



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR NEWS RELEASE

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### Whitman Announces 14 New Charter Schools

Governor Christie Whitman today announced the approval of 14 new charter schools. Eight of the 14 schools are scheduled to open for the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year.

"I have always strongly believed that parents should have the option of selecting the best educational program for their children," said Governor Whitman. "Our very successful charter school program has given more than 9000 children that choice and promises to do the same for the hundreds of children who will enroll in the new charter schools that have been announced today.

"Studies have shown that parents are extremely pleased with the charter school that their children are attending. In fact there are so many charter schools that have received more applications than spaces the schools must hold admissions lotteries," she said.

There are currently 47 charter schools in operation statewide serving more than 9000 students, with over a thousand more on waiting lists. Of the 14 new schools approved today 6 have opted to take a planning year and will open in the 2001-2002 school year. In addition there are 6 schools that have already been approved, but have opted to use the current school year for planning purposes. When school begins next September there will be 61 charter schools in 16 counties in operation.

"I am also pleased to note that our school choice program will be up and running in September. There are ten school districts that have been selected to become part of our pilot program in September. These districts will accept students from other districts around the state giving those parents the opportunity to choose a more appropriate educational program for their children," said the Governor.

New Jersey's charter schools offer many unique and innovative programs that are not offered in many traditional public schools. These would include schools that specialize in music, art and technology. There are also charter schools that offer a longer

school day and longer school year with small class sizes.

Governor Whitman enacted the state's charter school law in 1996. Under the law charter schools are required to seek the enrollment of a cross section of the community and cannot discriminate. Charter schools are also guided by the state's academic standards and must participate in the Statewide Assessment Program.

The fourteen new charter schools are:

- Alternative Learning Center Charter School, Atlantic City
- Galloway Community Charter School, Galloway Township
- DELTA Community Charter School, Chesterfield Township, Mansfield Township, North Hanover Township, Springfield Township, Northern Burlington County Regional
- Camden Academy Charter High School, Camden
- LEAP University High Charter School, Camden
- Lady Liberty Academy Charter School, Newark
- Russell Academy Charter School, East Orange
- The Center for Responsible Economic and Technological Excellence Charter School, Jersey City

- Trenton Community Middle and Senior Charter School, Trenton
- Granville Charter High School, Trenton
- Roberto Clemente Charter School, Perth Amboy
- The College Preparatory Academy Charter School, Roxbury Township, Dover, Mine Hill Township
- Eugenio Maria De Hostos Charter School, Paterson
- The Ridge and Valley Unity Charter School, Blairstown Township, Frelinghuysen Township, Knowlton Township, Hardwick and North Warren Regional.

"Although a number of charter school applicants did not receive approval this year, many of them are promising and with additional work between now and summer may be approved next January," noted Commissioner of Education David C. Hespe.

"The goal of our review process is to determine which applicants have the right ingredients for success at this point in time. The focus is on quality schools. We must also ensure that the statutory review, which is especially complex in regards to private entities, is fairly and faithfully implemented. Further deliberations by some of the applicants, especially those who entered the process late and had multiple applications, will ensure that this goal of quality is met. It will also provide the applicants a greater opportunity to accomplish the goals of their proposed charter in the future," said Hespe.

"The failure to receive a charter today does not in any way mean that an application with additional work will not be approved in the future," Hespe said. "We commend all applicants for their efforts on behalf of our children and look forward to working with them in the future."

[Further information about the new charter schools is attached.](#)