

CHARTER SECTOR LEADERS APPLAUD VISION AND LEADERSHIP BY NEW YORK STATE CAUCUS LEGISLATORS ON EDUCATION EQUITY, PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING AND CHARTER CAP LIFT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Last Friday, the New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus issued a strong vision statement highlighting the need and opportunity to conclude the current session with passing legislation that would begin to prioritize and address education equity in New York State.

The leaders and founders of successful minority-led charter schools and the highest performing public charter school networks, enthusiastically applaud this powerful vision and support the Caucus's efforts. Miriam Raccah, Executive Director of Bronx Charter School for the Arts and founder and former CEO of Public Prep Charter Schools: "The charter sector has long been committed to the work of ensuring that the lowest income Black and Latinx children and youth, who comprise the vast majority of the students we serve, have the best opportunity to receive the highest quality education. Yet it is also clear that along the way we have witnessed many founders, leaders and organizations led by people of color get shut out, turned away and denied the opportunity to provide new and innovative education options for our communities."

"Dramatically increasing the number of charter schools founded and led by people of color is essential to ensuring educational equity in New York," emphasized Eva Moskowitz, Founder and CEO of Success Academy Charter Schools, New York City's top performing charter school network. "One of the most powerful ways for our legislators to advance education equity would be to simultaneously and substantially increase public school funding, raise the charter cap and ensure that these new charters are prioritized for organizations founded and led by people of color."

Rafiq Kalam Id-Din II, Esq., Miriam Raccah, Rev. Al Cockfield, Christina Perry, Dominique Lee and Dr. Steve Perry are Executive Committee members of the Black-Latinx-Asian Charter Collective (BLACC), a movement to support the growth of community-based and minority-led charter schools. Mr. Kalam Id-Din asserts that, "the dearth of charters founded and led by people of color, coupled with the significant under-funding of public schools—both charter and traditional—who serve the highest numbers of Black and Latinx students, has resulted in a gargantuan equity gap. The vision outlined by the Caucus provides an opportunity for Albany to begin to meaningfully address this."

"Charter schools were designed as tools to empower local communities, especially those of color, with opportunities to improve, evolve and innovate public education," added Dacia Toll, Co-CEO of Achievement First, a nonprofit organization that operates public charter schools in New York, Connecticut and Rhode Island. "School choice is a powerful tool for education

equity, and it's critical for communities of color to have a wide array of successful and well-resourced public school options, particularly more led by people of color."

"We are all eager to do all we can to not only support the urgent passage of this legislation, including and especially the immediate issuance of 'zombie charters' to charter school organizations founded and led by people of color," offers Dr. Steve Perry, Founder and Head of Schools of Capital Preparatory Schools, a nonprofit that operates schools in New York and Connecticut.

"We praise the Caucus's position, especially the immediate issuance of previously revoked charters to continue to expand high-quality school options for our families and communities in NYC." adds Brett Peiser, CEO of Uncommon Schools, a nonprofit charter network that operates schools in New York City and upstate New York." It is also important for the charter sector to use our collective resources to support strong charter organizations led by people of color, as well as all public schools, to achieve success for all students."

"As has been noted many times before, public schools like ours that serve an overwhelming majority of low-income Black and Latinx students are the least publicly funded in the State," states Alicia Johnson, President and COO of KIPP NYC, one of New York's oldest nonprofit charter school organizations with over 20 years experience educating students in New York City. "I'm very excited about the Caucus' vision for education equity and advocacy to secure more resources for public schools—traditional and charter—to best serve all our students. And to combine that with an effort to increase the number and breadth of charter schools led by Black, Latinx and Asian people amplifies this push for equity all the more."