

Prospectus: Greater Works Charter School

I. Executive Summary

Greater Works Charter School (“Greater Works”) will be a very small charter school that will consist of: in-class learning with online technology; NY State standard-based core curriculum with college level electives; and project-based learning through internships and community service opportunities throughout the Monroe county area. We intend to open with 100 students entering the 9th grade and work with those same 100 students until they graduate, four years later.

The mission and purpose of Greater Works Charter School will be to provide a high quality, college preparatory, blended-learning education for Rochester students in a safe, small school setting that will lay the foundation for our students’ success in college, careers and life through an innovative, personal and challenging learning approach and strong student-adult relationships that support youth asset development. To do this, Greater Works Charter School will provide a unique, complete high school curriculum that will allow our students, whom will be small in numbers, to work at their own pace and achieve competence and understanding at a pace that is perfect for them.

Some of the key design elements of Greater Works Charter School include:

- Every student having a “Personal Development Plan” or Portfolio and developing an area of expertise through individualized research (similar to choosing a major in college)
- Advanced courses and electives being available to students
- Internship/Community Service hours as a requirement for graduation
- A very small school environment with only 100 students, all in the same grade
- Regularly-scheduled professional development every week for staff
- Every student being able to work/learn at their own pace online within a classroom monitored by staff
- Utilizing a blended-learning model (integration of face-to-face classroom time/instruction with online learning)

Greater Works Charter School will be the first blended-learning charter school and the second charter high school (Rochester Academy Charter School is the first and only current one) in the Rochester area. The blended-learning model (integration of face-to-face classroom time/instruction with online learning) is based on *NYC iSchool*, a DOE public high school and *Bedford Preparatory Charter School*, a NYC charter school, where students take a portion of their courses online, develop an area of expertise through individualized research, and have the opportunity to create a personalized curriculum based on their interests such as choosing a

major in college. In addition, to add to our uniqueness, Greater Works Charter School will enroll/accept 100 students entering the 9th grade in our first academic year and we will work with these same 100 students through their entire 4 years of high school (grades 9, 10, 11, 12) only accepting more students in cases where current students move or leave our school or in the fifth year, when all or most of our students will graduate.

Greater Work Charter School students will have the flexibility of enhancing their traditional classroom work with online course work in core subject areas. Students will be able to learn at their own pace online within a classroom monitored by staff, which allows for differentiated instruction within a single classroom setting. Online learning allows for immediate assessment and feedback so that students who need additional help and support can be pulled out into an individual or small group setting. It also gives advanced students the option and flexibility of taking a larger range of electives or advanced courses. With the expectation for our students to pass all Regents exams required for graduation, and take advanced electives and earn college credits, Greater Works seeks to provide an engaging learning environment where innovation, intellectual challenge and personalized learning are embraced by our students, teachers and administrators.

Effectively launching, overseeing and governing a charter school is a task that requires extensive experience, education, expertise and willpower. The founding group of Greater Works Charter School is comprised of professionals in various fields that all understand the logistics of what it will take to effectively launch, oversee and govern a charter school and that have made the commitment to work together to see to it that they are successful in doing so for Greater Works Charter School. The applicant, Ted J. Morris Jr. understands firsthand what these tasks require. For years, Ted has studied and researched the process of starting a charter school. Even in his high school years, he desired of opening a school and found that avenue when he learned about charter schools. Ted has been an advocate for education in the Rochester area since he was in high school and the public education system failed him. He has always been a great leader and facilitator and is honored to take on the task of working with a group of dedicated professionals in starting the Greater Works Charter School.

In addition to Ted, the founding group is comprised of community residents, parents, teachers, administrators and other professionals in the human services field. Some of the members of our founding group have even opened their own private practices or businesses throughout their careers. We believe that we have the capacity to effectively launch, oversee, govern and overcome start-up problems for several reasons. One of the most important and crucial things that we have decided to do in order to ensure our success is to dedicate our first year to planning and development. We intend to spend this first year, working diligently to raise funds and write grants, find a suitable facility, have several awareness events and open houses, hire and train our initial staff and complete other required tasks such as creating our human resources handbook and other important documents.

Our founding group is comprised of people who are driven by purpose and passion. It is these two things that will make us successful in our endeavors with Greater Works Charter School.

