



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

March 6, 2012

Dear Prospective Charter School Applicants:

Earlier this month, the Department of Education presented results on the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) for the 2010-11 school year. While overall performance continued to hold steady or improve slightly in nearly all grades and subjects, a persistent achievement gap remains for economically disadvantaged, minority, and urban students. Better preparing these students for success in college and career is among the Department's highest priorities.

A major component of Governor Chris Christie's education reform agenda is the creation of high-quality charter schools that provide choice and deliver strong student outcomes. With tens of thousands of students assigned to persistently underperforming schools, the need for more high-quality options is clear.

In the spring 2012 cycle, as in every application cycle, all submitted applications will be reviewed fairly and consistently. However, in this round, consistent with N.J.A.C. 6A:11-2.1, the Department is placing particular emphasis on proposals that seek to provide a high-quality education option to historically underserved students. For example, the Department will have a preference for applications that target districts with Priority and/or Focus Schools and demonstrate a commitment and the capacity to generate improved results for at-risk students.

The goal of the New Jersey Department of Education is to ensure that every student, regardless of life circumstances, receives a top-flight education. We look forward to receiving your applications for high-quality charter schools that will help to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. Cerf".

Christopher Cerf
Acting Commissioner