



TO: David Hespe
Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Education

FROM: Scott Gordon
Chief Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Renaissance Schools - Facilities Notification (East Camden Middle School)

DATE: March 25, 2015

This letter is to formally notify you and your department of Mastery Schools of Camden's plans to operate a 6-8th grade school at East Camden Middle School facility beginning in August 2015. East Camden Middle School is located at 3064 Stevens Street, Camden, New Jersey 08105. The facility current consists of approximately 45 classrooms, a library, a multi-purpose room/cafeteria, and a gymnasium. The facility is located within the approved Renaissance project's urban campus area.

Currently operated by the Camden City School District, East Camden Middle School is one of the lowest performing schools in New Jersey with a statewide percentile of 2% in Academic Achievement on the 2013-14 NJ School Performance report. Through our partnership with the Camden City School District, Mastery Schools of Camden intends to significantly improve the educational outcomes for students currently attending East Camden Middle School.

We project enrollment next year (2015-16) to be approximately 225 students in grades 6-8. We will revise future enrollment projection after we receive parent and community input.

Upon approval of our Renaissance School facility notification, Mastery Schools of Camden will submit preliminary plans for substantial renovation to the Commissioner by June 30, 2015. Mastery intends to begin discussing proposed plans with the community in April and May 2015. It is Mastery's understanding that the current building does and any proposed plans will comply with facility regulations pertaining to the health and safety of pupils, per N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-4.b(11).

Mastery intends to finance the substantial renovation using Qualified Bonds (e.g., QZABs) and other construction-related financing instruments.

Attached is a draft of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between Mastery Schools of Camden and the Camden City School District.

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BY AND BETWEEN
THE STATE-OPERATED CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND
MASTERY SCHOOLS OF CAMDEN**

This Memorandum of Agreement, dated March XX, 2015, is entered into between the State-Operated Camden City School District, located at 201 North Front Street, Camden, New Jersey 08102 (“District”), and Mastery Schools of Camden (“Mastery”), a New Jersey non-profit corporation.

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2014, the Commissioner approved Mastery’s renaissance project application, in accordance with the Urban Hope Act; and

WHEREAS, on XXX, 2015, the Commissioner approved Mastery’s proposal to utilize an additional facility for its renaissance school project; and

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement; and

NOW THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and between the parties as follows:

1. Mastery will:

1. Operate a 6 – 8 grade school at East Camden Middle School (the “East Camden Middle facility”), located at 3064 Stevens Street, Camden, New Jersey 08105, in the 2015-2016 school year.
2. Name the school “Mastery: East Camden Middle School.”
3. Enroll any rising 6th through 8th grade student in the current East Camden Middle attendance area who wishes to attend Mastery: East Camden, including all special education and bilingual/ESL students, up to Mastery: East Camden Middle School’s maximum enrollment.
4. Offer a first-round interview to any member of East Camden Middle School’s current staff who is interested in employment with Mastery: East Camden in the 2015-2016 school year.
5. Substantially reconstruct the East Camden Middle School facility, pursuant to the Urban Hope Act, *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36C-1, *et seq.*, and its implementing regulations.
6. Host at least one community meeting by June 1, 2015 to discuss plans for substantial reconstruction.
7. Submit plans for substantial reconstruction of the East Camden Middle School facility to the Commissioner, in accordance with state guidelines.
8. Permit District to post these draft substantial reconstruction plans to the District website.

2. The State-Operated Camden City School District will:

- a. Provide families in the East Camden Middle School attendance areas with information on Mastery.
- b. Grant Mastery reasonable access to the East Camden Middle School facility prior to July 2015 to allow for planning for substantial reconstruction.
- c. Upon request, provide Mastery with all available facilities-related documentation.
- d. Enter into a lease agreement or deed transfer for the East Camden Middle School facility with Mastery, in accordance with the Urban Hope Act.
- e. Designate the East Camden Middle School facility as temporary space until substantial reconstruction is complete, in accordance with the Urban Hope Act.
- f. Designate the attendance area attached as Exhibit A as the Mastery: East Camden Middle School attendance area.

State-Operated Camden City School District

Mastery Schools of Camden

Paymon Rouhanifard
State District Superintendent

Scott Gordon
Chief Executive Officer

Dated: _____

Dated: _____

Exhibit A: Mastery: East Camden Middle School Attendance Area

The Mastery: East Camden Middle School Attendance Area is bounded by the following streets: Federal Street, South Crescent Boulevard, Myrtle Avenue, Highland Avenue, Marlton Pike, Rosemont Avenue, Boyd Street, Berkeley Street, and 30th Street.

