

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created Thursday, January 22, 2015

Updated Thursday, January 29, 2015

Page 1

Applicant groups and Existing Education Corporations interested in submitting an application to establish Regents-authorized charter schools are asked to complete this brief information sheet. The Department will use this information to plan and coordinate peer review panels with appropriate expertise to evaluate all application materials.

Please indicate whether an Applicant Group or an Existing Education Corporation is submitting this Round 1 Letter of Intent.

Applicant Group LOI to establish a single, brand new charter school

Proposed Charter School Name

(Please write out the formal and full name for the school you proposed, and include the words "charter" and "school" in the proposed name(s)).

School Name	The Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	K-5
Number of Students During Initial Term	360

Proposed or Current Board Chair and Public Contact information, including mailing address, phone number, and email address.

(The entire chart may not be visible on your screen. Use the "tab" key to move from column to column. The first column will remain static as you do so).

	First and Last Name	Best Phone Number (###-###-####)	Email Address
Proposed/Current Board Chair	JoAnne C Thompson		
Public/Media Contact Person	Sandra E Oates	845-659-1965	Oatessandra@hotmail.com

If available, please provide the URL to the website established for the proposed school or existing education corporation.

www.thelegacycharter.com

Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner.

(See pages 45-46 of the application kit for definitions and guidance as only "substantial" partnerships should be listed here).

Proposed Management Company
Partner Organization 1

Lead Applicant(s) Signature and Date

Use your PC mouse or your mobile device stylus to sign your name below.

Lead or Co-Applicant listed in section c above.

(Internet Explorer may not support this feature. Open the portal using Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Doe", written across the page.

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

2015/01/21

Thank you for completing this survey so that the Department may plan its review panel accordingly.

LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY

I. Applicant Information

1. Applicant(s) information: JOANNE THOMPSON, LEAD APPLICANT/ [REDACTED]
 East Ramapo School District PTA Member; East Ramapo School District Trustee (2010-2012); Village of SV Homeowner

2. Public contact: SANDRA OATES, MEDIA CONTACT

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: 845-659-1965

Email: THELEGACYCHARTER@GMAIL.COM

Website: www.thelegacycharter.com

3. Applicant Group Information: **(SEE CHART BELOW)**

4. Initial Board of Trustees Information: **(SEE CHART BELOW)**

Name	Experience/ Skills & Role in Founding Group	Proposed Role in School (if any)
JOANNE C THOMPSON	Lead Applicant; School Governance; FOUNDING GROUP	Member; Education and Accountability
SANDRA OATES	Media Contact; School Governance; Education; Non Profit Management; Youth Development; School Management; FOUNDING GROUP	Member; Education and Accountability
AMEENAH CAPERS, ESQ.	Law and Compliance; Education; Finance; Governance; FOUNDING GROUP	Member; Finance Committee; Legal Advisor
FELICIA MUNCH	Finance; Management; FOUNDING GROUP	Parent Member; Finance Committee
GEORGE HEYLIGER	Educational Leadership; Finance; School Governance; Youth Development; School Mgmt.; FOUNDING GROUP	Member; Education and Accountability
SUSAN SHURTLEFF	Finance; School Governance; School Management; Waldorf Curriculum; FOUNDING GROUP	Member; Finance Committee
Advisory Board Member		
DR IRA OUSTACHER, Ed. D	Educational Leadership; Finance; School Governance; Youth Development; School Management	Advisory Board Member- Educational Leadership
HORACE TURNBULL	Educational Leadership; Finance; School Governance; Youth Development; School Management	Advisory Board Member- Finance & Educational Leadership

5. Replication or Network Information: N/A

6. Application History: 2013- LETTER OF INTENT SUBMITTED (**DENIED**)

2014- LETTER OF INTENT SUBMITTED (**APPROVED**)

2014- FULL APPLICATION (**NOT SUBMITTED**)

II. Proposed Charter School Information

1. Proposed school name: **THE LEGACY CHARTER SCHOOL OF INNOVATIVE THINKERS**

2. Proposed school location : **EAST RAMAPO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

3. Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term.

