



Meredith Pennotti, Charter School Administrator

Ida West-Jones, Curriculum Director

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(732).450.2092 ■ (732).936.1923

December 1, 2015

David Hesse, Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Education
100 River View Executive Plaza
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

Dear Commissioner Hesse,

In 1997, three long standing trends identified in Red Bank public school education drove the founding of Red Bank Charter School. Students repeatedly performed poorly on state assessments. They were disengaged or “disenfranchised” from their community. The schools were segregated, failing to reflect the diverse school age population of the children of the borough. Seventeen years later, Red Bank Charter School has done its’ part to reverse these patterns.

RBCS is an academically high performing Tier 1 school. Students are vested, visible, and well appreciated by stakeholders as contributing young citizens in their town. The diverse student body and strong school culture provides an optimal environment for learning and social development.

Despite these accomplishments, we acknowledge that the landscape of public education in Red Bank remains largely status quo. While one of the best charter schools in the state, we are also one of the smallest. Our small size hampers the impact we can have as an agent for change.

We propose that by providing greater access to quality public school education, Red Bank Charter School could influence a substantial shift to higher achievement for a significant number of the children of Red Bank.

The Board of Trustees of the Red Bank Charter School respectfully requests an amendment to our charter, to expand from 1 class to 2 classes at each grade level, Pre-K through 8, with 20 students in each class for a total enrollment of 400 students. This increased enrollment would be implemented through a weighted admissions lottery. If approved, a phased implementation plan will begin with grades Pre-K-4 in 2016-17,

grades 5-6 added in 2017-18 and grades 7-8 added in 2018-19, respectively. This grade clustering pattern replicates our current instructional model.

Teacher culture is a strong component of RBCS success. In staffing the expansion, we will continue the teacher adjunct model to maximize opportunities for differentiated instruction. We will actively recruit teachers that fit the RBCS teacher profile. We cultivate teachers as specialists in their content area while encouraging participation in our distributed leadership model.

The following is a proposed enrollment grid:

	Phase1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Grade Level	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Pre-K	40	40	40
K	40	40	40
1	40	40	40
2	40	40	40
3	40	40	40
4	40	40	40
5	20	40	40
6	20	40	40
7	20	20	40
8	20	20	40
Total	320	360	400

In the following document we provide all the required elements for amendment review. RBCS demonstrates evidence of consistent high academic performance, enrollment to capacity, robust wait list, fiscal stability, sound governance, stable school leadership, low faculty turnover, minimal student attrition and an available, affordable satellite facility to accommodate the expanded enrollment.

Red Bank Charter School is an example of a stellar stand-alone charter school, one that provided the backbone of the charter school movement in New Jersey. Our multi-dimensional, cohesive model for educational reform works. We are positioned and able to take it to scale.

We anticipate the public discord this proposal will generate. We are committed to refocusing the education discussion in Red Bank from the distractions of Common Core and PARCC back to outcomes and student achievement.

We anticipate the argument over the difference between the populations served by the Borough and Charter schools. We purport that the expansion and weighted lottery will convert to access and equity for a larger number of economically disadvantaged children.

We have examined the impact this expansion will have on the budget of the borough schools. We realize financial hardship will be incurred as RBCS likewise struggles under the New Jersey charter funding formula.

Acknowledging the weightiness of each of these factors, we respectfully submit that the determinant of this decision should not be political, demographic or financial. The decision must be grounded in the education and well-being of the children of Red Bank.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

