

Uncommon Schools

EXCELLENCE NORTH ★ STAR COLLEGIATE TRUE NORTH PREPARATORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 15, 2008

PRESS RELEASE

UNCOMMON SCHOOLS NAMES NEW CEO COO Evan Rudall to Lead the Organization in Its Work to Close the Achievement Gap

April 15, 2008. *New York, New York.* The Board of Trustees of Uncommon Schools (Uncommon), one of the leading nonprofit charter management organizations in the country, announced today that Evan Rudall will become the organization's new Chief Executive Officer. Rudall has served as Chief Operating Officer of Uncommon since August 2005. Founding CEO Norman Atkins will become Chairman of the Board and will take on a new role as CEO of Uncommon Knowledge and Achievement, Inc. (UKA), a groundbreaking nonprofit teacher training organization. Rudall and Atkins will assume their new positions on July 1, 2008.

Bob Howitt, current Chairman of the Uncommon Schools Board, enthusiastically observed that "With Evan Rudall as CEO and Norman Atkins as Chairman of the Board, Uncommon will be well-positioned for continued, even accelerated, growth and high performance. Evan brings to the role an exceptional commitment to our mission of preparing low-income urban students for college, compelling leadership skills, and strong operational experience, which will help Uncommon to achieve its student achievement targets."

Uncommon Schools is a nonprofit charter management organization that starts and manages among the most outstanding urban college preparatory charter schools working to close the achievement gap in the Northeast. Under Atkins' leadership, the organization has grown to include nine schools in New York City, upstate New York, and Newark, New Jersey. Uncommon Schools has achieved outstanding results in serving low-income students. All of its schools consistently outperform neighborhood schools, rank at the top of their cities, and are among their states' top-performing urban schools. For example, at Uncommon middle school Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School, 100% of 6th grade students scored advanced or proficient on the 2007 New York state math exam, compared with 63% citywide and 59% in the school's host district in Brooklyn. Further, at the high school level, North Star Academy Charter School of Newark is the highest achieving, non-selective urban school in New Jersey.

"Uncommon has assembled an outstanding team of proven charter school founders and leaders and its initial schools have posted incredible results," said Uncommon board member and NewSchools Venture Fund Partner Jim Peyser. "This transition in leadership will provide continuity, while deepening the leadership team and also expanding the organization's network of strategic partners."

In his new role, Norman Atkins will lead UKA, an organization created by Achievement First, KIPP, and Uncommon Schools. UKA has recently launched a teacher training institute (currently known as Teacher YOU) in partnership with Hunter College, CUNY, and with support from the Robin Hood Foundation and the New York City Department of Education. Noted David Steiner, Dean of the

School of Education at Hunter College, “This is really a first in the nation. We have three of the best charter school organizations in the country working hand-in-hand with a school of education that has a century of experience in inner city schools.”

The initiative is one of strategic importance to Uncommon and its partners given that teacher quality is the most important predictor of student achievement. Typically, teachers in the program at the School of Education at Hunter College will receive provisional certification to teach from New York State within their first few months in the program. Following two years of course work, teachers will receive a master’s degree in education assuming they have met the standards of the master’s program and demonstrated student growth in their schools. Norman Atkins stated, “At UKA we’re taking the most effective practices in our highest performing schools and matching them with world-quality training from the strongest leaders in education. I’m excited about the impact that the program will have on Uncommon, its teachers and its students. I’m equally thrilled that Evan Rudall is stepping into the role of CEO. Uncommon is at a critical stage in implementing its growth strategy, and as the organization grows to scale we’re very fortunate to have an extraordinary leader like Evan taking the helm.”

Evan Rudall is in a strong position to lead Uncommon as it grows and matures. Rudall is the Founder and former Co-Director of Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, a college preparatory school that has been recognized as one of the country’s highest-performing charter public schools. After founding Roxbury Prep, he served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning of the New York City Department of Education, managing the development of major math education and secondary school reforms for the Chancellor’s Children First planning initiative. Rudall received a master’s degree in Education from Harvard University and a law degree from Columbia Law School, where he was a senior editor of the *Columbia Law Review*.

With Evan Rudall moving into the role of CEO, Joshua Phillips, the current Co-Director of Roxbury Preparatory Charter School in Boston, will take on the role of COO. Roxbury Prep has established itself as the highest-performing urban middle school in Massachusetts; on the 2007 state 8th grade math exam, Roxbury Prep outperformed every school in the state. Roxbury Prep is an associate member of Uncommon Schools, receiving services in the areas of professional development, accountability, and strategy. The school also participates in activities, and shares best practices, with schools across the Uncommon Schools network. A Co-Director at Roxbury Prep for six years, Phillips brings a track record of results and extensive operational and management experience to the role of COO of Uncommon Schools.

Uncommon Schools is a nonprofit charter management organization that starts and manages among the most outstanding urban college preparatory charter schools working to close the achievement gap in the Northeast. Uncommon builds uncommonly great schools by developing and managing regional networks that are philosophically aligned and highly accountable. Based in New York City, the organization has created a home office from which it provides a full complement of management services that allow school leaders to focus on instructional leadership. Uncommon manages nine schools in New York City, upstate New York, and Newark, New Jersey and has two associate member schools in Boston, Massachusetts. The organization ultimately will encompass more than 30 schools, serving more than 10,000 K to 12th grade students. For more information, please visit <http://www.uncommonschools.org>.

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If you would like additional information on this topic, or to schedule an interview with Evan Rudall or Norman Atkins, please contact Megan C. Zug at 617-645-4063 or by email at mzug@uncommonschools.org.