



March 3, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Charter Schools Committee, SUNY Board of Trustees

**From: Kathryn Connell-Espinosa, Executive Director
SUNY Charter Schools Institute**

UPDATES

REVISIONS

Diamond Charter School is approved to be located in the Hempstead Union Free School District and is chartered to serve 162 students in grades K-1 for the 2026-27 school year growing to serve 486 students in grades K-5 by the 2030-31 school year, the final year of the current charter term. The school requested to temporarily incubate in the West Hempstead Union Free School District for a period not to exceed two years while facility acquisition and/or construction is completed within the Hempstead Union Free School District. The Institute reviewed the facility documents for the temporary location and found them educationally, fiscally, and legally sound. The school also presented feasible plans which would allow the school to move back within the Hempstead Central Islip Union Free School District by January 1, 2028. Therefore, the Institute approves the school's request to temporarily incubate in the West Hempstead Union Free School District but for only up to 18 months. If the school fails to relocate to the originally approved location of the Hempstead Union Free School District within that time, Diamond Charter School will surrender its charter effective July 31, 2028, or the Board of Trustees will revoke the charter per the Act and the charter agreement effective July 31, 2028.

SUNY Charter High School to SUNY Campus Enrollment Update

In 2025-26, 2,500 graduates from SUNY-authorized charter high schools are pursuing a higher education degree from SUNY. This is an increase from 2,200 students during 2024-25 and 1,900 students during 2023-24 and includes students who graduated from 45 SUNY charter schools, enrolled across 55 SUNY college campuses, and over 400 academic programs.

The campuses with the highest enrollment of SUNY-authorized charter school graduates by total number are University at Albany (389 students), University at Buffalo (238), Buffalo State College (143), Stony Brook University (138), and Binghamton University (120).

Among the students enrolled at a SUNY campus in 2025-26:

- 73% are Pell Grant recipients;
- 72% are pursuing bachelor's degrees, 24% are pursuing associate degrees, and the balance are pursuing postgraduate degrees or other certificates;
- 57% are Black or African American, 20% are Hispanic/Latino, 5% are White, and 1% are Asian/Pacific Islander; and,
- Roughly 35% of those students were enrolled at a SUNY college or university for the first time in the fall of 2025.

The Institute will continue to gather and analyze these data after the conclusion of each semester and report on trends.

2026 Request for Proposals for New Charter Schools

The Institute received 13 Intent To Apply packages in response to the 2026 New Charter Request for Proposals (“RFP”). Following a comprehensive review of the Intent to Apply packages, one applicant group was invited to submit a full proposal:

Proposed School Location	Proposed School Name	Grades		Enrollment		Planned Opening Date	Name of Applicant(s)
		Yr. 1	Yr. 5	Yr. 1	Yr. 5		
Rochester City School District	Bellavista Charter School of the Arts	7-8	7-12	150	550	August 2027	Dr. Oscia Miles

Full proposals are due to the Institute on April 15, 2026. Currently, 88 charters are available for applicants seeking to open charter schools outside of New York City. The Institute anticipates presenting any proposals recommended for approval to the Charter Schools Committee at a committee meeting in Fall 2026.