Grades	Ages	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
K	5-6	60	60	60	60	60
1	6-7	60	60	60	60	60
2	7-8		60	60	60	60
3	8-9			60	60	60
4	9-10				60	60
5	10-11					60
TOTALS		120	180	240	300	360

4. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner: N/A

5. Proposed school mission:

The Mission of The Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers is to provide a well-balanced educational environment inspired by the principles of the Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Curriculum. An art- infused curriculum that fosters critical thinking, strong character, and promotes equity through hands-on learning

experiences. Community participation is vital in the support and encouragement of high multi-level achievement and responsible citizenship.

6. School overview:

Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers, will provide a multi-layered educational program that will engage our students' natural learning curiosities and provide a healthy relationship to their community. The central focus is the development of that essence in every person by instilling an understanding of and appreciation of their background and place in the world. The Waldorf-inspired Kindergarten cultivates and works in support of the child's deep inborn natural attitude, belief and trust in and basic reverence for the world as an interesting and good place to live in, all while fostering his/her imagination. In the lower grades, this leads to an emphasis on using artistic elements in different forms, i.e. rhythm, movement, color, form, recitation, song and music not primarily as a means of personal self-expression, but as a means to learn to understand and relate to the world. This builds understanding of different subjects out of what is beautiful in the world in the broadest sense of the word. The goal is to develop an ever more conscious cultivation in the upper grades of an observing, reflecting, and experimental scientific attitude to the world, all of which builds an understanding of what is true, based upon personal experience, thinking and judgment. Some of our programs innovative features will be:

Looping

Unique to the Waldorf grade school is the intimate and enduring relationship that develops between teacher and child. A teacher progresses with his or her class from first grade through as high as eighth grade. It is a form of classroom organization that is believed to allow educators to develop rich relationships with students and their families, create trusting and caring classroom environments, and help kids overcome both academic and developmental obstacles.

Block Scheduling

In Grades 1-8, the core curriculum is taught in blocks of 3-4 weeks, during Main Lesson period at the beginning of the morning. A theme or subject is studied in depth, such as history, geometry, drama, or science. The teacher integrates movement and the arts in a cross-curricular approach to the subject matter, choosing the material, presentation and activities carefully, with attention to the variety of learning styles and individual needs of the students in the class.

Reading Readiness

Working with a real knowledge of the developing child, Waldorf teachers begin teaching reading by cultivating children's sense of language and their inner capacities to form mental images. Vivid verbal pictures and the use of rich language are constantly employed in the classroom. Children live in the world of imaginative inner pictures, totally unaware that they are developing the most important capacities needed for reading comprehension, for reading with understanding.

7. Target Population/ Community served:

East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD) has a population of approximately 113,000 people. With a 12.62% population growth from 2005-2009, East Ramapo Central School District is economically, socially, culturally diverse and ranked as the 7th largest School District in New York. Of the total population of East Ramapo, approximately 27,000 are school aged children. However, only 8,500 of that number attend Public School while approximately 18,500 attend private religious schools. According to the state education department, 54% of the district's 8,000 public school students during the 2009-2010 school years were African American; 30% were Hispanic. The majority of these children continue to live below the poverty line with 56% of them receiving free and 11% eligible for reduced lunch, a marker for low-income families. In addition, 19% of the school aged population has Limited English Proficiency and about 28% make up the school aged population classified with Special Education Needs. We anticipate that our schools population will reflect these factors with 12-14 % in need of Special Student Services.

