

Excel Academy Charter School – Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea Executive Summary

*This was prepared by the founding group of the
Excel Academy Charter School – Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea.*

Our Mission

Excel Academy Charter School – Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea will prepare students to succeed in high school and college, apply their learning to solve relevant problems, and engage productively in their communities.

Our Educational Philosophy and Approach

Excel Academy - Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea believes that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, are capable of achieving at the highest levels. Yet, sadly, a persistent and vexing Achievement Gap holds too many students back from achieving this ideal. In order to reverse this trend, Excel Academies adheres to an educational philosophy that is guided by three simple, yet powerful beliefs values about urgency, highest expectations, and no excuses:

- **Urgency:** There is no more urgent work than that of urban education. An average middle school student from an underserved urban neighborhood is often academically years behind his or her suburban peers. In order to make up valuable academic ground, teaching and learning must be approached with the greatest sense of urgency recognizing that every instructional minute is precious and must be maximized.
- **Highest expectations:** All students are capable of achieving at the highest levels when they are held to the highest expectations. Students will strive to achieve what is expected of them, and lowering standards for a group or individual student because of their social or academic background is not a support, but a hindrance to their learning.
- **No excuses:** If we truly believe that all students can achieve at the highest levels, then we must accept no excuses. Educators cannot make excuses for student performance based on a student's background or prior academic attainment. Excellence in urban education requires educators to uphold the highest expectations for students at all times and never make excuses for underperformance. Educators working with urban students must be relentless and do whatever it takes to drive student achievement, never settling for anything less than educational excellence.

In order to make these intrinsic values and beliefs about urban education tangible and actionable, Excel Academy - Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea will utilize a clearly articulated and defined operating model, to drive the school's educational program:

- Culture of high expectations: All members of the school community are held to the highest expectations. A comprehensive behavior management system creates a safe and orderly environment where learning can thrive. An embedded character education program supports students in internalizing our expectations and as result, our students develop an ethical code that guides their actions both inside and outside of the school building.
- Rigorous academics and student supports: All students are exposed to a college-preparatory academic program through a curriculum with a unique balance of targeted remediation and higher order critical thinking. We identify all the reasons why a student may not be academically successful and provide targeted supports to meet the unique and diverse needs of our students.
- Investment in talent: We recruit and retain highly qualified teachers with both the will and skill to execute our educational program. We recognize that the culture we create for the adults in the building is of equal importance to that which we have built for the student body. As such, we invest significant resources in building the profession of teaching and supporting staff in perfecting their practice. Staff members take ownership of their core functions and do whatever it takes to achieve the school's mission.
- Systems of operating procedures: We identify, down to the minute, how to maximize the productivity of the school and develop and execute a comprehensive system of procedures to ensure the efficacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of our program. Procedures are precisely and consistently applied by every member of the community; because of this consistency, our procedures enable us to achieve the intended outcomes.

Through a well-defined and executed operating model, Excel Academy - Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea will produce scholars and leaders who are prepared to succeed in high school and college and go on to change the world.

Our Community (Excel Academy Charter School – Chelsea)

The crisis of the Achievement Gap in the United States is particularly evident in the education of our Hispanic students; they tend to perform academically far below their Caucasian peers and also face a much higher risk of dropping out of high school and a much lower chance of attending and graduating from college than either their Caucasian or African-American peers.

Chelsea is a very diverse urban suburb, with a particularly high percentage of Hispanic residents. We believe that Chelsea is a community with students in need of increased educational opportunities and support, and that Excel Academy – Chelsea will be an exemplary educational resource for this community.

We have a proven track record of success in raising the achievement of Chelsea students – approximately one-fourth of the student body of our existing school reside in Chelsea.

With a solid waitlist of Chelsea families seeking enrollment at our existing school and strong community connections and partnerships, Excel Academy – Chelsea is well-positioned to make a significant impact on the quality of education offered to Chelsea students and families.

Our Capacity

Excel Academy - Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea will be governed by the Board of Trustees of an existing, highly successful charter school, Excel Academy Charter School located in East Boston. With a proven track record of overseeing educational excellence and deep experience in organizational growth and expansion, the Board of Trustees is uniquely positioned to capitalize on recent legislative changes that allow a single board to hold multiple charters.

Our Vision

The application for Excel Academy - Boston, Boston II, and Chelsea is a part of our broader vision for significantly impacting the quality of education provided to our most underserved, urban students and families. The Board of Trustees has initiated the creation and growth of a network of high-performing charter schools serving the greater Boston area. Each school within the network will be modeled after our existing flagship school, Excel Academy Charter School, which has a seven-year record of success in closing the achievement gap for students most at risk of being left behind. Through creation of the Excel Academies network, the Board of Trustees will, over the next 3 to 5 years, oversee the delivery of educational excellence to approximately 1,800 students and families and provide a beacon for what urban education can achieve at scale.