



July 5, 2017

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

To Members of the NYS Board of Regents,

As a mother of three distinct and individual children, I have watched as their educators have molded their lesson plans as well as activities to my children's abilities. As you are aware all children maintain different ways of learning. The ability to categorize all children into one "mold" has become an obsolete notion that cannot and is no longer followed.

This letter is happily sent in support of Harlem Hebrew Language Academy's request for renewal and expansion of its charter. I represent Harlem Hebrew's "sister school" in southern Brooklyn, and am impressed with the educational model and embrace of diversity all Hebrew Public schools prioritize. As New York City and New York State struggle, publicly and relentlessly, with issues around school integration, Harlem Hebrew and Hebrew Public are models for a thoughtful embrace of deep diversity.

Harlem Hebrew looks like New York City, which is to say it is one of the most integrated schools in New York City. It is 30% Latino, 33% Black or African American, 34% white, 1% Asian, and has many students who identify as multiracial, a student population more diverse than most other schools in Community School District 3, in which Harlem Hebrew is located.

Harlem Hebrew serves students from all backgrounds: nearly a quarter are students with special needs, half are economically disadvantaged, and 8% are English language learners.

Common sense, and studies from throughout the country, tell us that students learn better in diverse educational settings - dynamic learning environments that encourage all types of students.

Expansion of Harlem Hebrew's charter to include 6th, 7th, and 8th grades will provide stability to allow the school to grow its diverse student population, and better serve the our public school community. Its 5th graders will rise to 3 more years in the same building, a private space being renovated, and younger students will have an exciting learning future to look forward to with an important expectation of consistency.

Regent Cashin visited Hebrew Language Academy in Brooklyn, "my school," where my staff and I are frequent visitors, and I am happy to hear that Regent Meade visited Harlem Hebrew. Regular dialogue between authorizers, public officials, school administrators, teachers, and parents is a sign of a healthy school community.

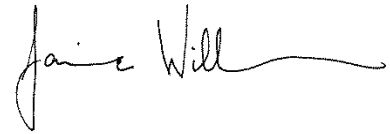
I hope Harlem Hebrew's application for charter renewal and expansion meets with your approval. Please don't hesitate to reach out for my office with any questions.

The Hebrew Language Academy serves a vital function for my district. Their wonderful educators take pride in the eclectic student body and diverse area that my district offers.

It is my hope that this institution which has served our area for many years, can be allowed to continue grow and thrive. As we are aware many children have individual needs and it is with strong support that I recommend the Hebrew Language Academy and this wonderful institution should be further enabled to work cohesively and increase their work product and knowledge base.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention and reply to this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jaime Williams". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Jaime Williams
Member of Assembly