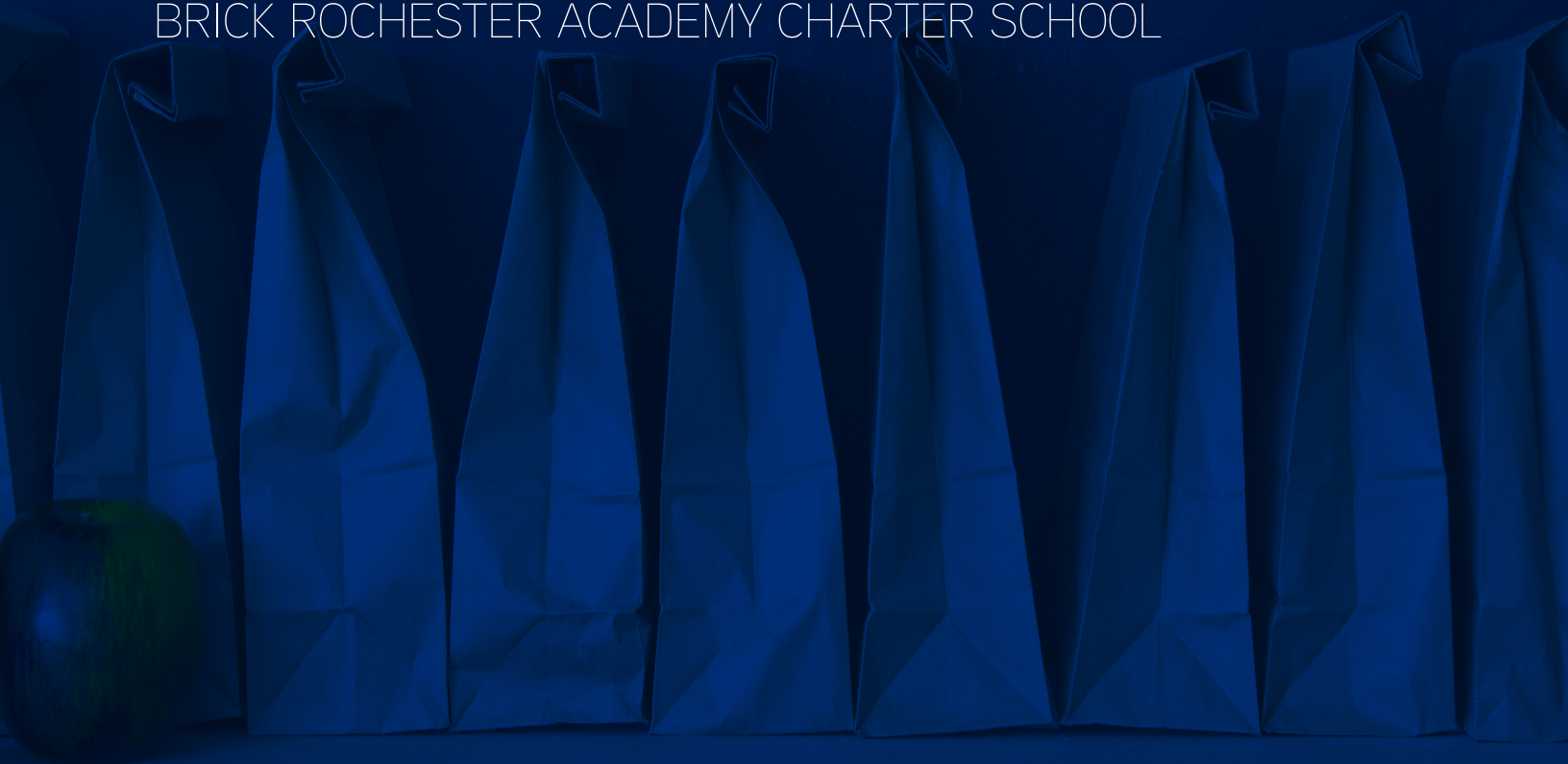




# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH  
BRICK ROCHESTER ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The applicant submitted the proposal to establish BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School (“BRICK Rochester”) to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) on June 3, 2024 in response to the Institute’s [2024 Request for Proposals \(the “RFP”\)](#) released on behalf of the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) on December 6, 2023. The Institute makes copies of applications [available on its website](#).

