



Riverhead Charter School

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Dorothy Porteus, Principal**

It's Official! – Five More Years for Riverhead Charter School! *State Board of Regents Today Approves 5-Year Charter Renewal*

Calverton, NY, April 21, 2009 – The New York State Board of Regents voted today to approve a 5-year charter renewal application for the Riverhead Charter School (RCS). The school will operate under this charter through June 2014.

“This is a day of celebration for the Riverhead Charter School families, board members, faculty and the extended community,” said School Principal, Dorothy Porteus. “We enthusiastically embrace the opportunity to continue to serve the needs of the families from 16 school districts on eastern Long Island.

“Riverhead Charter School has improved learning and achievement for students throughout this region and we are proud that the Regents have recognized this accomplishment,” said Kathryn Liddle, chairperson of the Riverhead Charter School’s Board of Trustees.

“We thank our dedicated teachers, board members, founders and parents who have been committed to offering programs promoting student growth and excellence in education,” said Porteus. “The renewal granted by the Board of Regents is a catalyst for RCS to renew its commitment to expand educational opportunities for all students.”

The Riverhead Charter School is a public school of choice serving families of K-6th grade students on eastern Long Island, since 2001. The school offers a longer school day and smaller class size with a focus toward more individualized instruction. Enrichment programs are provided for students needing a more challenging academic program. In addition, approximately 10 percent (or 25 students) of the students enrolled in the school are identified as students with a disability and 23 percent (or 57 students) are identified as English Language Learners.

Last year, the charter school dissolved its contract with the Edison Management Company and was given a one year renewal extension by the Regents to transition to self management. During this transition period, the charter school has been successful in meeting the requirements for a school in good standing and has provided sound fiscal management under the supervision of its board. Riverhead Town Supervisor Phil Cardinale said “I am pleased that the Riverhead Charter School has succeeded in calming the troubled water that has surrounded it and that its extraordinary efforts have been justly rewarded”.

According to the New York State Education Department, the school has succeeded in meeting all of the stated goals.

RCS student proficiency levels for both the ELA and Math state assessments exceeded or met the state and local district averages for grades 3 through 6. Overall student proficiency on the State ELA Assessment increased by 19 percentage points from 53 percent in 2006-07 to 72 percent passing. The school also increased its overall student proficiency on the State Math Assessment by 35 percentage points from 51 percent passing to 86.9 percent passing in 2007-08. Science scores went up 35 percentage points from 62.5 percent passing in 2006-07 to 97.4 percent passing and the school's social studies state assessment scores increased by 20 percentage points from 65.4 percent passing to 85.7 percent passing.

Additional data shows that student cohorts who have attended the charter school for two years or more, are showing higher levels of academic performance on the state assessments than those who have not.

"This five-year renewal will now allow us to take this school to the next level," said Porteus.

"We look forward to expanding partnerships with the area's business community and community based organizations to enrich the educational experience for our students and families."

New programming opportunities include a renewed vision for 2009-10 integrating specialized programs featuring local expertise and organizations that focus on the arts, science and agriculture. Students will learn at an early age how to enjoy and enhance the beauty of the resources on LI. and how to use science to preserve the natural resources. In addition, plans also include a need to expand the present facilities into a "green environment school" that will provide additional space for expanded programs.

"Riverhead Charter School's five-year renewal is a significant recognition by the state that it has met the rigorous achievement and accountability requirements of the Charter Schools Act. Congratulations to the school's trustees, leadership, faculty and students for overcoming tremendous challenges to make this special day a reality," said Peter Murphy, Policy Director for the New York Charter Schools Association, the statewide advocacy organization for charter schools.

Student applications for September 2009 as well as requests for school tours may be obtained by calling 631-369-5800 (ext. 2250) or downloading from the school's website at www.riverheadcharterschool.org.