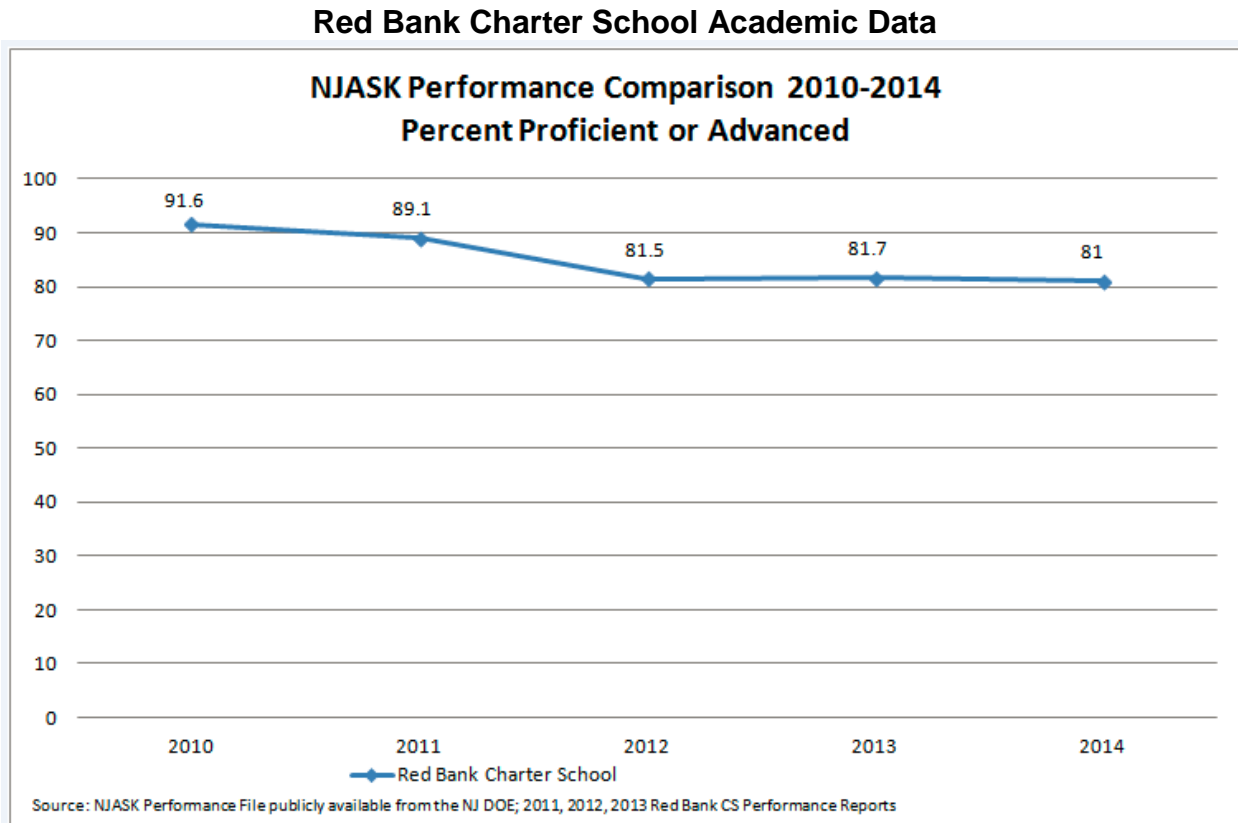
Sincerely,

Meredith S. Pennotti
Lead Person

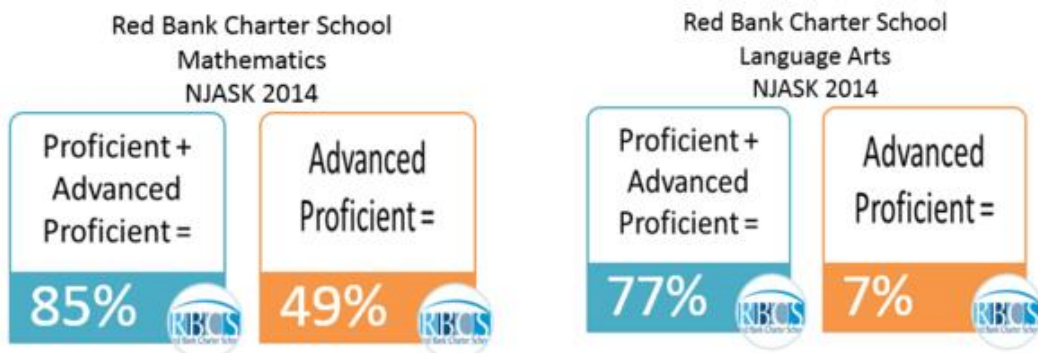
cc: Evo Popoff, Chief Innovation Officer, NJDOE
Harry Lee, Director, Office of Charter Schools, NJDOE
Dr. Jared Rummage, Superintendent of Red Bank Borough Schools

Academic Performance

Red Bank Charter is consistently an academically High Performing school. Based on statewide assessment data, a school-wide view of performance over time in language arts and mathematics demonstrates a trend of strong student achievement.