If approved, BRICK Rochester will open in August 2026 with 120 students in Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> grade, adding students in elementary grades each year, ultimately serving 480 students in Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade during its first charter term. BRICK Rochester will backfill all seats that become available through attrition in all grades. The school will replicate the instructional program implemented at BRICK Buffalo Academy Charter School (“BRICK Buffalo”), which opened its doors in August 2023.

BRICK Rochester will contract with the charter management organization (“CMO”) Building Responsible Intelligent Creative Kids, Inc. (“BRICK;” the “CMO;” or, the “network”), a New Jersey-based not-for-profit corporation, which will provide support to the school in the areas of school leader development, curriculum and instruction, operations, human resources, and financial services.

After a thorough review process consistent with the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (the “Act”), the Institute finds that the proposal to establish BRICK Rochester rigorously demonstrates the criteria detailed in the Institute’s 2024 RFP, which align with the Act.

Based on the proposal, as amended by the applicant, and the foregoing:

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the proposal to establish BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School.



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# FINDINGS

Based on the comprehensive review of the proposal and interviews of the applicant and the proposed education corporation board of trustees, the Institute makes the following findings.

1. The charter school described in the proposal meets the requirements of the Act and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations as reflected in (among other things):
  - appropriate policies and procedures for the provision of services and programs for students with disabilities and English language learners (“ELLs”);
  - the required policies addressing student discipline, personnel matters, and health services;
  - an admissions policy that complies with the Act and federal law;
  - the bylaws governing the education corporation’s board of trustees; and,
  - an analysis of the projected fiscal and programmatic impact of the charter school on surrounding public and private schools.
2. The applicant has demonstrated the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner as reflected in (among other things):
  - an educational program that meets or exceeds the state performance standards;
  - a culture of self-evaluation and accountability at both the administrative and board level;
  - the student achievement goals articulated by the applicant;
  - appropriate staffing plan;
  - a sound mission statement;
  - a comprehensive assessment plan;
  - sound start-up, first-year, and five-year budget plans;
  - a plan to acquire comprehensive general liability insurance to include any vehicles, employees, and property;
  - evidence of adequate community support for, and interest in, the charter school sufficient to allow the school to reach anticipated enrollment;
  - descriptions of programmatic and independent fiscal audits, with fiscal audits occurring at least annually;
  - school calendar and school day schedule that provide at least as much instruction time during the school year as required of other public schools; and,
  - methods and strategies for serving students with disabilities in compliance with federal laws and regulations.
3. Granting the proposal is likely to: a) have a significant educational benefit to the students expected to attend the proposed charter school; b) improve student learning and achievement; and, c) materially further the purposes of the Act. This finding is supported by (among other things):
  - a rigorous, inclusive, and culturally responsive curriculum that offers both opportunity for academic achievement and relevance to the students and families the school intends to serve;
  - a strong proposed board whose members have extensive ties to the local community and represent a diversity of backgrounds and experiences;
  - the support of the BRICK network, which will add capacity in the areas of school leader development, curriculum and instruction, human resources, wraparound services and financial services;

- significant academic need within the Rochester City School District; and,
  - the planned development of partnerships with local support organizations to provide wraparound services, including medical and housing support for families in need.
4. The proposed charter school would meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets, as prescribed by the SUNY Trustees, of students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program as required by Education Law § 2852(9-a)(b)(i).
  5. The applicant has conducted public outreach for the school, in conformity with a thorough and meaningful public review process prescribed by the SUNY Trustees, to solicit community input regarding the proposed charter school and to address comments received from the impacted community concerning the educational and programmatic needs of students in conformity with Education Law § 2852(9-a)(b)(ii).
  6. The Institute has determined that the proposal rigorously demonstrates the criteria and best satisfies the objectives contained within the RFP, and, therefore, is a “qualified application” within the meaning of Education Law § 2852(9-a)(d) that should be submitted to the New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”) for approval.