As of June 23, 2014, NYSED posted the Statewide High School Graduation Rate for the East Ramapo Central School District as the lowest graduation rates at 67% as well as the lowest scores on NY State English Language Arts and Math tests of all Rockland County school districts. During the 2011-2012 school years, nine of fourteen public schools in the East Ramapo School District were deemed as 'Schools in Need of Improvement' by the New York State Department of Education. Continued concerns with the fiscal management and board decisions have caused the Commissioner to designate a Fiscal Monitor to

evaluate the finances and management of the district. His findings were made public in November 2014. Based upon all of these factors, East Ramapo will be a district of declining enrollment as families have begun to utilize private school options. However, many of our families are unable to explore costly private schooling options.

It is imperative that the students of East Ramapo have access to high quality educational alternatives that will allow them to reach their potential and rise above their life circumstances. The Legacy Charter School will be uniquely suited to East Ramapo's residents by introducing a comprehensive Waldorf-inspired educational program.

III. Enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.

1. Those identified in the school's mission:

The Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers will be an inclusive school, meeting the educational needs of a diverse heterogeneous population. Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers will be non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. It will not charge tuition and will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, religious beliefs, gender, or disability.

Parents who choose the Legacy Charter School will do so for a variety of reasons, including:

- Alignment with the school's mission and vision;
- An interest in a creative educational program that addresses the whole child;
- A desire to be involved in their child's education;
- A commitment to life-long learning;
- A belief in a partnership between family and school; and
- An appreciation of the support given by the school and teachers to the social and emotional developmental needs of the student.

Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers will enroll and educate children with the expectation that the unique set of values, goals, methods, policies, curriculum offerings, dress and other codes, and all aspects of the educational philosophy of the Legacy Charter school can and will be supported by the child's parents.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- o Created school recruitment and advertising materials in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole with a description of the schools mission, strategies, and methodologies to be used to instruct children.
- o Fostering relationships with Community Partners- Individuals and Businesses- to reach their network of supporters as well as to spread the word of our Waldorf-inspired educational program.
- o Contacted local radio, television, and media sources for interviews to reach our community through Newspaper, Radio Shows, local Public Access TV shows, Churches, organizations and businesses.
- o Conducting Experiential Waldorf Forums and Weekends to educate Prospective Parents, Students, and Community Members.
- o Conduct On-going Parent Workshops and Public Forums where persons are provided hands on experience of Waldorf Methodologies and allowed the opportunity to ask questions and address concerns.

2. Students with disabilities:

The Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers embraces the full diversity in its student body and community including special needs children. We have and will continue to conduct an aggressive public outreach campaign to achieve the goal of attracting, recruiting and retaining students of all abilities.

Our ongoing plans to recruit and retain students with special needs will emphasize The Legacy Charter School of Innovative Thinkers as an inclusive school that will meet the educational needs of a diverse heterogeneous population. We will recruit children through special education and ELL advocates, through the District Committee on Special Education, and community agencies and social service providers serving special needs populations. Our advertising material will be translated and presentations made at community centers and organizations that serve ELLs, children with disabilities and children living in poverty.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Utilize community organizations that provide services to ELL, Special Needs, or Economically Disadvantaged students on an ongoing basis.
- Offer a learning experience that encourages lifelong learning through hands and mind on methods.
- Secure a location within East Ramapo Central School District that complies with all ADA laws.
- Fully comply with all IDEA and ADA requirements
- We will include a Non-Discriminatory clause as follows, “will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, religious beliefs, gender, or disability” in all of our advertising.
- Employ Consulting Certified School Psychologist and Special Ed Teacher on staff to address and oversee IEP compliance and Re-Evaluations

3. English language learners:

At Legacy Charter School for Innovative Thinkers, Students in Grades K, 1, & 2 will be fully immersed in a mainstream setting to foster natural language acquisition. Students, starting in First Grade, will be taught two languages, depending upon the predominant language in the school/ community. This continues through fifth grade. Also, Music Instruction (Recorder) will be used to help students train their ears which will help in language acquisition.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Host open house meetings with the benefit of translation for ELL Families
- Utilize community organizations that provide services to ELL, Special Needs, or Economically Disadvantaged students on an ongoing basis.
- Fully comply with all IDEA and ADA requirements
- Recruit Multi-Lingual teachers/ staff
- Engage community liaisons