II. Student Population

A. Student Enrollment

Anticipated Enrollment Table

	'11-2012	'12-2013	'13-2014	'14-2015	'15-2016
Kindergarten		-	-	-	-
1st		-	-	-	-
2nd		-	-	-	-
3rd		-	-	-	-
4th	N/A	-	-	-	-
5th		-	-	-	-
6th	"We intend to use our first year as a Planning Year"	-	-	-	-
7th		-	-	-	-
8th		-	-	-	-
9th		100	0	0	0
10th		0	100	0	0
11th		0	0	100	0
12th		0	0	0	100
Ungraded		-	-	-	-

B. Target Populations

Greater Works Charter School intends to operate within the confines of the Rochester City School District ("RCSD"). As of August 10, 2010; the Rochester City School District's website states that they have approximately 32,000 students. Of those students, 18% are students with disabilities or special needs, 10% are students with limited English proficiency and 84% are students from households eligible for the federal free- and reduced-priced lunch program. Greater Works Charter School will attract, serve and retain such students in numbers that are comparable to that or greater than the Rochester City School District.

Attracting

Greater Works Charter School will attract such students in numbers that are comparable to that or greater than the Rochester City School District.

We will do this by following a recruitment strategy and plan that we will have in place. In addition, we will set an enrollment preference for students with disabilities, students who are English language learners and students from households that are eligible for the federal free- and reduced-priced lunch program.

Our recruitment strategy includes the following: mailings to residents of the RCSD; flyers and notices posted in local newspapers, supermarkets, community centers, apartment complexes, and communities of faith; open houses conducted at public and private middle schools, after-

school programs and youth centers; visits to local organizations in surrounding neighborhoods, and; in an effort to reach families who are less informed about educational options, we will canvass neighborhoods.

In our outreach efforts to families of ELL, we will disseminate information in advertisements about our ELL services, hold special open houses for and conduct one-on-one meetings with parents of ELL, place advertisements in newspapers and other media outlets that reach families whose first language is not English, translate publicity materials and provide translation services as needed.

In our outreach efforts to families of SWD, we will hold special open houses for and conduct one-on-one meetings with parents of students with disabilities, and will disseminate information in advertisements about our special education program.

Serving

Greater Works Charter School will serve such students in numbers that are comparable to that or greater than the Rochester City School District.

Greater Works' online learning system will provide immediate assessment opportunities that will allow teachers to quickly identify students' learning issues, remediate immediately and monitor individual student progress.

We will address the needs of students with disabilities (SWD) through an inclusion model of instruction. Students with disabilities will be removed from the regular classroom only if the nature of the disability is such that the goals of the IEP cannot be achieved satisfactorily with the use of supplementary aids and services within the classroom. In the event that we are unable to directly provide services to SWD as required by the student's IEP, we will contract with appropriately certified individuals to provide services under our direction.

We will employ a process of structured English language immersion for English language learners (ELL). We will directly provide or make referrals for appropriate support services that maybe needed by ELL in order to achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. In an effort to address the needs of ELL, we will contract services with a literacy consultant who has specialized knowledge to support ELL. As a side note, our unique online learning system will have the ability to translate from English to another common language, which may make the transition from one language to English slightly easier for our students.

Retaining

Greater Works Charter School will retain such students in numbers that are comparable to that or greater than the Rochester City School District.

We will do this by constantly staying in contact with families of ELL and SWD, in addition to all our other families. For families of ELL, we will ensure that all communication to them whether by postal mail, email or phone will be in their native language. For all our families, we will

encourage and promote inclusiveness and involvement and will have several open houses and social gatherings throughout the year in which our families will be invited to attend, get to know each other and assist in each of their children's educations. With only 100 students, we will be a close-knit family that will have to work together to reach our goals and achieve our biggest aspirations.