The Institute developed the RFP “in a manner that facilitate[d] a thoughtful review of charter school applications, consider[ed] the demand for charter schools by the community, and s[ought] to locate charter schools in a region or regions where there may be a lack of alternatives and access to charter schools would provide new alternatives within the local public education system that would offer the greatest educational benefit to students,” in accordance with Education Law § 2852(9-a)(b). The Institute also posted the draft RFP for public comment and responded to same.

The Institute conducted a rigorous evaluation of the proposal under consideration including academic, fiscal, and legal reviews. In addition, the Institute engaged independent consultants to evaluate the proposal based on the criteria set forth in the RFP. Pursuant to its protocols, the Institute conducted an interview with the founding team, including the lead applicant, the proposed board of trustees, and key BRICK Rochester leadership. Trustee Joseph Belluck, Chairman of the SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee, also met with the founding team.

## BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

The applicant group for BRICK Rochester seeks to open a high-quality elementary charter school in Rochester, New York. The proposed school will implement a rigorous and culturally responsive instructional program designed to challenge students academically, embrace inclusivity, and build social emotional competencies. BRICK currently manages two charter schools: the SUNY-authorized BRICK Buffalo in Buffalo, NY and Gateway Academy Charter School (“Gateway Academy”) in Newark, NJ.

BRICK Buffalo opened its doors in August 2023 and currently serves 160 students in Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, growing to serve 486 students in Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade over its current charter term. Gateway Academy currently serves 810 students in Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Newark, NJ. The Existing School Performance section below highlights key academic outcomes for these schools.

Uniquely positioned to serve the high-need student demographic in Rochester which is home to a significant population of economically disadvantaged families, BRICK Rochester is committed to providing students and families with a holistic, community driven school model that incorporates a variety of wraparound service partners. The founding team chose to propose expansion into Rochester based on its similar demographics to the communities BRICK's existing schools serve and in response to gaps in achievement outcomes for students of color in the district. For example, the overall proficiency rates of black and hispanic students enrolled in the district were significantly lower than overall proficiency rates of white students as measured by 2023 state exams in both English language arts ("ELA") and mathematics. The BRICK Rochester team has engaged in extensive community outreach to assess the need and demand for the new school, as well as to develop connections with community partners and organizations and will continue to develop relationships with the Rochester community.

Anchored by its immersive approach to establish an ecosystem of wraparound services including early childhood education, health care, affordable housing, and workforce development, BRICK Rochester will offer comprehensive support for students, families, and school staff through BRICK's Promise Navigation System. BRICK's expertise in brokering these services stems from its experience in leading two federal promise neighborhood initiatives in New Jersey that currently provide families with services from over twenty-five local social service agencies.

The BRICK Rochester founding board and leadership team is comprised of diverse individuals with expertise in various areas critical for school startup, and bring robust personal and professional ties to the Rochester community. Leveraging their shared commitment to the school's mission and extensive expertise in education, real estate, law, financial oversight, governance, and community organizing, they collectively and individually demonstrate the capacity to successfully launch BRICK Rochester.

## MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

The BRICK Rochester mission states:

*At BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School, we will graduate a community of learners who will contribute positively to our global society and embrace their role as architects in building a just and better world. We use a holistic approach to ensure that students from Rochester neighborhoods have the knowledge, skills, and support needed to be college, career, and life-ready upon graduation. Our school will provide a rigorous, inclusive, and culturally responsive curriculum that challenges students academically and builds their social emotional competencies. We also immerse our families in an ecosystem of rich community partnerships to support them in maintaining the stable and healthy homes necessary for children to thrive. In partnership with our families, we empower our students to draw strength from their identity and become leaders in their communities.*

BRICK Rochester will implement the following key design elements:

- **BRICK's Rigorous and Culturally Responsive Instructional Program:** BRICK Rochester will offer a proven instructional program that maintains high expectations for all students as they grapple with rigorous work aligned to New York state standards and also respond to the needs of the Rochester community.

