

Uncommon Schools

EXCELLENCE NORTH STAR COLLEGIATE TRUE NORTH PREPARATORY

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PRESS RELEASE

KINGS COLLEGIATE OPENS TO FIRST CLASS OF 5TH GRADERS School to Build on Success of Uncommon Schools

August 22, 2007. *Brooklyn, New York.* Two weeks before most New York City students return to school, Kings Collegiate Charter School welcomed 81 fifth graders on its first day of school on August 22nd. The school will grow to serve 500 students in grades 5 through 12. Working with the New York City Department of Education, Kings Collegiate has secured a permanent home in a district school building, IS 252, in the Brownsville/East Flatbush area of Brooklyn.

The mission of Kings Collegiate is to prepare each student for college. Lauren Harris and Laura Lee lead the school as founding co-directors. Lauren Harris is a former Math teacher at Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, one of the highest-performing urban charter schools in Massachusetts. Laura Lee is a former management consultant and Harvard Business School graduate, who worked as the first Director of Analytics for the New York City Department of Education, Office of Student Enrollment Planning and Operations.

The academic program of Kings Collegiate is based on practices and approaches that have proven effective in producing significant academic gains at the highest performing, urban public schools in the country, including Boston Collegiate Charter School and Roxbury Preparatory Charter School. The school day runs from 7:45 am until 4:30 pm or until 5:30 pm for students to attend tutoring, detention, or Homework Center. Saturday School is required for students in need of extra academic preparation. Kings Collegiate promotes the core values of Tenacity, High Expectations, Integrity, No Excuses, and Kindness. As Harris and Lee explain, “Our vision is that Kings Collegiate will help redefine what families and students can expect from an urban public school.”

Kings Collegiate is a member of Uncommon Schools, a nonprofit charter management organization. Kings Collegiate, the second Collegiate school within the Uncommon Schools network, operates under the guidance of Uncommon Managing Director Brett Peiser, founder of Boston Collegiate. Peiser notes that, “At Kings and other Uncommon schools, we provide a highly structured academic environment for students. We believe that a safe and orderly environment – in and out of the classroom – is essential to student learning and achievement.”

The first New York City Collegiate school, Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School, opened in August 2005 and has posted outstanding academic results. In 2007, Williamsburg Collegiate was the highest performing school in Community School District 14 – the school’s host district – on both the 6th Grade New York State Math and English Language Arts exams. In particular, with 100% of students scoring Advanced or Proficient – compared to 63% citywide and 59% in CSD 14 – Williamsburg Collegiate was one of only two New York City charters to have every one of its 6th grade students score Advanced or Proficient on the state math exam.

Uncommon Schools is a nonprofit charter management organization that starts and manages among the most outstanding urban college preparatory charter schools working to close the achievement gap in the Northeast. Uncommon builds uncommonly great schools by developing and managing regional networks that are philosophically aligned and highly accountable. Based in New York City, the organization has created a home office from which it provides a full complement of management services that allow school leaders to focus on instructional leadership. As of August of 2007, Uncommon manages nine schools in New York City, upstate New York, and Newark, New Jersey. The organization ultimately will encompass more than 30 schools, serving more than 10,000 K to 12th grade students.

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If you would like additional information on this topic, or to schedule an interview with Kings Collegiate Founding Co-Director Lauren Harris or Uncommon Schools Managing Director Brett Peiser, please contact Megan C. Zug at 617-645-4063 or by email at mzug@uncommonschoools.org.