



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Shepard Building
255 Westminister Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 2e
May 8, 2013

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

May 8, 2013

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner

RE: Motion to grant charter – The Village Green Virtual Charter School

The charter application for the Village Green Virtual Charter School was submitted on March 1, 2012 and was reviewed and substantively considered by the Charter School Application Committee and officers at RIDE in accordance with the charter application review process.

On November 15, 2012, the Village Green Virtual Charter School received preliminary approval for opening from the Board of Regents as required by RIGL 16-77 .3 – 3 (b). Public hearings were held between August and October 2012.

Upon receipt of the initial approval, the school founders commenced with appropriate action to meet all readiness criteria and related requirements. The Village Green Virtual Charter School has satisfactorily completed the readiness tasks or provided adequate written assurance that all tasks will be met prior to the opening of the school as fully defined in Rhode Island statute and regulation.

Having completed these measures, the Village Green Virtual Charter School seeks authorization to operate under their final charter.

Application and Process Overview

The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School

Catchment Area: Statewide

Grade Level: 9-12

Location: Providence

Charter Type: Independent

Mission

The Village Green exists to advance individualized education and family choice by maximizing technology, creating community, reshaping teaching and redefining school.

First Authorization Term Projected Enrollment

		Providence
Year 1	2013-14	136 Students
Year 2	2014-15	204 Students
Year 3	2015-16	272 Students
Year 4	2016-17	272 Students
Year 5	2017-18	272 Students

Program Overview

The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School is a bricks and mortar “virtual high school” that will be located in Providence and will utilize high quality e-learning curricula to serve its student body, a majority of whom will come from urban areas. The school will create a learning environment that will include a 1:1 ratio of computers to students. It will be physically comprised of a large grouping of individual student learning centers (the Green) surrounded by conference and classroom space, student informal learning environments and administrative and school spaces (the Village). Faculty will be primarily responsible for instruction, the management and planning of their students’ digital learning and the analysis of daily data on student performance. They will also be responsible for organizing workshops, lectures and differentiated supplementary instruction.

- ⇒ The Village Green will start with two grades (9 and 10) with 68 students in each grade. The school will add 68 students in each subsequent 9th grade cohort until a maximum of 272 is reached in year three.
- ⇒ The Village Green purposefully recruits all learners regardless of skill level or language proficiency. Recruitment efforts focus on enrolling seventy-five percent from Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls and Woonsocket. The remaining twenty-five percent will be recruited state-wide. There is no specialized student type for whom the school is designed.
- ⇒ The founding group is comprised of veteran community activists and a charter school educator with leadership and operations experience. The Village Green Virtual Charter School application is sponsored by Destiny House, a South Providence based community organization.

Approval Process & Timeline



Application Submission

Applicants were required to submit applications by March 1 in preparation for a 2013-2014 school year opening.

- ⇒ **The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School submitted their application on March 1, 2012.**

Completeness Review

Upon receiving application, Office of Transformation staff review applications to ensure compliance with the application content requirements and, to the extent possible, applicable state and federal statutes and regulations. Applications that meet this bar are considered “satisfactory” and released for public comment.

- ⇒ **RIDE team found that the Village Green Virtual Public Charter School proposal met this preliminary threshold.**

Public Comment & Application Review

During the public comment period, at least two public hearings are held on the proposed charter in the district where the school is to be located. A thorough, rubric-based paper screen and a capacity interview are also conducted by the Charter Application Review Committee, an ad-hoc, advisory committee.

- ⇒ **The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School proposal public comment period was August 6, 2012 through October 9, 2012. Two hearings were held for the Village Green Virtual Public Charter School on October 2 and 9, 2012. A capacity interview took place on October 1, 2012.**

Preliminary Approval

Based on the evidence from Public Comment, the Commissioner offers a recommendation to the Board of Regents. By statute, this must occur no later than 90 days after the conclusion of the public comment period. If approved by the Regents, schools are granted a preliminary charter. This charter does not confer approval for the school to operate, but rather a preliminary endorsement from the Regents on the conceptual design of the proposal. In order to obtain final approval, schools must meet specific “readiness criteria.”

- ⇒ **Application the Village Green Virtual Public Charter School was presented and approved on November 15, 2012.**

Final Approval

C-1-4 of the Charter Regulations outlines the criteria that applicants must meet in order to obtain final approval to operate. Upon meeting these criteria, the Board of Education may approve the school’s final charter. An affirmative vote and award of the final charter to the charter school board will confer upon mayoral academies the legal authority to operate as school districts (LEAs). The items listed below outline the criteria required for final approval based on Rhode Island Charter Regulations C-1-4 and suggest supporting documentation to demonstrate compliance.

- ⇒ **The Village Green Virtual Public Charter School has satisfactorily completed the readiness criteria tasks required for approval. The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) has approved the school’s financial plan and financial record keeping system. The OAG determined at the time of review that the nonprofit organization is not financially responsible.**

C-1-4 (a) Articles of Incorporation	Rhode Island incorporation 501(c)3 status
C-1-4 (b) Fiscal Conditions	Operating budget Financial Plan OAG qualified review of sponsor OAG review of school budget
C-1-4 (c) Governance Structure	Board of trustees (biographies) Proposed by-laws
C-1-4 (d) Chief Administrator	Chief administrator CV/resume
C-1-4 (e) Staffing Plan	Proposed staffing plan aligned to school purpose and anticipated needs
C-1-4 (f) Minimum Enrollment	School roster summary Evidence of applications
C-1-4 (g) Facility Identification	Lease/deed agreement Health and safety inspection
C-1-4 (h) Final Charter	All materials required by R.I.G.L. 16-77, an accountability plan, the Board of Regent’s obligations to the school, and all assurances required in Charter Regulation C-1-4(h)(iv)-(vi)
C-1-4 (i) Management and Service Provider Agreements	Not applicable