- **BRICK’s Ubuntu Cultural Program:** BRICK Rochester will offer a cultural program rooted in the African humanistic philosophy of Ubuntu, which prioritizes interdependence among community members. BRICK Rochester’s cultural program aims to create a warm, belonging-based school environment by focusing on culturally sustaining practices, social-emotional development, trauma-informed practices, and positive identity development.
- **BRICK School Community Ecosystem:** BRICK Rochester will build an ecosystem of community partnerships to provide their students and families with concrete support services via established organizations Rochester residents trust and respect.

## CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE

BRICK Rochester will offer approximately 183 days of instruction each year. The first day of instruction for the 2026 school year will be on or around August 24, 2026, and the last day will be on or around June 17, 2027. Subsequent school years will follow a similar calendar. The school day will begin each morning at 7:45am and end at 3:35pm. BRICK Rochester will provide students with more than 1,250 hours of instruction per year, which exceeds the requirements of 900 hours for 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade mandated by Education Law § 2851(2)(n) and 8 NYCRR § 175.5.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

BRICK Rochester will implement the same academic program in place at Gateway Academy and BRICK Buffalo. Ensuring all grade-level instruction and curriculum content aligns to New York State learning standards, BRICK Rochester will offer robust programming in the core content areas of English language arts (“ELA”), mathematics, science, and social studies. Additionally, the school will offer a variety of specials courses such as art, music, dance, theater, and physical education. The proposed school’s selected curricula are externally validated through independent rating systems like EdReports and the What Works Clearinghouse, and have a history of success at high-performing charter schools in New York State. These efforts will ensure BRICK Rochester students receive exposure to rigorous material to prepare them for college and career.

Teachers at BRICK Rochester will deliver differentiated instruction and prioritize the inclusion of curriculum resources and supports necessary to ensure all students make significant academic gains and attain grade level mastery. In addition to New York State annual assessments, BRICK Rochester will administer the NWEA MAP test twice each school year in reading and math across all grade levels. Additionally, the school will incorporate frequent assessment in each content area throughout the year to assess skill attainment, determine individual student needs, and identify instructional modifications necessary to support academic achievement.

### **English Language Arts (“ELA”) (Reading and Writing)**

BRICK Rochester’s ELA curriculum is constructed to support student reading growth and ensure all students read on grade level by the end of third grade. The school will utilize Amplify Core Knowledge Language Arts to support foundational reading skills in Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and Great Minds’ Wit and Wisdom in Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> grade to ensure students can read, understand, and analyze complex texts across various genres. Together, the components provide a balanced program aligned with effective practices for supporting students in becoming strong, independent readers, writers, and thinkers. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, BRICK Rochester will use Achievement First’s Navigator curriculum which is designed to support students in developing reading stamina, analyzing and writing about complex texts, and building meaning through collaboration and discussion with other students.

### **Mathematics**

For Kindergarten – 6<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics, BRICK Rochester will implement the enVision mathematics common core curriculum. The enVision mathematics curriculum integrates opportunities for students to explore and apply mathematical concepts in meaningful ways during lessons. A key component of the curriculum is its focus on collaborative problem-solving, where students work together to analyze and solve mathematical challenges. This collaborative component helps students deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts while developing essential problem-solving skills.

### **Science**

For Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Science, BRICK Rochester plans to implement Full Option Science System (“FOSS”), a hands-on, research-based science curriculum that allows students to uncover new ideas through collaboration and problem solving. For 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade science, BRICK Rochester plans to implement Amplify Science, an inquiry-based curriculum that also provides hands-on, collaborative problem solving opportunities. Amplify science lessons include hands-on investigations, activities to support literacy skills, and interactive digital tools aimed at giving students opportunities to read, write, experiment, and reason like scientists and engineers.

### **Social Studies**

For Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade social studies, BRICK Rochester plans to implement the Core Knowledge History and Geography (“CKHG”) curriculum, which is aligned to support the common core ELA standards, to reinforce the school’s literacy efforts. CKHG lessons include activities to build students’ historical and geographical knowledge as well as opportunities to think critically about past historical events and their ongoing impact. Additionally, all students at BRICK Rochester will participate in a social studies unit titled “Rochester is My Home” where they will explore their own identity through stories and historical facts about their family, neighborhood, and the Rochester community. For 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade social studies, BRICK Rochester will implement the Achievement First social studies curriculum, which aligns with CKHG and focuses on building literacy skills through social studies material.