III. School Design

Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to accomplish the following eligibility criteria (a-i) listed below for several reasons. We, the founding group of Greater Works Charter School believe that we have the efficacy to do so. It is our intent to ensure that we, as a team, accomplish every goal that we put our mind to.

a. Increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics;

Greater Works will or is likely to increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics by operating with professionalism and a mindset for excellence. Our staff will be dedicated to our students and their families. All staff at Greater Works, no matter their title or immediate responsibilities, will be accountable for increasing student achievement and decreasing student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics. In addition, our online learning system will be able to identify and track where each of our students need additional academic assistance. Our staff will know exactly which students to provide extra assistance and support to. After all our students are enrolled in Greater Works, they will be required to take placement test in language arts, mathematics, science, history and geography. These placement test will allow Greater Works to understand where each of our students are academically and which students are currently at or above grade level as it relates to reading/language arts and mathematics. Greater Works teachers will know which students to work with more on an individual basis and in small groups. The founding group of Greater Works Charter School believes that these tools, set in place, will help increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in reading/language arts and mathematics.

b. Increase high school graduation rates and focus on serving at-risk high school student populations (including re-enrolled drop-outs and those below grade level);

Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to increase high school graduation rates and focus on serving at-risk high school student populations (including re-enrolled drop outs and these below grade level) for several reasons. First and foremost, Greater Works Charter School will willingly and welcomingly accept all student populations including those at-risk, re-enrolled drop outs and these below grade level. Second, we will or is likely to increase high school graduation rates because the size of our school, the dedication of our staff and the commitment that each of our students and their families will be asked to make. In addition, Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to increase high school graduation rates because of our extensive online learning

system. Each and every student of ours will be able to learn and achieve competence at their own pace and because of this and unlike most other schools, our teachers and staff will have more time to focus on assisting at-risk students and teaching individual and small-group lessons.

c. Focus on academic achievement of middle school student populations and preparation for transition to high school (if applicable);

This specific criteria is not applicable to Greater Works Charter School.

d. Utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical application of concepts;

Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to utilize a variety of high-quality assessments to measure understanding and critical applications of concepts. Teachers and schools that gather accurate information about student achievement through the use of sound classroom assessments contribute to effective teaching and learning. On the other hand, those who fail to understand and apply the rules of evidence for sound assessment risk doing great harm to students. Thus, all teachers and schools must understand the difference between high-quality or sound and no-quality or unsound assessments. We, the founding group of Greater Works Charter School believe that there are 6 criteria's to an assessment being considered high-quality. They are as follows:

1. The assessments reflect the state/local standards.
2. Students have the opportunity to learn.
3. The assessments are free of bias and insensitive situations.
4. The assessments are at the appropriate level.
5. The assessments are reliably scored.
6. The assessment mastery levels are appropriately set.

In addition, to regularly administered state/local assessments, several of the most important high-quality assessments we will use is already integrated into our online learning system. In addition to our placement test/assessments, we will administer periodic assessments to understand where each of our students is academically and to see if and where each of our students has made progress since placement testing.

e. Increase implementation of local instructional improvement systems and assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making, and effectiveness;

Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to increase implementation of local instructional improvement systems and assess and inform instructional practice, decision-making, and effectiveness. Through our efforts, we will ensure that we implement local instructional improvement systems that will provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practice, decision-making, and overall effectiveness. It is our intent to offer our teachers, tools for instructional effectiveness; our principal, tools

for continuous improvement; our executive director, tools for planning and monitoring; our parents, portals for involvement and enrichment; and, our students, portals for self-direction and anytime access.

Our teachers will have tools, such as:

1. Lesson planners that tie together standards, instructions and assessment
2. Grade books that provide real-time feedback and connections to standards
3. Formative assessment solutions for automated scoring and real-time feedback to allow differentiated group instruction and individualized focus
4. Student cumulative profiles and individualized learning plans
5. Tools for monitoring interventions and students at risk

Our parents will have tools, such as:

1. The ability to access attendance and tardiness records
2. The ability to access homework assignments
3. The ability to access behavioral incidents
4. The ability to access grades and report cards
5. The ability to access curriculum guides
6. The ability to access and understand their child's progress towards mastering standards.

