

## For Immediate Release

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# Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Approves Three New Charter Schools

*In addition, 1,000 expansion seats approved this cycle*

**MALDEN** - The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education today voted 5-3-1 to approve a new charter school in Westfield, 8-0-1 to approve a new charter school in Plymouth and 5-4 to approve a new charter school in Sturbridge. In other votes today, the Board approved expansion plans at four existing charter schools. When combined with other expansions the Board has approved since November, the state added approximately 1,000 seats to existing schools during this year's approval cycle.

The new schools are:

- Hampden Charter School of Science – West, which will open in 2018, initially serve 252 students in grades 6-9 from Agawam, Holyoke, Westfield and West Springfield, and grow to serve 588 students in grades 6-12. It would be located in Westfield. Like the existing Hampden Charter School of Science in Chicopee, the new school would have a math and science focus.
- Map Academy Charter School, which will open in 2018, initially serve 130 students in grades 9-12 from Carver, Plymouth, and Wareham, and grow to 300 students. It will be located in Plymouth. It would serve students who have dropped out of school or who are at risk of dropping out and would offer a flexible schedule.
- Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School, which will open this fall; initially serve 160 students in kindergarten through grade 3 from Sturbridge, Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, Monson, North Brookfield, Palmer, Southbridge, Spencer-East Brookfield, Wales and Webster; and grow to serve 360 students in K-8. It will be located in Sturbridge and will offer project-based learning, an emphasis on character development, and daily access to museum resources at Old Sturbridge Village.

"These schools will give families additional high-quality options," **said Secretary of Education James A. Peyser.** "I congratulate each of the successful applicant groups, whether they were seeking to start a new school or expand a successful school."

"I am confident that these applicants are prepared to provide high-quality school options for Massachusetts families," **said Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Mitchell D. Chester.** "One will create a second school in a network, another will serve at-risk students, and the third includes a unique partnership with a local cultural institution. I look forward to working with the applicants to secure a successful opening."

As part of the 2016-17 charter school application cycle, six groups were interested in opening new charter schools in Massachusetts. Commissioner Chester invited the founders of four of those groups to submit final applications. One of those did not receive a favorable recommendation.

In addition to considering whether to award new charters, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education also considered whether to grant [expansion requests](#) to several schools. The Department received requests from 14 schools to change their maximum enrollment or grades served, including 8 requests from charter schools in Boston.

In November, the Board approved a request from Foxborough Regional Charter School to increase its maximum enrollment by 400 seats. In January, the Board approved three requests to increase maximum enrollment: Boston Collegiate Charter School (an increase of 35 seats), Boston Preparatory Charter Public School (an increase of 300 seats), and Sturgis Charter Public School in Hyannis (an increase of 50 seats).

This month, the Board approved three schools' requests to increase enrollment: Alma del Mar Charter School in New Bedford (an increase of 90 seats), Community Charter School of Cambridge (an increase of 60 seats) and a temporary increase in enrollment of 70 seats for UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester, a Horace Mann school in Boston. The

school and the Boston School Committee requested the seats in order to address unanticipated higher enrollment.

More information on the [charter application and amendment process](#), [final applications](#) and [proposed expansions](#) is available online. For more information on charter schools in general, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter>.

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*Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary & Secondary Education*

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