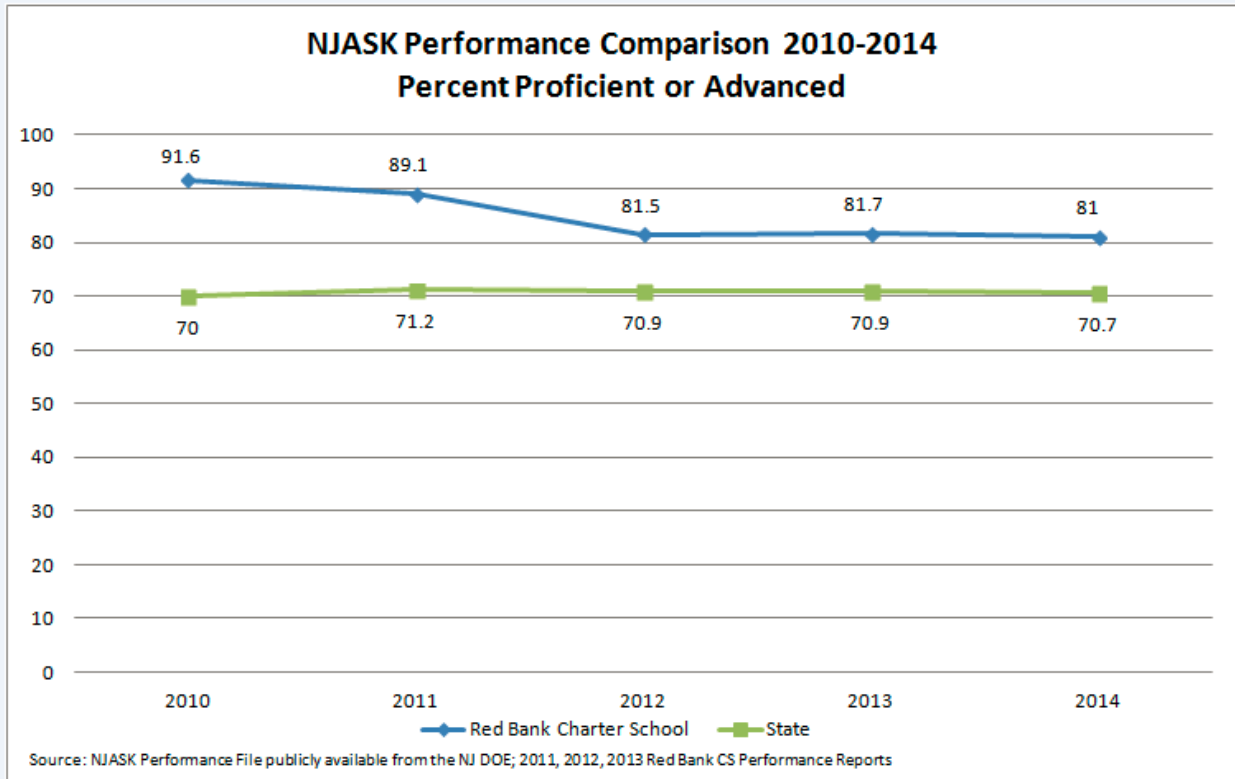


Breaking out ELA and Math, our most recent 2014 NJASK performance shows:



Source: NJASK as compiled on School Performance Reports

Over a 5 year period, RBCS surpasses the state proficiency rates in ELA and Mathematics:



