



# Old Sturbridge Village

1 Old Sturbridge Village Road  
Sturbridge, Massachusetts 01566  
508-347-3362

17 June 2022

Jim Donahue, Proposed Executive Director  
President and CEO  
Old Sturbridge Village  
1 Old Sturbridge Village Road  
Sturbridge, MA 01566

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148-4906

Dear Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign,

It is with great excitement that I send this letter of our intent to submit a preliminary charter application to open the Worcester Cultural Academy Charter Public School, an EL Education School, that we propose will serve high-need students of Worcester in kindergarten through eighth grade.

The early success of Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School and the cultural wealth of the city of Worcester inspire the Cultural Academy's mission: to provide students with rigorous, real world learning experiences in a supportive and nurturing environment and leverage the vast cultural resources of greater Worcester. Through project-based learning, case studies, field-work and more, the Worcester Cultural Academy Charter Public School will foster intellectual curiosity and will encourage students to become articulate communicators, critical thinkers and skilled problem solvers who care for themselves, others around them, and their communities.

Program partnerships with Old Sturbridge Village, the Worcester Art Museum, the Hanover Theatre and Conservatory, the EcoTarium and other organizations will help us to design high-quality learning expeditions through EL Education as well as curricular and extracurricular place-based activities similar to those provided by Old Sturbridge Village to Old Sturbridge Academy.

We will propose Old Sturbridge Village as the charter management organization for the Worcester Cultural Academy. The Village successfully managed the start-up and first five years of operation of Old Sturbridge Academy. Old Sturbridge Academy recently received an unconditional five-year charter renewal, and its Board of Directors has approved a renewal of the management contract through June of 2027. That contract is pending approval by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.



We will propose Jim Donahue as the founding Executive Director of the Worcester Cultural Academy. Jim was the founding director of both the Highlander Charter School and Highlander Institute – both located in Providence, RI. Highlander was Rhode Island’s first independent public charter school – and the Institute was its dissemination organization. Prior to starting Highlander, Jim was an educator and school leader in Providence schools serving mostly low-income students from 1989 until 2000. He has successfully led the Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School since the Academy opened in 2017.

We will propose Pam Boisvert as the founding Chairman of the Board of Directors. A member of Old Sturbridge Academy’s Board since its founding, Pam has been an active member of a number of committees, most recently serving as Chairman of the Board’s Governance Committee. She is retired Executive Director of Mass EDCO and lives in Worcester, where she is very active in the community.

Old Sturbridge Academy, under the leadership of founding Principal Lisa DeTora, will serve as a support partner to the Worcester Cultural Academy.

Both a proposed experienced founding Principal and a proposed Director of School Strategy and Planning (to support pre-opening activities, governance, etc.) will be named by the application deadline in August. Jim Donahue, Old Sturbridge Academy and Old Sturbridge Village will each be seeking Proven-Provider status. It is our understanding that EL Education has been a proven-provider for previous applications and we plan to contract with EL to provide curriculum, professional development and school design consultation. We believe we bring the combined experience to ensure not only a successful launch of the Worcester Cultural Academy, but an exceptional first charter term.

Old Sturbridge Village has enjoyed a long relationship with the citizens of the city of Worcester. Each year, we provide field trip experiences for third and fifth graders from the Worcester public schools. We have over 200 member households from Worcester, and several former and current Trustees of the museum live and work in the city. We have leased a beautiful school building in the Grafton Hill neighborhood at the corner of Plantation and Hamilton Streets and will be offering programs to the community and prospective families throughout the application and pre-opening periods.