### **At-Risk**

BRICK Rochester plans to adopt a culturally responsive model from the BRICK Network, emphasizing data-driven approaches, family supports, and a response to intervention (“RTI”) system to support students through academic, behavioral, and attendance challenges. The school will utilize strategies for literacy, math, and social-emotional development, as well as supports for students with disabilities and ELLs. The school will also provide ongoing professional development for teachers to ensure all teachers supporting students with disabilities and ELLs meet the required services for students and implement effective instructional practices.

### **Art and Music**

BRICK Rochester plans to implement its own comprehensive specials program in visual art and music, ensuring that students engage with culturally relevant content. The school will develop its arts and music program internally, incorporating resources and references to local cultural institutions such as the Memorial Art Gallery and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

### **Physical Education**

BRICK Rochester students will also take regular physical education classes designed to engage students in activities promoting physical fitness and overall well-being. The curriculum is developed internally and customized to provide opportunities for students to gain exposure to multiple sports and activities to maximize engagement and build healthy lifestyle habits.

## **Theater and Dance**

BRICK Rochester will also offer specials classes in theater and dance, offering students opportunities to express themselves through performance arts. The curricula for these classes will be developed internally to include lessons that are culturally responsive and rooted in students' local and cultural experiences.

## EXISTING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The BRICK network currently operates Gateway Academy and the SUNY-authorized BRICK Buffalo. SUNY's first year evaluation visit to BRICK Buffalo from April 2024 noted the school demonstrated clear systems in the areas of assessment, curriculum, and board oversight. While BRICK Buffalo does not yet serve students in grades with state exams, the school assessed its Kindergarten – 1<sup>st</sup> grade students using a variety of diagnostic and summative assessments. In 2023-24, two thirds of Kindergarten students and 83% of students in 1<sup>st</sup> grade met or exceeded their annual growth targets on the DIBELS assessment in 2023-24. In mathematics, one third of Kindergarten students and 70% of students in 1<sup>st</sup> grade achieved the equivalent of grade level proficiency on the school's internally developed end of year assessments. Notably, 79% of students in 1<sup>st</sup> grade maintained or grew at least one proficiency level on the school's interim mathematics assessment over the course of the 2023-24 school year. Gateway Academy has also demonstrated strong student outcomes, outperforming the Newark district by 12 percentage points in ELA and by 9 percentage points in mathematics on the 2024 New Jersey Student Learning Assessments.

## SCHOOL CULTURE AND DISCIPLINE

Implementing the Ubuntu cultural program used at BRICK's current schools, BRICK Rochester aims to create a school environment that establishes a sense of predictability and consistency, while cultivating a sense of belonging for all students. Teachers will integrate culturally responsive and social emotional learning programming into daily instruction and classroom activities. BRICK Rochester will also utilize the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning ("CASEL") program, a framework that supports schools in using evidence-based SEL practices to inform their lessons and culture systems. Further, BRICK Rochester will implement several of the successful strategies from existing BRICK schools to ensure strong and consistent student attendance, such as data-driven attendance meetings and having dedicated success mentors to support families struggling with attendance.

The schoolwide approach to behavior management will incorporate ongoing opportunities for social emotional learning and a robust intervention system to ensure that students receive individualized support. BRICK Rochester will promote positive behavior and build school culture through the use of restorative practices designed to strengthen relationships rather than exclusionary discipline methods. To reinforce this commitment, BRICK Rochester will work to recruit and retain a diverse community of leaders and teachers within the school that reflect student identities and cultural background, and has demonstrated success doing so at its existing schools where 87% of teaching staff at Gateway and 78% at BRICK Buffalo identify as people of color.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The BRICK Rochester board of trustees will contract with the BRICK network to provide comprehensive management services for the school. The contract will enable the school to access back-office supports related to talent recruitment, human resource management, finance, curriculum development, and instructional leadership. In addition to the BRICK network supports, the BRICK regional team, including the Western New York superintendent and the regional director of operations, consists of employees

based in western New York and dedicated full time to supporting BRICK Rochester and BRICK Buffalo. These key network staff will support the instructional and operational leaders at BRICK Rochester and BRICK Buffalo, as well as supporting with professional development to ensure leaders and teachers deliver the BRICK model with fidelity.