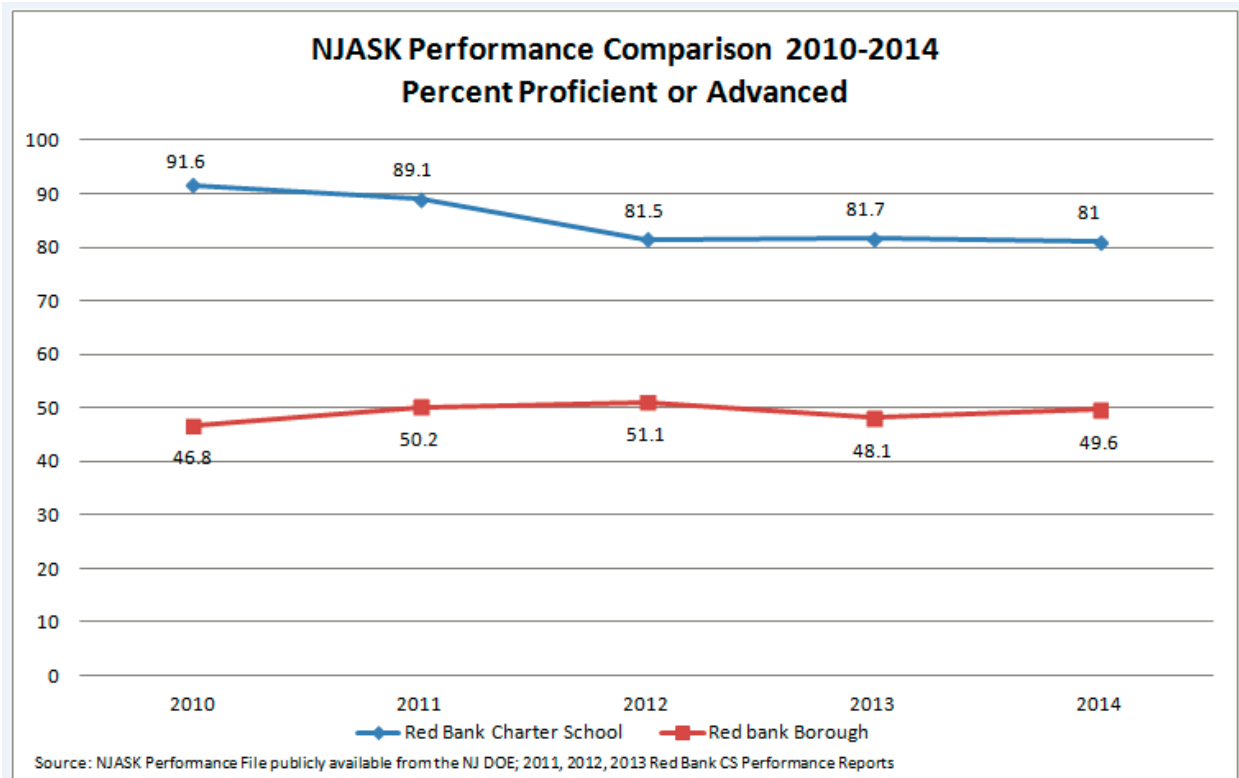
Academic District Comparative

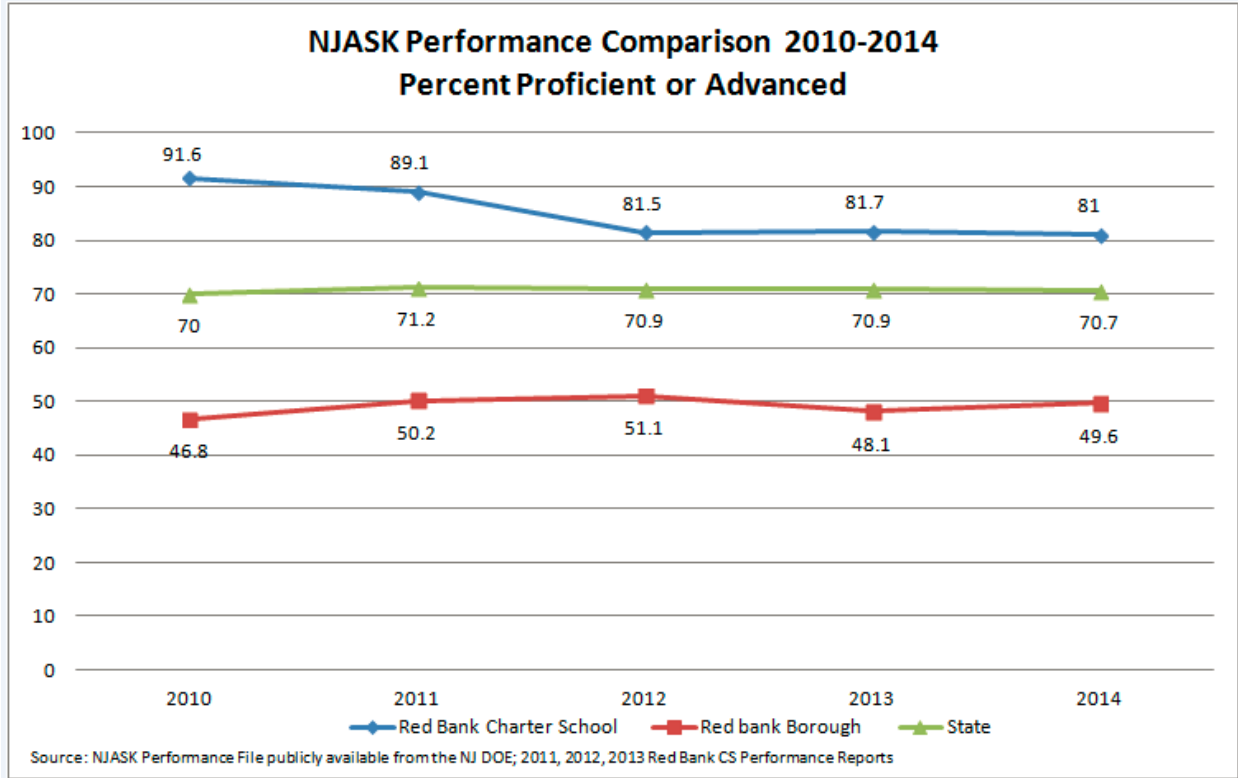
In doing a comparative of the RBCS data profile to that of Red Bank Borough Schools, the differential between the two is significant. These findings are the underpinnings of the petition to expand Red Bank Charter School.

