



OPEN Impact assists Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School

February 11, 2025 - Front Section



Brooklyn, NY OPEN Impact Real Estate (OPEN) shared that Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School has signed a 10-year lease for 44,114 s/f of turnkey school space at 2520 Church Ave. in Flatbush. The new space, previously occupied by St. Gregory The Great Catholic Academy, will serve as the future home of Kwenda Collegiate Girls when it opens its doors for the 2025-2026 school year.

Lindsay Ornstein, Jake Cinti and Kate Whitman of OPEN represented Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School in the transaction, while William O'Brien of M.C. O'Brien Inc. represented the landlord.

The soon-to-open school, which was recently awarded a coveted NYC school charter by the SUNY Charter Schools Institute, will utilize the building's classrooms and facilities to provide a high-quality education for girls in the Flatbush area. The school will first serve children grades K-1, with plans to expand through grades 5 and ultimately, through eighth grade.

"We are thrilled to have secured this facility, allowing Kwenda to provide a beautiful and empowering educational environment for our girls in Brooklyn," said Christina Yi-Perry, founder of Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School.

The historic space has high-ceilinged classrooms, large windows, a cafeteria on the lower level, and access to outdoor play areas, which will enhance the learning environment and experience for students. In March, Kwenda and McGowan Construction will begin renovations of the facility, designed by Studios Architecture, to create new spaces and amenities that will enrich student learning and growth.

The newly renovated building and grounds will feature an outdoor classroom space for immersive nature experiences that promote mental and emotional wellness, and a makerspace that will empower girls to explore science and art through hands-on projects. A visual and performing arts wing will house a dance and performing arts studio and a visual arts classroom. The building will also have 14 indoor classrooms, a school library, and a cafeteria.

"This lease marks an important step in Kwenda's mission to empower young people in Brooklyn through progressive and culturally relevant education," said Jake Cinti, senior vice president at OPEN Impact Real Estate. "The flexibility of the space will allow the school to grow sustainably and thrive in an elevated educational environment "

Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School is expected to take occupancy in July 2025 following the completion of renovations, with classes beginning in August 2025.

Kwenda Collegiate Girls Charter School's charter was first approved by the SUNY Charter School Institute Trustees in 2019, but it was not able to open then because of the State of New York's cap on the number of charter schools that were allowed in New York City. In 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature reached a deal allowing a group of approved schools that were on hold due to the charter cap, like Kwenda, to open. Yi-Perry, a proud Flatbush resident, has been collaborating with her neighbors in the East Flatbush and Flatbush communities to spread the word about Kwenda and gain support from families.

Kwenda's curriculum will prioritize Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) and will have over two hours of literacy instruction daily. The school will have two teachers in every classroom and will emphasize social-emotional learning, and daily literacy and empowerment classes.