BRICK Rochester's school leader, appointed by the board of trustees, will oversee the school's instructional and cultural programs, working alongside the Western New York Superintendent to achieve the school's mission and strategic priorities. Similarly, the Director of Operations, also appointed by the board, will oversee all operational matters, supported by BRICK's regional director of operations, to implement operational systems aligned with BRICK's model.

## GOVERNANCE

The bylaws of BRICK Rochester indicate the education corporation board will consist of no fewer than 5 and no more than 15 voting members. The proposed members of the board of trustees are set forth below:

### **1. Shanai Lee, Board Chair**

Shanai Lee, MBA, Ed.D. will serve as the Chair and is currently the Executive Director of Rochester Education and Development for Youth (READY), Inc. Lee is a Rochester native and product of the city's school district, and has previously held leadership positions at Uncommon Schools, the Rochester Board of Education and the City of Rochester. Shanai holds a doctorate degree in Educational Administration, a M.A. in Educational Policy, and an MBA in Finance and Accounting from the University of Rochester. She also holds a B.A. in Economics from Cornell University. She serves as a board member for various organizations in Rochester.

### **2. Martha Cole, Vice-Chair**

Martha Cole will serve as the Vice Chair and currently serves as the Strategic Partner and Community Engagement Manager at the Rochester-Monroe County Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI). Cole's previous positions include: Program Director, Apex Institute; Executive Director, Shelectricity; Program Director, Digital Opportunity Trust; Program Supervisor, Catapult Learning; Lead Teacher/Counselor, Youth Villages, Inc.; and Director of Coordinated Community Response and Special Programs, Family Safety Center. Martha holds an M.Ed. from Delta State University.

### **3. Kathleen Black, Treasurer**

Kathleen Black is currently the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching & Learning at Rochester City Public Schools and will serve as Treasurer. Her previous positions include Chief Academic Officer at Rochester City Public Schools; School Support Partner at Class Measures and Director and Leadership Coach at TNT. Kathleen has a B.A. from University of Pittsburg; M.A. in Teaching from American University; M. A. in Educational Administration from Trinity University; and M.ED in Educational Leadership from University of Pennsylvania.

### **4. Cynshei Wilson, Trustee**

Cynshei Wilson is currently the Constituent Services Coordinator for the Office of New York State Senator Jeremy Cooney. Wilson's previous positions include: Public Safety Aid, Rochester Police Department and Direct Support Assistant for the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. Wilson holds a B.A. in Social Sciences from the University at Buffalo and an A.S. in Criminal Justice from Monroe Community College. Wilson also serves on various boards and committees in the Rochester area.

## **5. Dominique Lee, Trustee**

Dominique Lee is the Founder and CEO of BRICK Education Network. His previous roles include Founder and Superintendent of Achieve Community Charter School and School Operations Manager & Teacher at Newark Public Schools. Lee holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Michigan and an M.A. in Educational Leadership from New York University.

## **6. Michael Mitchell, Trustee**

Michael Mitchell is currently the Family & Community Engagement/ERSEA Manager at Action for a Better Community, Head Start in Rochester New York. Mitchell's prior positions include Associate Dean of Students, Uncommon Schools; Coordinator of My Brothers Keeper Initiatives, City of Rochester; Administrator and Principal, Northside Christian Academy; and Summer Program Coordinator, City of Rochester Recreation & Youth Services. Michael holds a B.A. in Counseling from Ohio Valley University and M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from Ohio Valley University.