We look forward to submitting our preliminary application on August 1, and appreciate the consideration of the Commissioner and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Sincerely,



Jim Donahue

# COMMONWEALTH AND HORACE MANN CHARTER APPLICANT INFORMATION SHEET

*This information is included with all submissions. The application, including this form, are posted on the Department website. Applicants are advised that the primary contact person may be contacted by the public and/or media with questions about the proposed school.*

**Name of Proposed Charter School:** Worcester Cultural Academy Charter Public School

**School Address (if known):** 81 Plantation Street

**School Location (City/Town REQUIRED):** Worcester, MA

**Primary Contact Person:** Jim Donahue

**Role or relationship of contact person to proposal:** Founding Executive Director through CMO

**Address [Street, City/Town, State, and Zip Code]:** 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566

**Daytime Tel:** (508) 347-0341      **Secondary Tel:** [REDACTED]

**Email:** JDonahue@OSV.ORG

**1. The proposed school will open in the fall of school year:**     2023-2024     2024-2025

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
First Year	K-3	240
Second Year	K-4	300
Third Year	K-5	360
Fourth Year	K-6	420
Fifth Year	K-7	480
Sixth Year	K-8	540
<i>Add additional rows as needed to show planned growth to reach full proposed grade span and maximum enrollment.</i>		

**2. Grade span at full enrollment:** K-8

**3. Total student enrollment when fully expanded:** 540

**4. Age at entry for kindergarten, if applicable:** Five years old

**5. If applicable, the proposed Horace Mann charter school is:**     New    or     Conversion

6. If applicable, the proposed type of Horace Mann<sup>1</sup> charter school is:

Horace Mann I    Horace Mann II    Horace Mann III

**Questions #7-10 are for applications for a Commonwealth charter school ONLY.**

7. Will this proposed Commonwealth school be a **regional charter school**?  Yes    No

If yes, list the school districts (including regional school districts) in the proposed region. Please only list districts that are included in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app>. (Use additional rows if necessary.)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If no, please specify the district's population as reported in the most recent United States census estimate for the community the school intends to serve: 206,518.

*The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall not approve a new Commonwealth charter school in any community with a population of less than 30,000 as determined by the most recent United States census estimate [available at <http://www.census.gov/>], unless it is a regional charter school. (MGL c. 71 § 89(i)(1).*

8. For all proposed Commonwealth charter schools, list the districts that are contiguous with the proposed school's district or region. Please only list districts that are included in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/new/?section=app>. (Use additional rows if necessary.)

<u>Leicester</u>	<u>Shrewsbury</u>	_____
<u>Grafton</u>	<u>Westborough</u>	_____
<u>Auburn</u>	_____	_____

9. Will the proposed Commonwealth charter school serve a district where overall student performance on MCAS is in the lowest 10 percent, as designated in *District Information on Enrollment Projections for New Applications and Expansion Amendments* or in **any updated analysis** performed by the Department?  Yes    No

10. Will the proposed Commonwealth charter school serve a district or districts in which the 9 percent net school spending cap is, or **could be**, exceeded by applications during the upcoming cycle?  Yes    No

<sup>1</sup> The revision of M.G.L. c. 71, § 89 in 2010 created three types of Horace Mann charter schools, each with a particular set of requirements. For a description of Horace Mann II Charter Schools, see the Questions and Answers document at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/about.html>.

11. Have members of the applicant group previously submitted an initial application or final application that did not result in a charter?  Yes  No

If yes, is the present submission related in content to the previous application?  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the name of the previous proposal and the year submitted.

<u>Old Sturbridge Academy (App. 1)</u>	<u>2015</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

12. Is the applicant group currently the board of trustees of an existing charter school?

Yes  No

If answered YES, please explain why the group is not using the charter application designed for use by a current board of trustees.

13. Do members of the applicant group currently operate or are they employed by a private or parochial school?  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the person's name, the school name and school location, and dates of employment or affiliation.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

14. Are any members of the applicant group present or past members of a charter school board of trustees, school committee, or other type of public governing body?  Yes  No

If yes, please indicate the person's name; the charter school name and school location, or school committee district; and dates of membership.

<u>Pam Boisvert</u>	<u>Old Sturbridge Academy,</u>	<u>3/2017 – Present</u>
_____	<u>Sturbridge, MA</u>	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____