An analysis of NJASK assessment data shows the disparity in student performance in LAL and Math between RBCS and Red Bank Borough Schools.

Comparative Performance						
NJASK Schoolwide vs. RBB District Avg.	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Dist Comp-LAL (% Prof & Adv vs. Dist)	+24%	+46%	+42%	+31%	+35%	+36%
Dist Comp-Math (% Prof & Adv vs. Dist)	+23%	+45%	+35%	+26%	+32%	+26%

Source: NJASK as compiled on School Performance Reports





Based on state rankings, RBCS on average places among the top 73% of elementary schools across the state. The Red Bank Middle school out performs only 19 % of all elementary schools.

School Academic Achievement Performance Rates

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Red Bank Charter School	75%	73%	72%
Red Bank Middle School	20%	18%	19%

Source: NJ School Performance Reports

Progress Target Pass Rate Economically Disadvantaged Subgroup

	2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	Math	LAL	Math	LAL	Math	LAL
RB Charter	72.1	55.8	77.5	57.5	75	45
RB Charter Target	(88.2)	(85.9)	(89.3)	(87.2)	(90)	(88.5)
RB Middle	55.3	38.2	51.2	41.4	57.3	34.7
RB Middle Target	(61.2)	(46.5)	(64.7)	(51.4)	(68.2)	(56.3)
RB Primary	62.5	47.5	54.3	47.8	51.1	37.5
RB Primary Target	(55.8)	(31.5)	(59.8)	(37.7)	(63.8)	(43.9)

Source: NJ School Performance Reports

Testing Data is one snapshot of a school. Our strong belief is in a more holistic assessment model that captures outcomes which highlight individual student achievement and development. Some examples include the following:

9th Grade Math Placements

More significant than the number of students who take Algebra I in 8th grade is their placement into advanced high school math courses.

Red Bank Charter School Algebra I Outcomes 2009-2014		
# Students Tested	# Students Passed	9 th Grade Placements
36	31	Geometry Geometry II Honors Algebra II

Source: RBRHS Grade 9 Schedules

Recent PARCC data confirms that all 6 students who took the Algebra I assessment in spring 2015 met or exceeded grade level expectations and are on track for college and careers.

High School Acceptances

We have an exemplary success record of student acceptances into competitive high school programs.

Red Bank Charter School Competitive High School Placements 2010-2015		
# Students Applied		# of Acceptances
36		31
High School Placements		
Red Bank Regional Academies	Peddie School	Monmouth County Career Academies
	Red Bank Catholic	
Engineering Finance	Christian Brothers Academy	Communications High High Technology High MAST
Information Technology Visual & Performing Arts	Trinity Hall	Biotechnology High
Early Childhood	St. Paul's, NH	

Source: Acceptance Letters

Post Secondary Data

The following chart summarizes the number of RBCS graduates over a three year period who successfully applied to and went on to a post-secondary education. The impressive list of acceptances is listed in the Appendix.

RBCS Post-Secondary Education
of students that applied = 43
of applications submitted = 97
of acceptances = 92
denied = 5
of students that went on to higher education = 39

Source: RBRHS Guidance and Counseling Department

STARS Challenge

Noteworthy is the number of students that participate in the local competitive STARS Challenge science enrichment program. The goal of the program is to cultivate students who can become innovators involved in science and technology and ultimately maintain America's historical lead in technology and innovation through a focus on real-world problems and innovative solutions.

RBCS is proud to be a founding school with 6 of the original participants. Early on, we appreciated the value of the integrated discovery based approach to learning which we now term STEM. Over 10 years, 55 RBCS students have taken 124 courses. Commendable is the fact that students who participate travel to Monmouth University to take class at night extending their school day well beyond the 8 hours they spend at RBCS.

Enrollment

Family Demand-Wait List

Red Bank Charter School consistently has a robust waiting list with applicants at each grade level. The average number of applicants over the last 5 years, from 2011 to current is 98. We continuously backfill seats as they become available. There are no parameters or restrictions based on time of year or grade level. It should be noted that typically there is very little mobility from the wait list.