## FACILITIES

BRICK Rochester is seeking to secure a private facility capable of accommodating the school's expansion over the initial five-year period. The school's target zip codes are 14613, 14615, 14611, and 14614, and a location central to those neighborhoods and public transportation routes is preferred. To that end, BRICK has partnered with Benchmark Realty Advisors ("Benchmark"), an established Rochester brokerage and advisory firm, to explore facility options across the city. With Benchmark's extensive local market knowledge and roots in western New York, the team has sourced three potential properties that could serve the school within conservative budgetary parameters.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of BRICK Rochester on the district is summarized below.

| Charter Year       | A.                          | B.                                 | C.                                | D.                                                        | E.                                                          | F.                                    | G.                              |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                    | Expected Number of Students | Basic Charter School Per Pupil Aid | Projected Per Pupil Revenue (AxB) | Other District Revenue (SPED, Food Service, Grants, etc.) | Total Project Funding from District to Charter School (C+D) | Rochester City School District Budget | Projected District Impact (E/F) |
| Year 1 (2026-2027) | 120                         | 14,602                             | 1,752,240                         | 27,840                                                    | 1,780,080                                                   | 1,065,349,778                         | 0.17%                           |
| Year 5 (2030-2031) | 480                         | 14,602                             | 7,008,960                         | 158,340                                                   | 7,167,300                                                   | 1,065,349,778                         | 0.30%                           |

The Institute finds the proposed school's fiscal impact on the district, charter, and nonpublic schools in the same geographic area will be minimal. If the proposed school enrollment is higher than projected, the Institute has determined the fiscal impact of the proposed school on the district, charter, and nonpublic schools in the same geographic area will also be minimal. To date, BRICK Buffalo has been in compliance with all fiscal reporting requirements since beginning operations. BRICK Buffalo's board has demonstrated strong capacity to maintain conservative budgeting despite initially lower than anticipated enrollment, ending its first year with a surplus of \$413,000. BRICK Buffalo will submit its first annual audit to the Institute on November 1, 2024, which the Institute will review as is standard practice.

The Institute reviewed the school's proposed startup budget, fiscal plans, and supporting evidence for each year of the proposed charter term and finds them reasonable. The founding team noted BRICK Buffalo experienced lower initial enrollment than anticipated, and discussed detailed plans and lessons gleaned from the opening experience in Buffalo that are likely to support effective plans to meet full enrollment in Rochester. Notably, the proposed BRICK Rochester startup budget reflects an enhanced expenditure plan for student marketing in order to set the school up to open in a fiscally strong position. If the school is approved, the Institute recommends strongly emphasizing student recruitment/marketing during the preopening period to maximize enrollment and ensure fiscal stability. Based on the capacity interview and documentation, and BRICK Buffalo's history of conservative budgeting methods, the Institute finds BRICK Rochester has a reasonable and feasible plan to open in a fiscally stable position.

## NOTIFICATION & PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Institute notified the district as well as public and private schools in the same geographic area of the proposed school about receipt of the proposal, and posted it on the Institute's website for public review. The district scheduled a public hearing pertaining to the proposed school for September 3, 2024. The Institute carefully reviews and considers all district and public comments received prior to finalizing its recommendation. Any district comments and a summary of public comments is provided in Appendix A.

## PREFERENCE SCORING

Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c) requires authorizers to establish a scoring rubric and grant priority to applications meeting both statutory and authorizer standards. The purpose of the preference criteria is to prioritize proposals in the event that the number of proposals meeting the SUNY Trustees' requirements exceeds the maximum number of charters to be issued. The RFP identified the minimum eligibility requirements and mandated preference criteria required by Education Law § 2852(9-a)(c), as described in greater detail below, as well as SUNY's additional criteria. The BRICK Rochester proposal met the eligibility requirements, as evidenced by the following:

- the proposal was sufficiently complete, i.e., it included a Transmittal and Summary form, Proposal Summary, and responses to all RFP requests as prescribed by the Institute;
- the proposal included a viable plan to meet the enrollment and retention targets established by the SUNY Trustees for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible to participate in the FRPL program (as detailed in Request 5); and,
- the proposal provided evidence of public outreach that conforms to the Act and the process prescribed by the SUNY Trustees for the purpose of soliciting and incorporating community input regarding the proposed charter school and its academic program (as detailed in Request 4).

