mapped against available revenue during the year.					✓	
Presents a schedule of borrowings and repayments that aligns to the pre-opening budget, the projected five-year budget, and the cash flow statement.				✓		
Presents a financial management system and processes aligned to GAAP with adequate internal controls, including a description of the fiscal staff positions, qualifications, and duties.					✓	
Describes how the school will track finances in its daily operations, and how the governing council will provide oversight.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Thorough budget, reflects all commitments outlined and shows financial planning.</p> <p>Private contributions are not detailed regarding where they will come from.</p> <p>A clear process for tracking finances, including financial polices as reflected in sample policy from the Bronx School for Excellence included with the application.</p>						

3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability	Total Score:	1.00	0	1	2	3
Identifies clear and operational goals at all levels (e.g., school-wide, grade-level, classroom, staff, and student).				✓		
Provides clear systems of accountability for all stakeholders.				✓		
Identifies robust data systems and processes to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness.				✓		
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Goals not clear at all levels. More a description of activities than accountability. Inadequate discussion of robust data system.</p>						
4. Timetable	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a thorough action plan, outlining activities leading up to the successful launch of the proposed school (e.g., projects, staff responsible, deadlines, status, and resource alignment).					✓	
Demonstrates strong forethought and project management, showing the team's ability to coordinate, manage, track, and execute multiple work streams simultaneously.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Clear action plan outlined in the timetable.</p>						

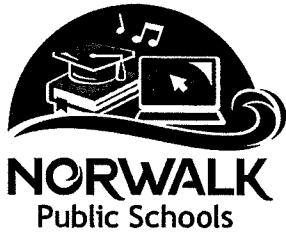
Evaluation Summary

Proposed Charter School Name: Norwalk Charter School for Excellence Date: 02 / 09 /2018

I. School Vision and Design		
1. Mission and Vision Statements	Score:	2.00
2. Educational Philosophy	Score:	2.00
3. Curriculum	Score:	1.71
4. Instruction	Score:	1.75
5. Student Assessment	Score:	1.00
II. Strength of Organizational Effort		
1. Experience and Expertise of Founders	Score:	3.00
2. School Governance and Management	Score:	1.71
3. School Leader	Score:	2.00
4. Evidence of Support	Score:	3.00
III. Student Composition, Services, and Policies		
1. School Demographics	Score:	2.00
2. Special Education	Score:	2.00
3. English Learners	Score:	2.50
4. Admission Policy and Criteria	Score:	2.00
5. Student Discipline Policies	Score:	3.00
6. Human Resource Policies	Score:	1.57
IV. School Viability		
1. Building Options	Score:	2.00
2. Financial Plan	Score:	1.75
3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability	Score:	1.00
4. Timetable	Score:	2.00
Total Score:		38.0

Section 4: Preferences

1a. Serving High-Need Student Populations through Establishment of Educational Programs	Yes	No
1b. Serving High-Need Student Populations by Using Specific Strategies to Attract, Enroll and Retain Students from the above populations	Yes	No
2. Turning Around an Existing School	Yes	No
3. Opening in a Priority School District or District with at Least 75 Percent Racial or Ethnic Minority Enrollment	Yes	No
4. Being a Higher Education Institution	Yes	No
5. Locating the School at a Work Site	Yes	No
Justifications:		



Steven J. Adamowski, Ph.D
Superintendent of Schools

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125 East Avenue, PO BOX 6001
Norwalk, CT 06852-6001

January 14, 2018

Robert Kelly, Charter School Program Manager
State of Connecticut Department of Education
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145

Dear Mr. Kelly:

I am responding to your solicitation of comments on the application of the Charter Schools for Excellence CMO for the "Norwalk Charter School of Excellence."

First, I wish to state that members of the Norwalk Board of Education and I are generally supportive of all forms of public school choice, including charter schools. The Side by Side Charter School has operated in Norwalk for many years with the cooperation and collaboration of the District.

While there may be a need for additional charter schools in some Connecticut school districts, the need for another charter school in Norwalk is questionable at this time.

Norwalk is a school system of 11,600 students – 43% Hispanic, 30% White, 17% Black and 10% Asian and Other. Fifty percent of our students are eligible for free lunch, the low-income proxy. Fifteen percent of students have special needs; seventeen percent are English language learners. Sixty-three percent are in the "High Needs" category of the Connecticut Next Generation Accountability Plan. All schools are racially/ethnically balanced. As a high needs, high wealth district, Norwalk has been the poster child of Fairfield County for underfunding in the ECS formula. Norwalk's net per pupil expenditure as calculated by the SDE is the lowest in our area. We cannot afford a loss of enrollment to a competing (charter) school district and resulting further diminution of the ECS grant.

You may be aware of the recent gains made by Norwalk students as measured by the 12 indicators of the Next Generation Accountability Plan. Norwalk's 2016-17 Accountability Index of 76.9% now exceed the State's and is higher than any city in the State and the highest in District Reference Group H. Our gain of 56.6 points, primarily due to the growth of our "High Needs" students, is the second highest gain in the State, just below the 1,000-student East Haddam district. Fifteen of Norwalk's 20 schools significantly improved in 2016-17.

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In terms of the other value and purpose of charter schools, Norwalk Public Schools has demonstrated its own capacity to develop models for low performing district-operated public schools to share and emulate. In terms of choice, Norwalk has one inter-district magnet school, three intra-district magnet schools and another (Montessori) under development and several open-choice Academy programs. You may be aware of the national attention received by the Norwalk Early College Academy, our recent approval for implementation of the International Baccalaureate Diplome, our plans for an I.B. Early Years Programme and K-8 intra-district magnet school STEM Campus. In terms of diversity, Norwalk enrolls 63% minority students, yet all of our schools are racially/ethnically balanced within the State Board's guidelines.

There are many homogeneous districts throughout Connecticut that would benefit from some choice in schools and increased diversity. The Charter School of Excellence may be a better choice for a district where students and families may not enjoy the same level of diversity, opportunities for school choice and academic growth.

Thank you for consideration of this information by members of the State Board of Education relative to the Charter School of Excellence CMO expansion proposal.

Sincerely,



Steven J. Adamowski, PhD.
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Dianna Wentzell, Ed.D, Commissioner
Norwalk Board of Education
Harry Rilling, Mayor
Mary Yordon, NFT President