



NJDOE News

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Commissioner Librera Approves Applications for Charter Schools In Monmouth and Passaic Counties

Commissioner of Education William L. Librera today announced his approval of two new charter schools. The Commissioner approved the applications of the Jersey Shore Charter School, which will serve students from Eatontown, Oceanport and West Long Branch in Monmouth County; and the Great Falls Charter School, which will serve students from Paterson.

New Jersey's 50 operating charter schools currently enroll nearly 13,000 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12. The Jersey Shore Charter School is scheduled to open in September 2003 along with the Ridge and Valley Charter School in Warren County and the Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology in Passaic County. The applications for both schools had been previously approved and each school had opted to take a planning year. The Great Falls Charter School will take a planning year before opening in September 2004.

"I congratulate the successful applicants from the Jersey Shore and Great Falls charter schools on the excellence of their applications," said Commissioner Librera. "They have put together strong academic and fiscal plans.

"It takes a lot of hard work to start a charter school," the Commissioner said. "I hope our newest schools are successful in fulfilling their missions."

The Jersey Shore Charter School will enroll a maximum of 180 students in grades five to seven, with a four-year projection of serving 240 students in grades five through eight. The school will use the local environment, focusing on the Jersey Shore, as a context for learning and will emphasize use of technology in areas such as laptop computers for all staff and students and distance learning links with institutions of higher education.

The Great Falls Charter School will enroll a maximum of 162 students in grades six to eight, with a four-year maximum enrollment of 324 students in the same grades. The school will feature small class sizes, individualized learning plan, and an innovative focus on becoming a "professional development school," which will feature a relationship with higher education to establish a lab or teachers.

Charter schools are permitted under a state law enacted in 1996. A charter school is a type of public school that is given greater flexibility in curriculum and instruction. The law establishes charter schools as laboratories of educational innovation where new practices can be developed and implemented in schools throughout New Jersey.