

Jeffrey Epstein, Prominent Financier, Applauds Mayor Bloomberg's Funding of Four Charter Schools in New York.

New York City Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, recently announced that he will personally fund the creation of four charter schools in New York City. The announcement was welcomed by prominent New York financier and education philanthropist, Jeffrey Epstein. Epstein, a long-time supporter of Bloomberg, has financed numerous charter schools across the country including the Maya Angelou schools in Washington DC, the highly acclaimed Bard High School Early College in New York City and the Harlem Link Charter School.

Mayor Bloomberg's funding will come through his foundation, the Young Men's Initiative, which is also funded by George Soros' Open Society Foundations. Once approved by the state Board of Regents, the new co-ed charter high schools will open in September 2014, alongside four traditional public schools in five high-poverty neighborhoods: East New York and Brownsville in Brooklyn, the South Bronx, Jamaica in Queens and East Harlem in Manhattan. Both the public and charter schools will share a board of trustees, with Melanie Hartzog, a former official in City Hall's Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, as a proposed member.

"The Mayor has a keen sense of what's needed to run a charter school," Jeffrey Epstein noted, whose own foundation also has a long history of supporting early education and Head Start programs. "Bloomberg oversees numerous charter schools and understands how to optimize fiscal and academic standards."

So far, there have been mixed reviews about Bloomberg's initiative. On the one hand, supporters of charter schools cite the expansion of a successful alternative to the public system, while others criticize the frequent closings of charters as well as the partial use of public tax dollars to manage the schools.

Elements of the initiative are already being piloted in 40 schools that were selected last year to implement and evaluate practices that help black and Hispanic students succeed.

In addition to funding charter and Head Start schools, The Jeffrey Epstein VI Foundation continues to be a staunch supporter of cutting edge science and science education. Jeffrey Epstein also founded the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics at Harvard University in 2003 with a \$30 million grant. He is a former member of the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, Rockefeller University, New York Academy of Science and sits on the board of the Mind, Brain and Behavior Committee at Harvard University.

SOURCE:

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