

Founding Group of Greater Works Charter School
c/o Ted J. Morris, Jr. – Lead Applicant

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

January 17, 2012

New York State Education Dept. Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Founding Group of Greater Works Charter School, I am honored to submit this letter, expressing our intent to submit an application to establish a New York State Charter School to the Charter School Office of the New York State Education Department.

We have spent the past three years, working together to develop a proposal for a high-quality charter school in the Rochester, NY area. Our work has included gaining support from the community, building a strong founding group of local professionals as well as a strong advisory group of national professionals, visiting successful public schools (some of which were charters) in Rochester, Buffalo and Lafayette as well as schools in other states and writing the application for our charter school. We feel confident in the work that we have completed and would like to participate in this Request for Proposals to Establish Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents.

As per the requests in the RFP issued by the Regents of the University of the State of New York, we would like to submit the requested information.

I. Applicant Information

a. Lead applicant: Ted J. Morris, Jr.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Ted is life-long resident of Rochester, New York. He was born and raised in Rochester, NY.

b. Media contact: Ted J. Morris, Jr.

Phone number: (585) 230-6168

E-mail address: tmorris10@gmail.com

c. The applicant founding group of Greater Works Charter School is comprised of eleven educators, administrators, leaders, parents and/or city residents with several years of experience in the fields of education, administration, accounting, education policy, reentry initiatives, marketing, and other areas. **Andrea Clarke** is a parent of 3 children, one of which is a child with disabilities. She is a city resident and is active in the community as a volunteer

working with children. Andrea will have no specific role with the school. **Andrew Prinzing** is the Asset Development Specialist at the Community Charter School in Buffalo, NY. Previously, Andrew was an Administrator with the NYC DOE Re-Start Program and has worked at the TST Community School as the Principal. Andrew also served on Governor Patterson's Dropout Prevention Workgroup as the Alternative Education Representative. He has 18+ years of experience in the field of education and administration. Andrew will serve on the initial Board of Trustees. **Dawn Miner** is an Admissions and Outreach Counselor at Job Corps. She has 6+ years of experience working with children, primarily high school dropouts and student at-risk of academic failure. Dawn will have no specific role at the school. **Donald Hardaway, Jr.** is the Interim Director of the Reentry Program and the Coordinator of Education, Outreach and Quality Assurance at Catholic Family Center. He is also a professor at Monroe Community College, teaching the Leadership Development Seminar and the founder of Rochester Reentry Initiative, Inc. Donald has certification as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and will serve on the initial Board of Trustees. **Eric Scheele** is an Education Policy Consultant with Scheele Consulting. Previously, he was the Vice President of Operations and Education Policy at Falls View Academy. He has 4+ years of experience in education policy and completed a graduated-level internship with the Department of Accountability at the Rochester City School District. He is well versed in education policy and education law. Eric will have no specific role with the school. **Evhen Tupis** is a seasoned and experienced Information Technology professional. Formerly, he was the Director of Technology for the Medina Central School District, VP and Chief Technology Officer of Nexus ISR and the District Coordinator of Technology for Greece Central School District. He has 22+ years of experience in Communications and Information Technology. Evhen will be on the initial Board of Trustees. **Kristin Rapp** is the Founder and Executive Director of ArtPeace, Inc. Previously, Kristin was a Primary Therapist at Unity Health. She has 27+ years of experience working in the Social Work field with high school dropouts, students with disabilities and chemical dependent adults and is a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW). Kristin will be on the initial Board of Trustees. **Orlando Rivera** is an Advertising Account Executive for the Catholic Courier/El Mensajero. Previously, he was a Regional Administrator with Pathstone Corporation. Throughout his career, Orlando has primarily worked as a Spanish teacher, English as a second language (ESL) instructor and an interpreter/translator. Orlando has 10+ years of experience in Spanish literature and teaching and is fluent in writing and speaking Spanish. Orlando will be on the initial Board of Trustees. **Dr. Peter L. Zozik** is an Assistant Professor of Education at Keuka College, an Assistant Research Professor at Syracuse University and the Project Coordinator and Chairperson on the Task Force for Quality Inclusive Schooling. He has 25+ years of experience in the field of education. Peter is a certified teacher in N-6 and English 7-12 and is a certified School District Administrator. Peter will be on the initial Board of Trustees. **Robert Statham** is the Operations Manager at the Rochester Rehabilitation Center. Previously, he worked at Unity Health as a Job Developer/Employment Specialist. He has 10+ years of experience in the fields of employment, counseling and operations. Robert will be on the initial Board of Trustees. **Ted J. Morris, Jr.** is the Lead Applicant for and Founder of Greater Works Charter School. In addition, he is the Founder of Greater Works Education Network (GWEN). Ted is the Assistant CEO at the Hickok Center for Brain Injury. He has 7+

years of experience in the fields of education, human services and administration. Ted will be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the school.