As BRICK Rochester's proposal submission met the eligibility criteria, the Institute's evaluation continued with a full review of the proposal, an interview of the application team and proposed board of trustees, and requests for clarification and/or amendments to the proposal. The review process then continued with an evaluation of the proposal in relation to the nine Preference Criteria contained in the RFP for which proposals can earn credit as described in the RFP's Preference Scoring Guidance. The Preference Criteria, in addition to eligibility criteria and the overall high standards established by the SUNY Trustees, include the mandatory objectives set forth in Education Law §§ 2852(9-a)(c)(i)-(viii).

Pursuant to the RFP, in compliance with the requirements for new charter applications set forth in Education Law § 2852(9-a), the Institute recommends the SUNY Trustees approve the application for one new charter as proposed. BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School earned a score of 25.75 preference points out of a maximum of 39. Based on this score and the other information and findings set forth herein, the Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the application for BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School, which does not exceed the statutory limit in Education Law § 2852(9)(a).

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Based on its review and findings, the Institute recommends the SUNY Trustees approve the proposal to establish BRICK Rochester Academy Charter School.

# APPENDIX A:

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

### SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE SUNY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD THROUGH OCTOBER 2, 2024

On or about July 3, 2024, in accordance with Education Law § 2857(1), the Institute notified the district as well as public and private schools in the same geographic area of the proposed school about receipt of the proposal to establish BRICK Rochester. The notice reminded the district that the New York State Commissioner of Education's regulations require the school district to hold a public hearing within 30 days of the notice for each new charter application. A redacted copy of the BRICK Rochester proposal was also posted on the [Institute's website](#) for public review.

The district scheduled a hearing pertaining to the proposed school for September 3, 2024 and provided the Institute a summary of comments made. No one attended, spoke, or submitted written comments.

The proposal included evidence of support in the form of letters from the CEO of Charter Champions of Rochester, the President and CEO of Jordan Health, and seven additional Rochester community members. The letters expressed support based on a significant need for more high quality schools in Rochester given the low performance of district schools, and BRICK's proposed comprehensive approach combining academic support with character development.

# APPENDIX B: DISTRICT INFORMATION

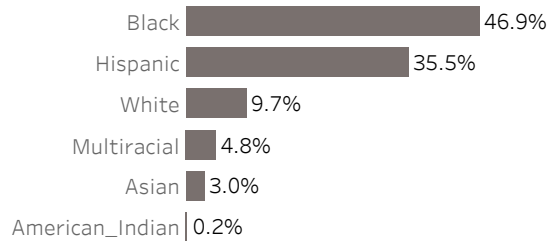
## Rochester City SD Kindergarten through Grade 5 Demographics 2022-23

### Grade Level District Student Enrollment Subgroups Data

Total Enrollment (K-5):

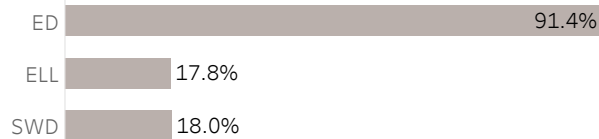
9,041

#### Race/Ethnicity



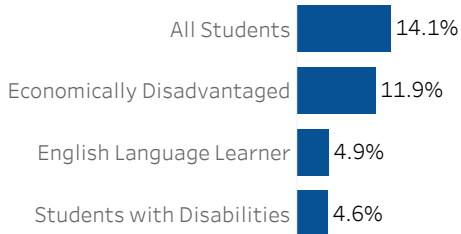
|       |
|-------|
| 4,236 |
| 3,206 |
| 873   |
| 436   |
| 275   |
| 15    |

#### At-Risk Subgroups

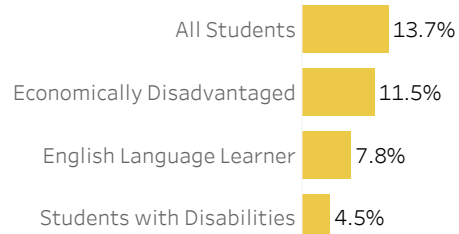


|       |
|-------|
| 8,262 |
| 1,611 |
| 1,626 |

### ELA Proficiency Grades 3 through 5 2022-23



### Math Proficiency Grades 3 through 5 2022-23





**Charter Schools Institute**  
The State University of New York

[www.newyorkcharters.org](http://www.newyorkcharters.org)

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