

FINAL APPLICATION REVIEW 2012-2013																			
Proposed School Name:	Brooke 4 Charter School																		
Grades Served At Full Capacity:	K-8																		
Number of Students At Full Capacity:	510																		
Proposed School Location:	Boston																		
Proposed Opening Year:	2014-2015																		
<p>Public Statement: “Brooke 4 will be a K-8 school, located in Boston, serving 510 scholars. The school’s mission is to provide an academically rigorous education to students from the city of Boston that will ensure that they are prepared to attend and succeed in college. To close the achievement gap, the school will focus on the same strategy proven to lead to higher achievement for <i>all</i> students: great teaching. The founders are also founders of the Edward W. Brooke Charter School in Roslindale, one of the highest performing schools in the city and the state, and of two additional Brooke charter schools.”</p> <p>Mission Statement: “The new school will share the mission of the existing Brooke Schools: To provide an academically rigorous education to students from the city of Boston that will ensure that they are prepared to attend and succeed in college.”</p> <p>Proposed Growth Plan for First Five Years of Operation:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School Year</th> <th>Grade Levels</th> <th>Total Student Enrollment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>First Year</td> <td>K, 1, 5</td> <td>180</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Second Year</td> <td>K, 1, 2, 5, 6</td> <td>285</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Third Year</td> <td>K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7</td> <td>390</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fourth Year</td> <td>K-8</td> <td>495</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fifth Year</td> <td>K-8</td> <td>508</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: Applicant group is the Board of Trustees of the three Edward W. Brooke Charter Schools (Brooke), Commonwealth charter schools located in Boston. The three existing schools serve students in grades K-8 with a maximum enrollment of 475 for each school. The original Brooke opened in 2002, Brooke 2 opened in 2011, and Brooke 3 opened in 2012. Brooke 3 is a regional school serving Chelsea and Boston. During the 2012-2013 school year, the three schools serve 925 students but will serve 1425 students once both new schools are fully expanded in 2015-2016.</p> <p>Amendment Request: The Board of Trustees has also submitted a charter amendment request to add 105 seats to the original Brooke and consolidate all Brooke schools into a single charter.</p>		School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment	First Year	K, 1, 5	180	Second Year	K, 1, 2, 5, 6	285	Third Year	K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	390	Fourth Year	K-8	495	Fifth Year	K-8	508
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Mission, Vision, and Description of the Community(ies) to Be Served

Primary Strengths

- The mission and vision clearly define the purpose and values of the school, communicates high academic standards and student success, and is reflected throughout the application in a meaningful way. (Section I.A.)
- In the interview and the application, the applicant group emphasized the continued high demand for seats at the existing three Brooke schools and explained that they have structures already in place that will enable the group to continue to successfully replicate and expand to serve even more students. (Section I.C.)
- This charter application received letters and/or written testimony in support during the public hearing and public comment process, and included support letters within the application, including but not limited to Representative Russell Homes, and Boston City Councilors John Connolly and Ayanna Pressley. See public comment and application. (Section I.C.)

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

Educational Philosophy, Curriculum and Instruction

Primary Strengths

- The educational philosophy describes clearly the applicant group's core beliefs and values which align strongly with the mission and vision statements. (Section II.A.)
- The application provides explicit examples of how the educational philosophy will be integrated into the implementation of a comprehensive educational program and how it will meet the diverse needs of individual students. (Section II.A.)

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

- The applicant group presently operates three K-8 schools. The original flagship school is presently in its third charter term; has had continued success with its educational program; and is identified as a Level 1 school under the newly implemented framework for accountability and assistance. The recently added network schools are in their second and first year of operation. (II.A. and II.B.)
- The Brooke curricula, specifically their character education and mathematics programs, have been disseminated and have been or will be implemented by other Commonwealth and Horace Mann charter schools. (Section II.B.)

Assessment System, Performance, Promotion, and Graduation Standards

Primary Strengths

- The application described a variety of assessments that are consistent with the proposed school's mission and educational program. (Section II.D.)
- During the interview, the network leadership described the evolution of the assessment system to ensure consistency across the network as well as responsiveness to the learning gaps of new students placed in first and fifth grade in the two new schools. For example, in order to ensure capacity to support the use of student assessment data at each of the schools, the network office has added a data management position. (Section II.D.)

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

School Characteristics

Primary Strengths

- The applicant group has previously successfully integrated the described

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

mission, educational philosophy, curriculum and instruction, assessment system, and school characteristics into a comprehensive educational program. (Section II.E.)

- While the applicant group acknowledges high suspension rates, they reported in the application and the interview the trend of a decreasing attrition rate. The applicant stated that their discipline system provides for an effective learning environment with a strong culture of safety and respect. The decreasing attrition prompted a charter amendment request to add 35 additional seats to each of the existing three schools and a slightly higher maximum enrollment of 510 for the proposed fourth school. (Section II.E.)

Special Student Populations and Student Services

Primary Strengths

- Though special student population representation is lower than the sending district at all three schools, it is evident based on MCAS performance results that the applicant group has the capacity to successfully work with students in need of special education services as well as English language learners. The group emphasizes that the school is successfully meeting the needs of all students in the general education classroom, and provides services as required. (Section II.F.)
- In February 2012, the flagship school was renewed with a condition related to special education service delivery. All instructional staff who are involved in the delivery of special education services are now either appropriately qualified to do so independently, or work under the supervision and oversight of an

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

appropriately qualified individual. The condition has been met and is expected to be removed. (Section II.F.)

Enrollment and Recruitment

Primary Strengths

- The network leadership has identified and addressed challenges in the recruitment of new fifth graders at the two new schools. The staff has been proactive in talking with families once a child has been admitted through the lottery but acknowledges that the schools compete with other charter programs that may include a high school program or are geographically closer to a prospective student's home. This experience has further supported the commitment to a high school program in the network's future. (Section III.A.)

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.

Capacity and School Governance

Primary Strengths

- The board of trustees and network leadership has the experience and qualifications to implement the proposal and have demonstrated the capacity, thus far, to found and sustain high quality charter school programs in Boston. (Section III.B.)

Primary Weaknesses

- Concerns remain that the applicant group has not had sufficient time as a network to demonstrate a track record of success that would warrant the granting of the fourth K-8 school. In February 2011, the group was granted two additional charters rather than the three requested, due to the overwhelming demand for Boston seats by a number of very competitive proposals. This year's cycle is the first opportunity to reapply for the fourth proposed school. See Network and School Management. (Section II.C.)

Network and School Management

Primary Strengths

- The network has systems and personnel in place to support the proposed fourth school and continued growth of the network, including capacity for the recruitment of school staff, the professional development of school leaders, and the recent addition of a business manager, and chief development officer. (Section III.C.)
- The fifth grade students at the first Brooke replication demonstrated a median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) in English Language Arts of 92 and 95.5 in Mathematics in the first MCAS test administration at the school. (Section II.C. and II.D.)

Primary Weaknesses

- The applicant group has indicated that a future proposal for a Brooke high school hinges on the critical mass that four K-8 schools would provide. The group indicated that based on its own analysis a 1000 student high school would be needed to support the envisioned depth and breadth of programming. With the net school spending (NSS) cap in place and the present demand for Boston seats, it is unlikely the group would have access to 1000 additional Boston seats without change to the charter school statute. (Section III.C. and III.D.)

Facilities, Transportation, and Finances

Primary Strengths

- The application offers a solid financial structure with fiscal controls, and a clear description of the network and school finances. The application included clear network budgets and individual school budgets. (Section III.F.)

Primary Weaknesses

- None identified.