4. Students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program:

It is our goal to provide lunch to all students regardless of need. We will establish a Community Garden and make lunch a part of the community experience. All students will participate through not only the lunch itself but also various lessons like Cooking lessons, Etiquette lessons, and Instruction on Balancing Meals. We aim to ensure that no distinction is made between our students on the basis of their eligibility for free and reduced lunch.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Engaged Parents and Families of students helping them to understand that their involvement is integral to their student’s success.
- Develop and advertise a Parent Education Program.
- Reached out to local Elected Leaders, Ministers, and Businesspersons within our community to tap into their resources and offer them an opportunity to share input in how best we can serve our community.
- Conducted Petition Signing Drive and Information Sessions at local daycares, churches, and the local library to inform parents and ensure that we meet our enrollment targets.
- Provide Posters, Flyers, and Brochures for display at local businesses; maintain Business Website and Contact cards as well as other social media contact.
- Secure grants for Lunch Program funding.

Describe the school’s strategies to retain its students, particularly:

1. Those identified in the school’s mission:

An integral component to the success, and therefore retention, of our students and families is to ensure that they feel connected. To do so, we will establish specified checking points throughout a student’s first year and beyond to ensure individualized attention. These sessions are designed to answer student’s families’ questions as they develop and to provide families with a “refresher” of the information discussed during the Initial Orientation/ Intake Meeting. This will aid in fulfilling our mission to promote excellence and close the academic gap for all students, and will provide the necessary instruction and support for our student population. One of our founding members is a Certified Psychologist. His expertise will influence our Special Education Specialist, differentiated instruction, and individual educational programs to provide additional support.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Conduct Initial Intake Meetings, Information Sessions, Skill Building Workshops, Student Follow-ups, Grade Checks, and Mentor Program
- Participate in local radio, television, and media shows to reach our community through Newspaper, Radio Shows, local Public Access TV shows, Churches, and businesses.
- Conducting Experiential Waldorf Forums and Weekends to educate Prospective Parents, Students, and Community Members as well as On-going Parent Workshops and Public Forums where persons are provided hands on experience of Waldorf Methodologies and allowed the opportunity to ask questions and address concerns.

2. Students with disabilities:

Our goal is to develop a holistic approach to serve the needs of all East Ramapo children Students with IEP's would be required to meet the goals and objectives as outlined by this document. It is our goal, as aforementioned, to integrate these students within general education setting to the greatest extent possible. If a special needs student does not fulfill outlined goals and objectives, then he or she will be further assessed by school psychologist to determine what structures can be put in place to assist in the enhancement of learning outcomes. If the student has not minimally met the educational goals and objectives then he/she would be provided with opportunities (extended day; revision of IEP; smaller class size) to improve upon skills required for promotion to the next grade. We will also incorporate Remedial Services during our Enrichment Programming Time or Voluntary Academies on Weekends to address any educational concerns on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Provide students with varied learning experiences that include both experiential and academic approaches.
- Provide educational experiences that may not be available to them based upon educational or economic disadvantage.
- Work as a liaison to connect families with providers, resources, and community organizations that provide services to ELL, Special Needs, or Economically Disadvantaged students on an ongoing basis.
- Employee Consulting Certified school psychologist on staff to address and oversee IEP compliance and Re-Evaluations
- Certified Special Ed Teacher on Staff