Family Preference for Choice

It is significant to examine the number of families exercising the option for school choice rather than attend the borough public school. For the 2013 school year, the data indicates that more than a third of students in Red Bank would choose a school other than the traditional borough school.

$$\begin{array}{r} 145/1320=11\% \text{ choosing private} \\ 180/1320=14\% \text{ attending RBCS} \\ + \quad 130/1320=10\% \text{ RBCS wait list} \\ \hline 35\% \text{ of students demonstrate a preference for choice} \end{array}$$

Source: 2013 estimates of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, NJSMART

Stable Enrollment

RBCS enrollment is stable with minimum fluctuation. If there is an opening, typically the seat is being held for student placed in an out of district placement.

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
174/180	175/180	180/180	194/195	193/195	199/200
*charters are required to hold spaces open for special education out-of-district placements					

Source: CHE-Charter School Enrollment

Minimum Attrition Rate

Another indicator of high parent/student satisfaction is the attrition rate. Over the past 5 years, as recorded in NJSMART, most students who transfer out, move out of district or out of state.

Number of students:

Transfer Out = 53

Returned to Red Bank Borough Schools = 5*
*1 then came back.

Source: NJSMART

Demographics

As documented in the original charter of 1998, Red Bank Charter School was established to serve the school aged children of the town.

The admissions policy of Red Bank Charter School corresponds to the Charter School Act, 18A:36A-8e. It states, "The admission policy of the charter school, shall to the maximum extent practicable, seek the enrollment of a cross section of the community's school age population including racial and academic factors."

A common misunderstanding is that RBCS should mirror the population of the borough schools. To do that, however, would violate the very tennent on which the charter school was founded. Furthermore, it would compound the pre-existing long standing condition of segregation of schools in Red Bank. We hold that the success of RBCS is largely due to the integration and rich diversity of the school student body.

The demographic data below was used to examine Red Bank Charter School's status on this condition.

Red Bank Borough Demographic Data	
% Hispanic or Latino of any race for RB Borough children under 18:	742 / 1,856 = 40%
% White Alone for RB Borough children under 18:	1,265 / 1,856 = 68%
% White Alone (Not Hispanic or Latino) for RB Borough children under 18:	754 / 1,856=41%
% Black or African American Alone for RB Borough children under 18:	328 / 1,856 = 18%

Source: 2010 American Community Survey and the 2010 Census Summary File 2

A comparative of RBCS 2013 enrollment data to this census validates that Red Bank Charter School substantially meets this mandate.

	RBCS	Census
Hispanic	34%	40%
White	52%	41%
Black	12%	18%

Further examination of this census data indicates that in Red Bank, 26% of children under 18 are below the poverty level. The DOE uses free and reduced lunch status to define economic disadvantage. While not a direct correlation, over the past 5 years approximately 40% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch.

Source: Census Data

Examining the deltas of the demographic ethnicity data, however, indicates the school population is somewhat skewed from that of the town.

	RBCS 2013	Census	Delta
Hispanic	34%	40%	-6%
White	52%	41%	+11%
Black	12%	18%	-6%

Source: Census Data

Contributing factors to this deviation are the small sample size, open admission policy, the sibling policy and the random lottery system.

RBCS is committed to the larger mission of changing the landscape of public education for the town. We are, therefore, proposing a shift to a weighted lottery system that will allow us to sustain our diverse school culture while educating more economically disadvantaged children.

For the 3 years of expansion, Red Bank Charter School is requesting to use the weighted lottery by proposing the following mechanisms to increase an economically disadvantaged student's chance at a seat. Any child who can provide proof of one of the following would get his or her name placed into the lottery (3) three times, rather than (2) twice:

- Lives in Red Bank public housing;
- Lives in Red Bank Section 8 housing;
- Child or guardian qualifies for SNAP/TANF benefits or
- Child already qualifies for free or reduced price lunch in his/her current public school.

Fiscal Impact

The anticipated financial impact of having this amendment granted will be a greater surplus amount. Surplus will be used to properly maintain our 100 year old existing buildings and new facility sites. While an increase in students may result in a lower per pupil tuition, the economies of scale and fixed costs associated with school operations will prove this to be a fiscally prudent endeavor. Given the unbudgeted surplus already maintained by Red Bank Charter School, it will have sufficient funds to reconfigure leased or purchased space to meet the educational standards equal or better to those required by the Department of Education.

