We are currently supporting the development of a single-sex Middle/High School for Young Women in Rochester. The Charter School for Young Women will open in 2008-2009 with an enrollment of approximately 100 students in the 7th & 8th grades; these students will be divided equally into two groups for each of the grade levels.

This will be the first public middle/high school of its kind in the Greater Rochester area. The Charter School for Young Women is designed to be a small school that offers a S.A.F.E. single-sex environment. Through our commitment to Standards, Achievement, and Future Endeavors, our young women will graduate with a Regent’s diploma, and will be able to pursue degrees in higher education and careers of their choice.

There are only 13 charter high schools in New York State; none of these alternative high schools are currently available in Rochester. Furthermore, of the existing charter schools in New York State, only 5 are single sex schools. Only one of these 5 charter schools is a high school for boys. The Charter School for Young Women will foster an enriching learning environment to provide the parents of public school girls with a choice currently available exclusively to private schools.

The vision of the Charter School for Young Women is to create an educational environment and culture that will maximize learning while overcoming the social distractions of a coed environment. Establishing an all-girls school will encourage young women to express themselves without the fear of being labeled. A single-sex education encourages the building of self-confidence and a positive self-image. These advantages make it possible for young women to excel in academics and confidently assume leadership roles. Single sex classrooms remove gender bias and the unequal treatment that exists in coed classrooms.

The Charter School for Young Women will use established educational models, current research and community resources to maximize the effectiveness of the School programs and curriculum by:

- Focusing on the unique needs of young women: promoting physical, social and emotional wellness & health in general and specific resources in coaching, counseling and appropriate referrals for individuals in need.
- Creating a safe, secure and stable learning environment.
- Establishing a middle/high school for young women where in the initial (classroom instruction) year of the charter contract CSYW will house grades 7-8; each subsequent class year, the School will add an academic grade until full matriculation (grades 7-12) is achieved.
- Incorporating an extended academic day where CSYW will operate from 7:30 AM to 4:05 PM Monday through Thursday with an abbreviated (7:30 AM to 2:00 PM) Friday to address the need for academic improvement, professional development and necessary training for the staff.
• School-wide academic lab during the last period of the school day to address academic needs.

• An extra 9.5 instructional hours per week that will give CSYW an additional 380 instructional hours per year compared to the RCSD.

• Two highly qualified teachers in each classroom. (Highly qualified as defined by NCLB.)

• Eleven month academic year August to June calendar --185 days -- consisting of four distinct nine week terms followed by three week vacation breaks. Three week breaks and an abbreviated summer vacation will allow a greater retention of the students’ learning

• A 13:1 student to teacher ratio in each classroom.

• School-wide dress code to envision professionalism.

• Assessment and data monitoring tools to measure student growth.

• Ongoing family involvement and community support components.

• Technical support for the classroom.

The Rochester community needs alternative schools that foster continuous academic achievement. The Friends of the Community Charter School of Rochester Inc. believes that when a school focuses on the State Standards and Performance Indicators, this will allow the schools to offer direct assistance with regard to learning styles, developmental levels, counseling concerns, and recognition of individual differences. The Friends envision the creation of several small and specialized alternative-learning environments in the City of Rochester; one that monitors learning through NYS aligned assessment tools, which allow the Charter Schools to merge several established methodologies into one cohesive academic program. The curriculum for the different Charter Schools will foster but is not limited to:

• Utilize complementary instruction in related subject areas that align with the New York State Standards,

• Integrate reading, writing, research, and math across the curriculum,

• Emphasize graduation from the Charter School with a Regents diploma,

• Pair ELA with Social Studies and Math with Science in order to complement cross-curricular vocabulary and concepts,

• Pair teachers in order to utilize their expertise, reinforce academic concepts and increase student teacher interaction by allowing the support teacher to assist, clarify, and interact with students,

• Foster team teaching approaches where teachers will co-teach, co-write lesson plans and collaborate on student assessments,

• Enroll students in the seventh grade as a preparatory program that focuses on academic readiness to be used in our middle and high school program. Seventh grade students will receive a study skills course designed to help them be more successful within a given academic model: study groups, note taking, test strategies, library as well as computer and non-traditional resources.

• Provide seventh and eighth graders with enrichment in Math and ELA