*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeff Wulfson  *Acting Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:** | Jeff Wulfson, Acting Commissioner |
| **Date:** | March 16, 2018 |
| **Subject:** | Charter Schools – Charters Renewed for City on a Hill Charter Public School Dudley Square, Collegiate Charter School of Lowell, Excel Academy Charter School, Pioneer Charter School of Science II, and Rising Tide Charter Public School. |

At its meeting in February 2013, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) voted to authorize the Commissioner to act on its behalf in “(a) granting charter renewals that do not involve probation; (b) approving charter amendments that do not involve changes in grade span, maximum enrollment, or districts served; and (c) removing or continuing conditions imposed on charters of charter schools; provided that the Commissioner shall report to the Board on all charter renewals, charter amendments, and conditions that have been so approved; and provided further, that the Commissioner shall notify the Board in advance of all such intended actions, and a Board member may request that the Commissioner place the charter matter(s) on the agenda of the Board for discussion and action.”

On February 14, 2018, I notified the Board that I intended to renew the charters of five schools. These schools were City on a Hill Charter Public School Dudley Square (COAH DS), Collegiate Charter School of Lowell (CCSL), Excel Academy Charter School (Excel), Pioneer Charter School of Science II (PCSS II), and Rising Tide Charter Public School (RTCPS). No Board member requested that any of these matters be brought to the full Board for review. I am now notifying the Board that I have renewed the charters of these five schools.

Summary information regarding the five schools for which I renewed charters is provided in this memorandum. Each charter is renewed for the period of July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2023. The charter of each school is renewed for the maximum enrollment, grades served, and district(s) served, as indicated in this memorandum. All of the schools shall operate in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 71, § 89; 603 CMR 1.00; and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such additional conditions as the Commissioner or the Board may establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter.

**Charter School Performance Criteria – Ratings and Recommendation Summary**

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| ** Exceeds** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** | ** Falls Far Below** |

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|  | **Criteria** | **City on a Hill Charter Public School Dudley Square** | **Collegiate Charter School of Lowell** | **Excel Academy Charter School** | **Pioneer Charter School of Science II** | **Rising Tide Charter Public School** |
| **Faithfulness to Charter** | 1. Mission and Key Design  Elements | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** |
| 2. Access and Equity | ** Partially Meets** | ** Partially Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** | ** Partially Meets** |
| 4. Dissemination | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Partially Meets** |
| **Academic Program Success** | 5. Student Performance | **No Level** | **No Level** | **No Level** | **No Level** | **No Level** |
| In 2017, schools administering only the 10th grade legacy MCAS, schools with participation rates lower than 90 percent, and schools with persistently low graduation rates received a Level according to the statewide accountability system. | | | | |
| **Organizational Viability** | 9. Governance | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** | ** Meets** |
|  | **Commissioner Action** | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal | Unconditional Renewal |

**City on a Hill Charter Public School Dudley Square**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Boston |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2013 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 280 | **Current Enrollment** | 272 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 9-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 9-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 0[[1]](#footnote-1) | **Current Age of School** | 5 years |
| **Mission Statement**  City on a Hill graduates responsible, resourceful, and respectful democratic citizens prepared for college and to advance community, culture, and commerce, in order to compete in the 21st century. We do so by emphasizing academic achievement, citizenship, teacher leadership, and public accountability. | | | |

**Collegiate Charter School of Lowell**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Lowell |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Non-Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Year Opened** | 2013 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 1200 | **Current Enrollment** | 759 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | K-12 | **Current Grade Span** | K-7 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 69[[2]](#footnote-2) | **Current Age of School** | 5 years |
| **Mission Statement**  The mission of the Collegiate Charter School of Lowell is to provide an academically rigorous and successful world-class college preparatory public educational program that enables all students, regardless of their background, to achieve their full potential, to be prepared for success in college, equipped with the ability and desire for lifelong learning, and to have developed strong civic, ethical, and moral values in a safe, caring, and rigorous environment built on a school ethos that emphasizes high behavioral and academic expectations. | | | |

**Excel Academy Charter School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Boston, Chelsea |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Boston, Chelsea |
| **Year Opened** | 2003 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 1344[[3]](#footnote-3) | **Current Enrollment** | 1127 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 5-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 5-11 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 779[[4]](#footnote-4) | **Current Age of School** | 15 years |
| **Mission Statement**  Excel Academy’s mission is to prepare students to succeed in high school and college, apply their learning to solve relevant problems, and engage productively in their communities. | | | |

**Pioneer Charter School of Science II**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Saugus |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Danvers, Lynn, Peabody, Salem, Saugus |
| **Year Opened** | 2013 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | N/A |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 360 | **Current Enrollment** | 357 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 7-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 7-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 222[[5]](#footnote-5) | **Current Age of School** | 5 |
| **Mission Statement**  The mission of Pioneer Charter School of Science II (PCSS-II) is to prepare educationally under-resourced students for today’s competitive world. PCSS-II will help students to develop the academic and social skills necessary to become successful professionals and exemplary members of their community. This goal will be achieved by providing the students with a rigorous academic curriculum with emphasis on math and science, balanced by a strong foundation in the humanities, a character education program, career-oriented college preparation, and strong student–teacher–parent collaboration. | | | |

**Rising Tide Charter Public School**

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| **Type of Charter**  (Commonwealth or Horace Mann) | Commonwealth | **Location** | Plymouth, MA |
| **Regional or Non-Regional** | Regional | **Districts in Region**  (if applicable) | Barnstable, Bourne, Carver, Duxbury, Falmouth, Lakeville, Marshfield, Mashpee, Middleborough, Old Rochester, Pembroke, Plymouth, Sandwich, Silver Lake, Wareham |
| **Year Opened** | 1998 | **Year(s) Renewed**  (if applicable) | 2003, 2008, 2013 |
| **Maximum Enrollment** | 700 | **Current Enrollment** | 660 |
| **Chartered Grade Span** | 5-12 | **Current Grade Span** | 5-12 |
| **Students on Waitlist** | 203[[6]](#footnote-6) | **Current Age of School** | 20 Years |
| **Mission Statement**  The Rising Tide Charter Public School will provide a strong academic program rooted in the history of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Our students will harvest opportunity from the practice of language, the reasoning of mathematics, the analysis of science and the reflection of history. We want children to hone skills through rigorous studies, but skills alone do not make a whole education. The Rising Tide Charter Public School will also cultivate within its students a sense of belonging to our community, a tie with those who have come before them and a seed of continuity between the Plymouth of today and the Plymouth of tomorrow. The Rising Tide Charter Public School will graduate capable and prepared young adults who have already sown within themselves a sense of place and belonging that will be the bounty of the future, whether they remain among us or venture from our harbor. | | | |

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If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Alison Bagg, Director (781-338-3218); Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner, (781-338-3222); or me.

Attachments: Charter Schools – Notification of Intended Actions Memorandum from February 14, 2018

1. As reported on October 1, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Updated Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As reported on October 1, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Updated Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Excel’s enrollment of students from Boston is currently capped at 748. This “subcap” sets a limit for the total enrollment from Boston, but does not guarantee tuition for the specified number of students. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As reported on October 1, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Updated Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As reported on October 1, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Updated Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. As reported on October 1, 2017, in the Massachusetts Charter School Waitlist Updated Report for 2017-2018 (FY18). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)