*Due to Formula and Rounding of Numbers, Some Dollar Amounts Vary Slightly

2015-2016 (Current)			
	Total Aid Due from District		Monies Retained by RBB Schools
	\$ 1,557,838.00		\$ 152,035.00
2016-2017 (Addition of 100 Students)			
	Total Aid Due from District	Increase Over Previous FY	Monies Retained by RBB Schools
	\$ 2,415,638.00	\$ 857,800.00	\$ 237,859.82
2017-2018 (Addition of 40 Students)			
	Total Aid Due from District	Increase Over Previous FY	Monies Retained by RBB Schools
	\$ 2,724,547.00	\$ 308,909.00	\$ 271,839.81
2018-2019 (Addition of 40 students)			
	Total Aid Due from District	Increase Over Previous FY	Monies Retained by RBB Schools
	\$ 3,033,456.00	\$ 308,909.00	\$ 305,819.80

Appendices

Census Data Explanation

Disclaimer

Pages from original charter

Enrollment Chart

Admissions Policy

Post Secondary Acceptances

Board Resolution

Receipt from Red Bank Borough School District

Census Data Explanation

Each year the American Community Survey samples ~3.5 million addresses nationwide. While this is a substantial number of addresses, it is still insufficient to accurately report data for small areas. To increase accuracy for these locations, the Census releases estimates using 1-year, 3- years and 5-years worth of data. Due to the size of Red Bank Borough, Red Bank is covered by an ACS 5-year estimated data set. A five year estimate is calculated using 60 months of Red Bank data. The Census data I provided was calculated using data collected from 2006-2010. 5-year estimates are more accurate than a single year "snapshot" data for small populations.

Because the data used to calculate the 5-year estimate is between 5 and 10 years old, if Borough demographics have been shifting, the estimated data may be slightly out of date. However, it is as close to current as we can get. Even though the most recent ACS 5-year estimates use data from 2009-2013, the latest 5-year estimate available for Red Bank Borough with racial/ethnic/economic demographics is 2006-2010.

Disclaimer. Census demographic data for Red Bank Borough provided in this application is based on the 2006-2010 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate. Census data regarding percent of students attending private school is based on the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate. Five year estimates increase the statistical reliability of data with small sample sizes.



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO Box 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

CHRISTOPHER D. CERF
Acting Commissioner

March 2, 2012

Mr. Bruce Whitaker, President
Board of Trustees
Red Bank Charter School
58 Oakland Street
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Dear Mr. Whitaker:

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:11-2.3, Red Bank Charter School has successfully completed a rigorous review of its program and fiscal-related activities and academic performance.

It is my pleasure, therefore, to inform you that I am renewing the charter for the Red Bank Charter School for another five-year term. This approval is based on the school's academic progress, the school's ongoing examination of its results to guide improvements and the commitment exhibited by the school's administration and board. I confirm the school's maximum approved enrollment, with expansion, is 200 students with 20 students at each grade level through 2016-2017 in accordance with the following configuration:

Grade Level	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Pre-K	20	20	20	20	20
K	20	20	20	20	20
1	20	20	20	20	20
2	20	20	20	20	20
3	20	20	20	20	20
4	20	20	20	20	20
5	20	20	20	20	20
6	20	20	20	20	20
7	20	20	20	20	20
8	20	20	20	20	20
Total	200	200	200	200	200

ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In accordance with the charter, admission to the Red Bank Charter School is free and open to K-8 school age children who are residents of the Borough of Red Bank, regardless of creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, race, sexual orientation, disability, or the need for special educational services.

Student Admissions Policy

By Resolution of the Board of Trustees, it is the policy of the Red Bank Charter School that, prior to a lottery, priority in enrollment of students shall be given to only the siblings of any student then enrolled who is a resident in Red Bank. It is further Policy that priority enrollment shall be given; first, to the sibling of any Charter School student then enrolled who is a resident of Red Bank; second, to any student who is a resident of Red Bank. Priority within each of the preceding categories following the lottery shall be determined in the order in which the applications are received. However, any student whose application is received after the 10th day of May of the year of enrollment, shall be enrolled, if space exists, or shall be placed on a waiting list in the order in which his/her application was received without regard to the Admissions Priority Policy set forth above.

Charter School Enrollment/Transfer Process

Red Bank resident student entering Red Bank Charter School:

1. Parent arrives at district school (Primary or Middle) and states that his/her child will be enrolled in the Red Bank Charter School (RBCS).
2. Primary School or Middle School office personnel
 - Obtains enrollment data: name, address, date of birth, name of parent(s), citizenship and sex of child (per NJAC 6:3-6.3).
 - Authenticates Red Bank residency (whatever documentation is customarily used for this purpose including possible use of Nancy Hooks).
 - Prepares transfer records (per NJAC 6:3-6.5(c).10) and transmits same to Charter School Lead Person (per NJAC 6A11-4.2).
3. Charter School adds student to their enrollment with Primary School or Middle School designation.

