

New Jersey

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Governor Christie has made clear that increasing the growth of high-quality charter schools in New Jersey is at the top of his bold education reform agenda. Acting Commissioner of Education, Chris Cerf, and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) are committed to carrying out this initiative on behalf of the Governor. New Jersey has dramatically begun its education reform agenda by approving a record 29 new charters in the last year, and this grant application sets forth New Jersey's plan to continue that growth with a relentless focus on improving education outcomes for all students and a particular emphasis on special education students, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students.

With the award of this grant, the NJDOE will concentrate on the following activities: supporting the start-up of new charter school programs, encouraging the replication of the state's most successful charter schools, and facilitating the dissemination of best practices throughout the State. Each of these activities has been carefully designed to align with Governor Christie's goal of supporting the growth of high-quality charter schools. Each identified activity will place a priority on supporting those programs geared toward supporting our targeted student populations as well as those programs that have demonstrated efficiency in their operations while driving high levels of student achievement. The NJDOE has set forth measurable objectives to accomplish the grant's goals, a comprehensive management plan to ensure that all activities are carried out on time, and a strong evaluation plan that will give us mid-course feedback on how we are doing as well as final results. The detailed and thorough evaluation will lay the blueprint for the nation to follow New Jersey's model of success for growing quality charter schools.

New Jersey identified five objectives for the next three years:

1. Increase the number of students in high-quality charters through a careful new-start process and the expansion and replication of successful models;
2. Improve accountability for charter schools through improved monitoring and renewal and closure decisions;
3. Increase achievement and graduation rates for low-income students, traditionally underserved minority populations, ELL, and special education students;
4. Disseminate best practices from high-quality charters to all schools in New Jersey; and
5. Increase community engagement around New Jersey's charters and the CSP.