3. English language learners:

Students who are academically low-achieving, have disabilities, or are English Language Learners will be identified and helped by devising a plan for additional support to ensure the child's success. Since learning activities will be built upon Multiple Intelligence theory (Gardner, 1989) and authentic assessment practices, all students will have the opportunity to thrive in an inclusive and inspiring setting. English language learners will be identified by means of the Home Language Survey given to all entering students. The Legacy Charter School also will assess ELL for primary language proficiency as needed. Teachers will encourage parents to value and nurture the ongoing development of primary language proficiency in the home. Students, starting in First Grade, will be taught two languages, depending upon the predominant language in the school/ community. This continues through fifth grade. Our model is an "inclusion model", and ELL students will be included in mainstream classes. ELL may receive specialized English acquisition help by means of effective programs before, during, and/or and after school.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- Provide Professional Development regarding integrated learning, differentiated learning, disabilities, and cultural differences.
- Provide remedial services through the Students' Home District.
- Employ a Community Outreach Coordinator and/ or collaborate to network with existing Community Organization Leadership who conduct ongoing Adult Education, Language and Literacy Workshops and provide services to ELL, Special Needs, or Economically Disadvantaged students on an ongoing basis.

4. Students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program:

We recognize the link between proper nutrition and a child's ability to focus on learning. In addition, we recognize our responsibility to provide excellent nutrition to children in a community where two thirds of the children qualify for free or reduced lunch and these children get both their breakfast and lunch (2/3rds of their meals) within the school setting. Thus, Legacy Charter School Of Innovative Thinkers will provide support and food services to every child in accordance with the East Ramapo District Guidelines and NYS Law regardless of financial need.

Advertising and Recruitment Plan

- o Host Open Meetings for teachers and families to foster a collaborative Home-School relationship/ connection.
- o Offer skills based workshops for development for parents and families as well as community.
- o Encourage Family and Parent Volunteerism opportunities as well as regularly scheduled Health, Education, and Fitness Fun Fairs.
- o Integrate lunch as part of the Educational Program where all students can participate through our community garden and an in-house farmer.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

1. Describe the public outreach conducted to date to solicit community input regarding the proposed school. This may include public meetings held, discussions with community parents, stakeholders or organizations, public awareness campaigns, media coverage or results from surveys conducted.

We have conducted Parent and Community Information Sessions to communicate our mission to our community as well as to gather response or feedback to the vision. We have also participated in various fairs and community activities enumerated below as to get exposure for this school. We created a website, Facebook page, business cards, and obtained a mailbox for correspondence and dissemination of information. We have reached out to existing community organization leadership to utilize their network. We are fostering community partnerships with local daycare centers and organizations to get word to our community as well as to gather feedback. We also have an open door policy for individuals that wish to join and help in formulating the details of the school.

In 2014, we had discussion with Sunbridge Institute and Green Meadow Waldorf School regarding support of the school’s Waldorf-inspired curriculum. Together in 2015, we have scheduled and will conduct Waldorf forums and weekends to educate the public about how this curriculum can address a wide variety of student educational experiences. **(Appendix A)**

2. Describe your initial assessment of parent interest in your proposed charter school to allow the school to reach its anticipated enrollment. Include in your response a description/analysis of any data you have collected to support the initial assessment of interest. **Letters of Support (see table below)**

Mr. Toney Earl , Rockland County Legislator	Mr. Allan Thompson , Past Mayor of the Village of Spring Valley
Mrs. Jacque Harrakinsingh , ERCSD Resident	Dr. Ira Oustacher , Past Superintendent of East Ramapo Central School District
Mrs. Jessica Zeigler , Executive Director of Sunbridge Institute Waldorf Teacher Training	Mr. Renold Julien , Director of Konbit Neg Lakay (A Haitian Cultural Organization)
Mr. Bill Pernice , Pedagogical Administrator, Green Meadow Waldorf School	Mr. Ed Day , Rockland County Executive

