



Foundation Begins Charter School Initiative

Farash Foundation News Release

July 9th, 2013

The Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation will award up to \$1 million in seed money for new charter schools in Monroe and Ontario counties.

The Foundation is offering grants up to \$500,000 each to charter schools, charter management organizations (CMOs), or education management organizations (EMOs) that will expand existing operations to additional sites or establish new charter school operations. Further details are available at www.farashfoundation.org.

"Education, in all of its aspects, is an underlying priority for the Foundation and we look for the best opportunities to support education locally," said Nathan J. Robfogel, board chair. "This is one, although by no means the only, educational program in which we are investing."

Charter schools have established themselves as important, viable alternative models in public school education, complementing the work and mission of traditional public schools. An overview prepared for the Foundation by Rochester-based CGR notes rapid growth in charter school enrollment nationally. The U.S. Department of Education reports about 5,000 schools enrolling 1.6 million students for the 2009-10 school year, or about 3 percent of total K-12 enrollment nationwide, CGR said.

"Charter schools are not a panacea," the report said. "Evidence suggests that successful charter schools succeed when they attract exceptional management and exceptional teachers, which is the lesson of effective schools across the board."

The applicants must show evidence that their plans will make a positive difference in educational outcomes for students in Monroe and/or Ontario counties. Proposals must also show an explicit commitment, both in philosophy and implementation, to be inclusive of children with disabilities. Plans to involve the school's immediate neighborhood will be encouraged.

Currently, the funding objective in the Foundation's education grant category is "Getting to 21": facilitating the improvement of outcomes for youth from birth through age 21 in ways that lead to success and enhanced opportunities later in life.