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### **New Jersey Public Charter Schools Celebrate National Charter School Week**

(TRENTON, NJ) - After a once-in-a-generation pandemic, academic crisis nationwide, and historic challenges, New Jersey's public charter schools are celebrating National Charter School Week this week, celebrating successes over the past year and the impact on students' lives that high-quality school options have had on communities across the state. Free, public, and open to all, public charter schools in New Jersey educate more than 57,000 students at 87 schools, operating in 40 cities in 18 of 21 counties across the Garden state. From arts-focused schools, to computer science-centric schools, to dual-language options, to schools with a unique focus on the classics, there are a wide variety of unique, programmatic offerings so that parents can choose the schools that are right for their child.

Since they were first introduced in 1996 in our state, public charter schools have delivered exceptional academic outcomes for students who need high-quality classrooms most.

- Charter students in New Jersey are 33% more likely to read at grade level, and 44% more likely to do math at grade level.
- Students of color are thriving in New Jersey's public charter schools, with Black charter students performing 12% higher in ELA and 14% higher in math than their district counterparts.
- Low-income students are also outperforming their district counterparts statewide, performing 9% higher in ELA and 10% higher in math.

"Children deserve classrooms that nurture a lifelong love of learning. Parents deserve high-quality school options that best meet their child's individual needs. And communities should have a diverse array of programmatic school offerings. Since the first one opened in 1996, public charter schools are truly what makes the diverse public education landscape just that - diverse," said Harry Lee, President and CEO of the New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association. "This week is a week to celebrate the programmatic diversity and academic success of charters, and to recognize that while progress has been made, there is far more to do to help ensure every child has access to classrooms that help them reach their potential."

"We are proud to work every day to meet the needs of our community and continue to serve young people through LEAD Charter School, even amidst a challenging year," said Rob Clark, Chief Executive Officer of Newark Opportunity Youth Network. "This is a week to celebrate all that charter schools have done to ensure that every child has access to a quality education and look ahead to see what is still ahead."

"Everyone in our school community, from teachers, to administrators, to staff, have worked tirelessly to ensure that we continue to educate our students and bring community to them despite the obstacles of the past year," said Graig Weiss, CEO of Foundation Academies. "This

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week, we embrace the fundamental right of all families to enroll their children in schools that they determine can provide the best educational experience for their child. Every child deserves access to a high-quality education, and we are committed to supporting both traditional public schools and public charter schools that provide high quality options for families.”

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**About the New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association**

The New Jersey Public Charter Schools Association (NJPCSA) is the non-profit membership association that represents the state’s charter school community and, by extension, charter school students and their parents. There are currently 87 charter schools in New Jersey serving approximately 57,000 students. We are committed to advancing quality public education for New Jersey’s children through the cultivation of excellent public charter schools. The Association seeks to influence legislative and policy environments, leverage collective advocacy, and provide resources to support our members in developing and operating high quality, public charter schools.