V. Lead Applicant(s) Signature and Date Signed:

APPENDIX A- Public Outreach and Community Support

Public Information & Planning Q&A Sessions

2/5/2013	Pedro Santana Residence	New City, NY
2/12/2013	MLK Jr Center	Spring Valley, NY
2/19/2013	MLK Jr Center	Spring Valley, NY
2/25/2013	MLK Jr Center	Spring Valley, NY
3/10/2013	RCC Youthfest	Rockland Community College (Suffern, NY)
3/19/2103	MLK Jr Center	Spring Valley, NY
3/24/2013	East Ramapo Forum	Gracepoint Church (New City, NY)
4/9/2013	MLK Jr Center	Spring Valley, NY
8/4/2013	Spring Valley Day	Spring Valley Memorial Park (Spring Valley, NY)
8/11/2013	Finkelstein Library	Spring Valley, NY
3/2014	Oakland Charter School	
5/6/2014	Sunbridge Institute	Chestnut Ridge, NY
5/2014	CEJJES Institute	Pomona, NY
6/2014	Community Barbershop	Spring Valley, NY
7/2014	Community Forum	Spring Valley, NY
11/13/2014	Open Elementary Day	Green Meadow Waldorf (Chestnut Ridge, NY)
1/11/2015	Planning Meeting	Finkelstien Memorial Library, Spring Valley, NY
1/18/2015	Community Forum	Louis Kurtz Civic Center, Spring Valley, NY
2/7/2015	Waldorf Conference	Sunbridge Institute (Chestnut Ridge, NY)
2/8/2015	Community Forum	Spring Valley, NY
3/15/2015	Rockland County Youthfest	RCC Fieldhouse (Suffern, NY)

One-to-One Meetings with Stakeholders

Mrs. Diane Rivera, Director of West Street Daycare, Spring Valley NY
Mrs. Kira Davenport, Director –Headstart of Rockland, Nyack
Mr. Allan Thompson, Past Mayor of the Village of Spring Valley
Mr. Renold Julien, Director –Konbit Neg Lakay
Mr. Pedro Santana, Former Asst. Supt. Of Instruction (K-12), E. Ramapo Central School District (DECEASED)
Mr. Horace Turnbull, CFO, St. Christopher’s Schools
Mrs. Jessica Zeigler, Executive Director- Sunbridge Institute
Dr. Ira Oustacher, Past East Ramapo Central School District Superintendent
Mr. William Pernice, Green Meadow Waldorf School Pedagogical Administrator
Mrs. Susan Shurtleff- CEJJES Institute Finance Director
Mr. Eric Silber, Green Meadow School- Financial Administrator
Dr. Edmund W. Gordon- Founder and Director, CEJJES Institute/ Chairperson of the Gordon Commission
Mr. Gregory Sousa, Branch Manager- Hudson Valley Bank
Dr. Oscar Cohen, Educational Consultant- CEJJES Institute/ Past Superintendent Lexington School for the Deaf
NYS Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee, (Rockland County) 97th District
Honorable Judge Sherri Eisenpress, Rockland County Family Court
Mrs. Louise Covert, PhD.- Director/Founder of Analogies Consulting: Education Management & Corp. Training
Rockland County Business Association

Flyers, Brochures, Survey Distribution

Door to Door Surveys	Slinn Avenue Apartments	Advocating for Change
Surveys	RCC Fieldhouse- Suffern, NY	Rockland County Youth Fest
Surveys	Online- Facebook and Website	Survey Monkey
Flyers/ Brochures	Hill Neighborhood Stores	
Flyers/ Brochures	Martin Luther King Jr Center	

Flyers/ Brochures	Main Street Stores	
Flyers/ Brochures	Dry Cleaners	
Flyers/ Brochures	Bon Accueil Restaurant	
Flyers/ Brochures	Konbit Neg Lakay	
Journal Ad/ Sponsor	Rockland County Haiti Relief Dinner	
Journal Ad/ Sponsor	Rockland County Alumni Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Membership Dinner	

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
JoAnne Thompson	[REDACTED]	Rockland BOCES
Sandra Oates	[REDACTED]	East Ramapo Central School D
Ameenah Karim Capers, Esq	[REDACTED]	Rockland Cty District Atty Offi
Felicia Munck	[REDACTED]	Bed, Bath, and Beyond
George Heyliger	[REDACTED]	Retired- NYC DOE
Susan Shurtleff	[REDACTED]	Retiree