Our students will have tools, such as:

1. The ability to access homework, grades and behavior data
2. The ability to access and understand academic expectations
3. The ability to access a portfolio of work including sample best practice
4. The ability to access enrichment and remediation resources
5. The ability to access and understand graduation requirements and college guidance information.

f. Partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best practices;

Greater Works will or is likely to partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best practices. Throughout our charter, Greater Works will have a “no shame in its game” mentality. We will constantly publicize our efforts and our results. It will be commonplace for local public schools that are low-performing to receive constant calls and letters from us informing them of our best practices that has so successfully produced great results. It will be our intent to have on-going relationships with local schools, businesses and non-profit organizations in which we work with each of them for a variety of reasons. One way we will be able to partner with low-performing, local public schools will be by way of our internship/community service requirement that each of our students will have. We will be able to do our part in sharing best practices by sending our students out to help our community and other local public schools by completing their internships and/or community service requirements there. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Director and the Principal of Greater Works Charter School to ensure that we partner with low-performing, local public schools to share best

practices.

g. Demonstrate the ability to overcome start-up challenges to open a successful school through management and leadership techniques;

We, the founding group of Greater Works Charter School understands the start-up challenges associated with opening a successful charter school. Through our management and leadership techniques, we will ensure that we have the ability to overcome such challenges. In our initial planning year, Greater Works Charter School will start working to establish partnerships and relationships with local businesses, non-profit organization and other schools to share best practices and to gain additional support from the community, beyond what we currently have. We will work in our initial planning year, to raise funds to prevent us from running into any financial hurdles. In addition to that, in our initial planning year, we intend to hire our executive director and development director, have several public and awareness meetings, set up agreements with local organizations and companies for our students to do internships and community service with, gain sponsorships and support and hire/train our initial instructional staff. We will have procedures in place in case of situations where we feel that we maybe in jeopardy of not successfully overcoming start-up challenges.

h. Demonstrate the support of the school district and the intent to establish an ongoing relationship with such district; and

In essence of Jean-Claude Brizard, the Superintendent of the Rochester City School District not being available, Greater Works Charter School has met with Mary Doyle, the Senior Director of School Innovation at the Rochester City School District. We informed her of our intentions to open a charter school and the logistics/details of our school. She ensured us the support of the Superintendent and the support of the Rochester City School District. She expressed her department's (which oversees charter schools in the Rochester City School District) willingness to establish an ongoing relationship between Greater Works and the previously stated district. We are excited about this support and look forward to working with the Rochester City School District in establishing a great on-going relationship.

i. Provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there are a lack of alternatives.

Greater Works Charter School will or is likely to provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions where there are a lack of alternatives. In Rochester, there are several education alternatives that are viable but that are not available or already over-full past capacity. This presents a lack thereof education alternatives. For instance, in addition to the several "general" high schools that the Rochester City School District has, they also have alternatives such as the School of the Arts or Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School. However, these alternatives are not always available. In 2009, School of the Arts received a whopping 946 applications for only 200 available spots and Wilson received 687 applications for only 278 available spots. That left a total of 1,155 students looking for another school (or education alternative) to attend.

Greater Works Charter School will provide access to viable education alternatives to students in regions (like Rochester) where there are a lack of alternatives. We will be an alternative for students with disabilities, re-enrolled drop outs, English language learners and student below grade level. We will willingly and welcomingly accept them.

School Design Success

Greater Works Charter School will use a blended-learning model (integration of face-to-face classroom time/instruction with online learning) which is based on *NYC's iSchool*, a DOE public high school and *Bedford Preparatory Charter School*, a NYC charter school slated to open September 2010, where students take a portion of their courses online, develop an area of expertise through individualized research, and have the opportunity to create a personalized curriculum based on their interests such as choosing a major in college. In addition, Greater Works Charter School will use a small school model (having no more than 400 students, and optimally/preferably fewer than 200) which is also based on *NYC's iSchool*. The NYC iSchool is based in New York City and was opened in September of 2008. Since its launching, the NYC iSchool has been so successful that the NYC DOE and the Fund for Public will be scaling the model to additional schools and seeking to open an additional 40 schools. NYC iSchool's student attendance for the 2008-2009 school year was 94 percent versus a citywide average of 50 percent. In 2009, 93 percent of NYC iSchool students passed the Global History & Geography Regents exam versus an average citywide pass rate of 50 percent, and 99 percent of their students passed the Living Environments Regents exam. As of May 15, 2009, there were already 1,500 applications for 100 spots available for this year's freshman class. The NYC iSchool has been extremely successful and it is our intent to be just as successful, if not more.

Greater Works Charter School will have the capacity and the power to produce our desired effort of academic success. The founding group, board of trustees and staff of Greater Works will be a powerful team that will above all else, do anything and everything in our power to succeed even our expectations.

We look forward to advancing to the next stage and submitting our full application to the New York State Education Department.