Note: All Red Bank Charter School students who are residents of Red Bank are maintained on Red Bank Borough school district school registers but are identified as Charter School students.

Recruitment Policies and Practices

Student applications are accepted throughout the year, with special recruitment initiatives during the fall and winter. Recruitment activities include:

- Newspaper advertisements, press releases, school website, internet and social media announcements published in both English and Spanish.
- Outreach to Red Bank ministerium for inclusion in church bulletins. Congregations include the diverse populations of charter community.

- Posters in both English and Spanish displayed in various locations/businesses throughout town which service highest needs population of students.
- Large banner hung across main thoroughfare in neighborhood where the highest needs population reside.
- Advertisement for lottery in Red Bank town kiosk.
- Hosted a general informational “Charter Chat” with the principal for prospective families
- Offered tours to any prospective family.
- Letters to current families informing them of the lottery and applications distributed to RBCS families at LIP conferences.
- RBCS faculty liaison to the Hispanic Community makes targeted outreach efforts to the larger Latino community.

Post-Secondary Acceptances

Barry University
Lesley University
Pratt Institute
Suffolk University
Elizabeth City State University
University of North Carolina Charlotte
Winston-Salem State University
Johnson & Wales University (Providence)
Kent State University
James Madison University
The College of New Jersey
Bethune-Cookman University
University of Maine
Livingstone College
College of Saint Elizabeth
College of Mount Saint Vincent
Berkeley College- Woodbridge Location
George Mason University
Northeastern University
St. John's University- Queens Campus
New Jersey Institute of Technology
New York Institute of Technology
Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
Kean University
William Paterson of NJ
University of Delaware
Monmouth University
Sacred Heart University
Marymount Manhattan College
Johnson & Wales University-Charlotte
University of Rhode Island
Widener University
Lebanon Valley College
Mount Saint Mary's University
University of Vermont
Northwestern University
St. Francis College
University of North Florida
West Virginia University
Boston College
Johns Hopkins
Duquesne University
William Paterson University
Farleigh Dickinson University- Metropolitan Campus

Drexel University
Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Rutgers University- New Brunswick
Benedict College
George Mason University
University of North Carolina Greensboro
Brookdale Community College
Lynchburg College
University of Delaware
Loyola University Maryland
Saint Joseph's University
Grambling State University
Florida Memorial University
New England College
Centenary College
Pace University New York City
Montclair State University
University of Maryland-College Park
Pennsylvania State University
Stevens Institute of Technology
American University
Temple University
Millersville University of Pennsylvania
Georgian Court University
Rowan University
Fairfield University
Quinnipiac University
Villanova University
Albright College
Morgan State University
Saint Joseph's University
Howard University
University of Massachusetts-Amherst
Tufts University
Emerson College
University of Rhode Island
Arcadia University
Towson University
Kutztown University
Carnegie Mellon
University of Alabama
University of Scranton
Boston University



Meredith Pennotti, Charter School Administrator
 Ida West-Jones, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
 www.redbankcharterschool.org

58 Oakland St. • Red Bank, New Jersey 07701
 (732).450.2092 • (732).936.1923

Board of Trustees Meeting: November 16, 2015

**RESOLUTION:
 Amendment to the Charter**

Motion was made by Roger Foss, Seconded by Andrea Plaza to approve the submission of the amendment to expand the enrollment of the Red Bank Charter School per the proposed enrollment grid to Commissioner, David Hespe, New Jersey Department of Education.

The following is the proposed enrollment grid:

Grade Level	Phase 1 2016-2017	Phase 2 2017-2018	Phase 3 2018-2019
Pre-K	40	40	40
K	40	40	40
1	40	40	40
2	40	40	40
3	40	40	40
4	40	40	40
5	20	40	40
6	20	40	40
7	20	20	40
8	20	20	40
Total	320	360	400

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Carol Anderson	X	—	—	—
Patricia Balderas	X	—	—	—
Caryn Cohen	X	—	—	—
Roger Foss	X	—	—	—
Janice Havay	X	—	—	—
Rona Kaplan	X	—	—	—
Cristie Ritz-King	X	—	—	—
Andrea Plaza	X	—	—	—
Eric Wagner	X	—	—	—

Resolution approved 11/16/2015.

I hereby certify this to be a true copy of the action taken by the Board of Trustees of the Red Bank Charter School on November 16, 2015.

Janice Havay, Board President

11/16/15
 Date

