

### **Brief Summary**

Ember Charter Schools for Mindful Education, Innovation and Transformation (“Ember Charter Schools”, or “Ember”), is our proposed charter school that seeks to achieve the evolution and merger of the existing Teaching Firms of America-Professional Preparatory Charter School (“TFOA”), into a new K-12 NYSED charter school, combining the existing program of TFOA with the program of The Anew School, an award winning and highly innovative school design aimed at transforming educational and life outcomes for students and families through its model that includes a strong focus on socio-emotional development, intensive study abroad experiences, and single-sex boarding school learning. As a result, Ember Charter Schools will be an innovative, holistic and comprehensive primary, middle and secondary education experience and community of learning, practice and thought leadership located in Bedford Stuyvesant-Central Brooklyn. Ember will be dedicated to improving educational and life outcomes for historically underserved communities, particularly low income Black children, the most “at-risk” demographics in our society.

Our Mission: Ember’s mission is to transform, empower, and ignite students who have traditionally been labeled “at-risk” from historically underserved, under-resourced, low income communities with our innovative holistic elementary and lower middle school, international experiences within upper middle school, and single-sex cohorts in both upper middle school and a boarding high school, all of which nurture students into social entrepreneurs, engineers, and global leaders using our Teaching Firm model, a unique teacher-led approach, while we concurrently affect net positive economic, socio-emotional and cultural outcomes within the communities we serve.

***Objectives:*** The key design elements of Ember’s model are designed to achieve the implementation of the important objectives highlighted in the New York Charter Act (Education Law §2850(2)):

- A. Improves student learning and achievement;
- B. Expands learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure;
- C. Encourages use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- D. Creates new professional opportunities for teachers; and
- E. Provides parents/students with expanded choices in educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

Ember seeks to provide our target population with expanded progressive, holistic and global education opportunities that have previously been unavailable to them. Ember seeks to accomplish this objective by engaging in three primary efforts:

1. Nurture and enable students to become holistic social entrepreneurs, engineers and global leaders through the development of: critical thinking skills; agency and self efficacy; social, emotional, and physical well-being; mindful leadership and global citizenship; substantive international exposure and experiences;
2. Develop and provide thought leadership, training and development to individuals and organizations committed to and engaged in education reform in alignment with the values, principles and strategies Ember employs;

3. Contribute to the positive and healthy economic, social and cultural development of the historically underserved, under-resourced, low income and at risk people of the communities we serve.

**Key Design Elements:** Ember is comprised of three core educational enterprises:

- Holistic Elementary School experience serving students in Grades K-4;
- Middle School experience serving students in Grades 5-8, where upper school (Grades 7 & 8) will include both single-sex cohorts and guided, intensive international travel learning experiences; and
- Two parallel high school experiences focused on careers in STEAM and Social Entrepreneurship, and serving students in two single-sex cohorts for Grades 9-12, which will include a residential, community-based boarding option.

**Student Communities Served:** Ember will serve the most historically and socioeconomically underserved children of the Bedford Stuyvesant-Central Brooklyn community, offering an admission preference for students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch (to the extent permitted by law). Bedford Stuyvesant remains an overwhelming Black and Latino community, and these populations continue to be beset with high poverty, unemployment, violence, obesity and other negative physical and mental health indicators. Black and Latino children in Bedford Stuyvesant are some of the poorest in the nation and in large measure remain disconnected from high quality, holistic and comprehensive education options.

**Leadership, Management & Instructional Staff Design:** Ember will operate using the existing and highly innovative “Teaching Firm” org model currently and successfully employed by TFOA. The Teaching Firm is a unique teacher-led model inspired by the professional partnership management and leadership models of law firms, designed to transform and elevate the teaching profession by placing currently practicing master teachers at the helm of school organizations, dramatically improving compensation and empowering them to lead directly from the classroom.

**Curriculum & Instructional Features:** Ember’s progressive, research backed pedagogical approach is driven by a commitment to developing strong student self efficacy and extraordinary habits of mind, operationalized through teacher constructed curricula and formative assessment tools. This approach includes, but is not limited to the following instructional and pedagogical features:

- Neuropedagogy: Strong Focus on Self Efficacy & Social Emotional Development
- Looping, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy & Economically Relevant Pedagogy
- Substantive International Experiences and Exposure
- Residential, Community-base Boarding option (High School)
- Data Driven Socratic Questioning, Design Thinking and Integrated Instruction
- Strong Focus on Critical Thinking and Executive Functioning Skills
- Community-Based Staff (goal of >70% of color and residence in Central Brooklyn)