



# **New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Charter Schools**

**Pride Academy Charter School**

**Collection of Best Practice**

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**Name of Charter School:** Pride Academy Charter School

**About the Charter School (Mission / Key Design Elements):** “Pride Academy Charter School endeavors to ignite success in middle school students of all abilities through a curriculum rooted in the values of peace, respect, integrity, determination, and empathy. By establishing a community dedicated to academic achievement, mastery of fundamental skills, positive leadership, and active service, Pride Academy Charter School strives to embolden its students to harness their own power to shape their future and the world.”

**Best Practice Topic(s) / Performance Area within Organizational Framework:** Achieve Empowerment as it relates to Performance Area 2.1 School Climate and Culture of the Organizational Framework

**Summary:** In June 2014, Pride Academy received the opportunity to apply for a Dissemination Grant which was successfully received. Divided into two phases, the purpose of the grant was to identify a best practice or set of best practices that have contributed to the school’s success, develop and market the best practice(s), and recruit a partner school to work with during the best practice implementation stage in a partner school. A core set of best practices was selected relating to the way in which Pride intentionally developed programs, mindsets, strategies, and opportunities that empower the students, parents/families, and staff in order to create and continuously build a strong, safe, structured, responsive, and high expectations school climate and culture. Pride created a model, called **Achieve Empowerment**, and developed a Mission Statement to capture the essential premises: “Achieve Empowerment endeavors to support the increase of student achievement in the school’s partner schools by sharing the mindset, practices, and experiences that frame the success through efforts to invest in students, their families, and their communities. Through Achieve Empowerment, the partner schools will identify and harness the power within their own school communities to build capacity in implementing research-based programs in fostering a culturally responsive, restorative, and high expectations school climate.” The model focuses on three pivotal school culture areas: Student Empowerment, Parent/Family Empowerment, and Staff Empowerment. By focusing on these three areas, Achieve Empowerment seeks to develop school cultures where the school community as a whole actively and willingly participates in and contributes to their school’s success.

**Partner(s):** East Orange Community Charter School

**Dates:** Implementation – September 2015-February 2016

**School Contact:** Fiona Thomas

**Resources:** During the design phase, Pride developed an Achieve Empowerment Website which will be launched in January 2016. Those who access the site will be able to view, review and download best practices submitted by Pride Academy staff and East Orange Community Charter School staff under the three focus areas of students, parents/families, and staff.