- d. The proposed members of the initial board of trustees are Andrew Prinzing, Donald Hardaway Jr., Evhen Tupis, Kristin Rapp, Orlando Rivera, Dr. Peter Kozik and Robert Statham. Please see above for descriptions of relevant experience and skills.
- e. This request is not applicable.
- f. Our founding group has previously applied to the SED Charter School Office in the January 2010 Charter School Application Cycle. We submitted a Letter of Intent and a Prospectus but were not asked to submit a full application. We also participated in the Charter School Institute's Special Call for Application in July 2011 but were not invited to submit a full application.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

- a. Proposed school name: Greater Works Charter School
- b. Proposed school location: Rochester City School District
- c. Planned grades and enrollment:
 - Year 1: Grade 9 and 125 students
 - Year 2: Grades 9-10 and 249 students
 - Year 3: Grades 9-11 and 374 students
 - Year 4: Grades 9-12 and 499 students
 - Year 5: Grades 9-12 and 499 students
- d. This request is not applicable.
- e. The mission of Greater Works Charter School will be to provide a quality education in a safe and supportive environment that prepares our students for college, careers and global citizenship, with a focus on assisting students who are over-age, under-credited or at-risk of academic failure.
- f. Greater Works Charter School will combine innovative educational approaches, longer instructional time, high academic standards, strong behavioral expectations, family involvement, mentors and service-learning to create a "no-excuse" school that will improve student learning and achievement and increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure or who are over-age and under-credited. Our school will use Reclaiming Youth International's Circle of Courage model for positive youth development, which helps youth get their needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity in healthy, positive ways.
- g. Greater Works Charter School will recruit students from the City of Rochester. The Rochester City School District is the third largest urban school system in New York State. The Rochester City School District serves approximately 32,000 students in pre-K through grade 12. The district's student enrollment based is comprised of 64 percent African-American/Black; 22 percent Hispanic; 11 percent White; 3 percent Native American, Asian and other minorities. About 10 percent of the district's enrollment is made up of English Language Learners (ELL) and 16 percent of the district's enrollment is made up of students with disabilities, which is higher than the state's ratio of 13 percent. Rochester is ranked

11th in the nation's per capita for child poverty among medium/large US cities. The poverty rate is further attested to by the high percentages of students eligible for federal free or reduced price lunch. Approximately 88 percent of the Rochester City School District's (RCSD) students are eligible for federal free or reduced price lunch. This makes the RCSD the poorest big-city school district in the state.

III. Enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.

Greater Works Charter School (GWCS) will admit students without regard to race, creed, ethnicity, disability, or socio-economic background. We will enroll 125 students in grade 9 in our first year. To ensure that we reach our enrollment level and that we satisfy enrollment and retention targets of students with disabilities, English language learners and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program, our school will directly mail out an information packet to all 8th grade students residing in the City of Rochester. This packet will include information on our school's model and mission as well as an application. These materials will be provided in English and Spanish.

The additional methods for recruitment of students will include:

- Utilization of local print and electronic media widely available at community libraries and recreation centers (i.e. Minority Reporter, City Newspaper, La Voz, etc.);
- Appearances on local radio shows (including stations whose audience includes those speaking a language other than English) whose target audience closely aligns with our target population;
- Collaboration with the County and City to provide applications and information to neighborhood organizations, clubs, agencies (Center for Youth, Boys and Girls Club, Threshold, ArtPeace, etc.) and churches. This will provide awareness of GWCS and availability of applications at their officers;
- Identification of speakers cognizant of GWCS design, vision and mission to present at meetings, media events, etc;
- Participation in the 2013 School Choice Fair, facilitated by the Rochester City School District in January 2013; and
- Development of a website and other social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

In addition to general recruitment efforts, GWCS will employ strategies and techniques to recruit students with disabilities at a rate comparable to or greater than the percentage of the Rochester City School District. Recruitment efforts will include: (a) distribution of brochures highlighting information about GWCS' special education program, (b) outreach to community programs and agencies (ACCES-VR, Lifetime Assistance Program, Learning Disabilities Association and Youth Advocacy Programs) where we will request opportunities to provide GWCS information during meetings hosted by these community agencies and service coordinators. During the application process and meetings, we will clearly identify the special education services that will be available at GWCS, (c) provide meetings with members of special

education staff and/or Board of Trustees with parents of students with disabilities who express interest in learning more about how GWCS will meet the needs of their child. It is our goal to retain a comparable number of enrolled students with disabilities to that of the Rochester City School District. To reach English Language Learners (ELLs), GWCS will work with the Rochester community and the Rochester City School District to identify the major languages spoken other than English. Once this information has been compiled, GWCS will target areas of highest ELL concentration and provide information about GWCS to the people in those areas in their languages. Also, we will distribute information to local clergy whose congregations are non-English speakers. We will display and provide GWCS materials in different cultural centers, including but not limited to Puerto Rican Youth Development Center, American Action League and Urban League, etc. We also will invite families and students to our recruitment events which will include open houses prior to and during the enrollment process. Native speakers or translators will be available to facilitate these events. We will emphasize the availability of resources for ELL students. More detailed information about our school's recruitment and retention strategies will be provided in our full application.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

The founding group of Greater Works Charter School has been working aggressively to do public outreach about our school and to solicit community input regarding our school. To date, we have had approximately 5 public meetings which were held on 12/8/10, 9/19/11, 10/24/11, 12/1/11 and 01/19/12 and we have plans to have more in the near future; several discussions with community parents, stakeholders and organizations including, but not limited to Mary Doyle (Chief of Staff of the Rochester City School District), Roderick Cox-Cooper (CEO of Wilson Commencement Park), Senator Joseph Robach, Dr. Gregory R. Wells (Senior Pastor of Victory Living Christian Faith Center), Thomas Pappas (Principal, School Without Walls) and Stacey Shells (Principal, Rochester Prep Charter School). We have also facilitated presentations at Aquinas Institute on 2/15/10, Hillside Family of Agencies on 10/22/10, Allendale Columbia School on 11/09/10 and Victory Living Christian Faith Center on 12/08/10. We have secured 5 letters of support from various individuals/agencies and have been featured on Your News Now (YNN) Rochester. In addition, we have set up an information website so the community can access information about the school and provide comments/feedback about the school.

We have received nothing but positive comments and feedback about the school and we believe that the community is excited about our school and is ready to apply for admission once our charter school is approved. We look forward to submitting a full application. We welcome your comments and feedback.

Sincerely,

Ted J. Morris, Jr.
Lead Applicant