Broad Foundation Awards $5 Million to Success Academy Charter Schools to Expand in New York Following CMO’s Top Performance on State Exams

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LOS ANGELES – On the heels of its recent performance on New York State tests, Success Academy Charter Schools, one of the highest-performing and fastest-growing charter management organizations in the country, has been awarded $5 million from The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation to expand the number of schools serving mostly low-income students and students of color.

On the 2013 New York State exam, aligned for the first time with the rigorous Common Core State Standards, Success Academy Schools ranked in the top 1 percent of all New York schools in math and in the top 7 percent in English language arts. Two Success Academy Schools in the South Bronx — where the poverty rate is 88 percent — ranked among the top 25 schools in the state. African-American and Hispanic scholars from Success schools outperformed white students across the state by more than 51 points in math and 27 points in English.

Success Academy schools are located in empty space in public school buildings, and their students are admitted by random public lottery. Success schools outperformed many of the best schools in the city, including highly selective gifted and talented programs. The comparisons to traditional public schools in shared buildings were especially stark: In one Harlem school building, 79 percent of Success Academy’s third-graders passed the math test, while no third-grader in the co-located public school received a passing grade. In another building in the Bronx, where 77 percent of Success Academy third-graders passed the English test, only 3 percent of the co-located students passed. Overall, Success students outperformed students across New York City by 52 percentage points in math and 32 percentage points in English.

“These results are astounding,” said Rebecca Wolf DiBiase, managing director of programs for The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. “Clearly, Success Academy Charter Schools is doing something right, and this investment underscores our belief that high-quality charter schools need to expand so we ensure that more students have the opportunity to attend a great school.”

Success Academy Charter Schools operates 22 schools across New York City, with plans to open its first high school and six new elementary schools in 2014. The Broad Foundation grant will support the expansion of Success Academy over the next two years.

“We are so grateful to Eli and Edye Broad for their generosity, their dedication to reform and their profound belief in the power of schooling,” said Eva Moskowitz, founder and CEO of Success Academy Charter Schools. “The support we have received from The Broad Foundation has made our swift growth possible, and these new funds will give us the opportunity to change the lives of thousands more children and families.”

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Among the practices and policies that distinguish Success Academy schools:

- An engaging, academically rigorous curriculum aligned to high standards.
- A commitment to teach science five days a week beginning in kindergarten. (One hundred percent of Success Academy students passed the 2013 state science exam, and in three Harlem schools, every child earned an advance rating, the highest possible.)
- Students attend a longer school day.
- Success focuses on student engagement and critical thinking and teaches students art, chess and music, as well as literacy, writing and math.
- Parents are engaged in their children’s education.
- All schools are held to high standards of excellence, which has produced operational efficiencies and sound financial practices.
- Success provides up to 15 weeks of immersive year-round training for all teachers in both content and pedagogy.

The Broad Foundation was the first major funder of Success Academy. The new $5 million grant brings The Broad Foundation’s total support of Success Academy to $11.4 million. Over the past 12 years, The Broad Foundation has invested more than $130 million in supporting and expanding high-performing public charter schools and in closing under-performing charter schools.

Success Academy was founded in 2006, with the dual mission of building world-class public schools across New York City and advancing education reform across the country. Starting with a single school in Harlem and 165 kindergarten and first-graders, Success Academy now serves nearly 7,000 children in 18 elementary and four middle schools from the Bronx to Brooklyn. The nonprofit network of public charter schools receives approximately 70 percent of the public funding allotted to district schools. Demand for this high-quality education is strong: in the most recent random lottery held in April, Success Academy received more than 12,000 applications for 2,500 seats.

Founded by entrepreneur Eli Broad and his wife Edythe, both graduates of Detroit Public Schools, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation is a philanthropy that seeks to ensure that every student in an urban public school has the opportunity to succeed. Bringing together top education experts and practitioners, the foundation funds system-wide programs and policies that strengthen public schools by creating environments that allow good teachers to do great work and enable students of all backgrounds to learn and thrive. For more information, visit www.broadeducation.org, and updates are available on Facebook and Twitter @broadfoundation.

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