



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 26, 2017

New York State Board of Regents
NYS Education Department
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12234

To the Members of the Board of Regents,

As the Representative for the 8th Congressional District, I write in support of Harlem Hebrew Language Academy's application for renewal and expansion of its charter. Approval would aid the school in its mission to address the culturally rich and highly diverse needs of many communities in this city by providing a fully inclusive school option.

Harlem Hebrew is one of the most integrated schools in New York City across a range of measures and serves students from all backgrounds. As an example, 8 percent of Harlem Hebrew students are English language learners, nearly a quarter are students with special needs, and half are economically disadvantaged. Differences in background, ethnicity, nationality and economic status all make for a dynamic learning environment and it is my understanding that learning a foreign language is a great equalizer.

Expansion of Harlem Hebrew's charter to include 6th, 7th, and 8th grades would provide an expectation of consistency and stability that would help the school grow its diverse student population. In addition, its 5th graders would rise to 3 more years in the building and younger students could look forward to an exciting educational future.

Both Harlem Hebrew in Manhattan, and Brooklyn's Hebrew Language Academy in the district I represent, have demonstrated a commitment to educational excellence, and a dedication to racial, economic and ethnic diversity as a core learning principle. For the above mentioned reasons, I urge full and fair consideration to Harlem Hebrew's application for charter renewal and expansion so they can continue to provide high quality educational options for parents and students. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hakeem Jeffries".

HAKEEM JEFFRIES
Member of Congress