

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created Tuesday, January 27, 2015
Updated Thursday, February 05, 2015

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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 Staten Island Green Charter School For Environmental Discovery
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	K-5
Number of Students During Initial Term	125

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	Dr. Vincent Maligno		
Public/Media Contact Person	Carole Reiss	718-608-5232	creiss1952@gmail.com

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

www.sigcs.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	None
Partner Organization 1	Sylvan Learning Center

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 that reads "Madeline Vasquez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

2015/02/05

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

NYSED Charter School Office/ Ms. Vickie Smith, Director
89 Washington Avenue, Room 462 EBA
Albany, New York 12234
February 7, 2015

This letter is our official application to NYSED for a charter for The Staten Island Green Charter School for Environmental Discovery. In accordance with NYSED guidelines, we are providing required information about the proposed school.

I. Applicant Information:

A. Lead Applicants:

1. Dr. Carole B. Reiss, Teacher, M123, Harlem, District 5, creiss1952@gmail.com, 2. Madeline Vasquez, Staten Island Mental Health Society Head Start, [REDACTED]

B. Media Contact: Dr. Carole Reiss, creiss1952@gmail.com, 718-608-5232

C. Applicant Founding Group:

- Dr. Carole B. Reiss — Proposed Executive Director- Teacher at P.S.123 (Harlem) PhD. K-12 Leadership, Capella University. Enrolled in Emerging Leaders/New Leaders program at the NYC Department of Education. Former Director of Health and Wellness, Region 10, NYC DOE, Office of the Superintendent.
- Dr. Vincent Maligno — School Administrator and Staten Island community resident. Former Assistant Principal at Manhattan High School/P35 M. PhD. Psychology- the City University, College of Staten Island.
- Dr. Roy Calafoto — Administrator and Psychologist. Serves as a Board member at The Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services. 40 years of service as a Psychologist and Administrator. Presently an advisor to our Board of Trustees.

D. Proposed Initial Board of Trustees:

- Dr. Roy Calafoto- Currently Senior Advisor. Administrator and Psychologist for 40 years at a variety of facilities; including: NJ Department of Corrections. Serves at the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services Inc. PhD, Clinical Psychology Rutgers University, M.A. Clinical Psychology, Columbia, Pacific, B.S. NYU.(Advisor Only)
- Dr. Vincent Maligno- Administrator for NYC Board of Education, Community Activist Senior Founder of the Staten Island Green Charter School Proposal. Community Outreach with Senator Andrew Lanza.
- Madeline Vasquez- Lead Applicant- Office Manager/Social Worker at Coney Island Day Care, Staten Island Mental Health Society.
- Danielle Dotson- Staten Island Mental Health Society, INC., Head Start Program
- Shawntay Williams-Wavier Service Provider- Humanfirst, NYC
- Regina Abraham- Reading Specialist and teacher K-6, Playwright and Author, Chocolate Fudge Books.
- Scott Fried- ESL Teacher at PS 123, Mahalia Jackson. National Chess Team Program at PS 123 Founders.
- Jeff Lipton- Editor and Publicist, Richner Communications. Resident of Staten Island, and former Resident of New Paltz, worked as a Paraprofessional in New Paltz.
- Debbie Hansen- Banker, Loan Officer, Victory State Bank, Staten Island, New York.

E. **Replication or Network Information:** None

F. **Application History:** SIGCSED applied to SUNY Charter Institute in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. We applied to NYSED in October 2013 Round 2. All applications were withdrawn in order to allow members to

expand funding opportunities as well as reflect on areas that were not considered sufficient by NYSED. We have reviewed the need for our school on Staten Island by studying student test scores on the Common Core Examinations from 2013-2014, and 2011-2013. We saw very few percentages in growth for all students, and even slower growth for ELL and Students with Disabilities. Clearly an approach that includes success for all students is the foundation and focal point for our school. Our students from all economic backgrounds need encouragement, and engagement in academic achievement as well as community and global concerns for the scientific, academic, and spiritual growth that all children need as a part of character and academic development. Since submitting our original application we have a 501c3 from the IRS since May 2013. We held a Fundraiser on May 20, 2014 at the Old Bermuda Inn in Staten Island. We raised \$10,000 at this event. Microsoft donated an X-box to one for our raffle, as well as baskets and antiques from community members. We also received a loan from Victory State Bank for \$10,000 for our 501c3. We also have a contract for a fundraiser at The St. George Theater in St. George, Staten Island for a partnered event with the Staten Island Mental Health Society. This event will take place in April 2015. Victory State Bank will be supporters of this event as well as Santander Bank. The event will be sponsored by the NYC Dance ARTS/Cypher Program in Staten Island, directed by Mr. Charles Balducci, Realty T.V. star for 11 years at MTV. He will be working with our Parent Outreach Committee and he is focusing on the needs of parents to become actively involved in their children's education, as well as the need to fundraise for important programs. Our parents requested their involvement in their children's education at all levels including fundraising. It is included in our full proposal.

II. Proposed Charter Information

1. Proposed Name: The Staten Island Green Charter School for Environmental Discovery. K-5

2. Proposed Location: We have applied to the NYC DOE for public school space and we are working with Lansco Realty for the lease agreement of locations on the North Shore. We expect to sign a lease on February 8, 2015 for 18,000 square feet of space. Funding will be offered through Lansco for our land and building initiative.

3. Planned Grades and Enrollment:

We plan to have a K-5 school with 25 students per class. Year 1- K-75, Gr.1-50=125.

Year 2 -K-75, 1-75, 2-50=200. Year 3-K-75, Gr.1-75, Gr.2-75, Gr.3-50=275. Year 4- K, 75 Gr. 1-75, Gr.2-75, Gr.3-75, Gr.4-50=350. Year 5- K-75, Gr.1-75, Gr.2-75, Gr.3-75, Gr.4-75, Gr5.-50=425.

E. Proposed Management and or Partner Organization: No Proposed Management.

- Through our multiple community outreach efforts, the following have agreed to partner with SIGCSED. Most notable are: SEER (State Education and Environmental Roundtable), Pratt Recycling Industries, College of Staten Island, Staten Island Zoo, National Grid, Salvadori Center, NYC Parks Department for water testing programs, and Sylvan Learning Center, as well as the Staten Island Mental Health Society. Each organization will provide support as needed to meet budgetary limitations without cutting children's services. The NBA FIT Program has partnered with Dr. Reiss for the students of the Staten Island green Charter School for Environmental Discovery and will support the school financially with programs and instructional support for after school and weekend programs. We have a letter of commitment for this project.

F. Proposed School Mission:

- The Staten Island Green Charter School for Environmental Discovery will deliver outstanding educational instruction and services to grades K-5 students of all ability levels so they can acquire the knowledge, skills and strength of character necessary to successfully meet future academic, career, social and environmental challenges in the 21st century.

G. School Overview: The Staten Island Green Charter School for Environmental Discovery (SIGCSED) will be built on the following cornerstones:

- **Achievement for All Students:** We believe all children have the capacity to succeed and will do so when they have the opportunity to learn from and interact with competent, dedicated, and motivated teachers. Our educators are committed to providing each student with the learning opportunities and

guidance critical for academic achievement and character development using data from multiple assessments to guide instruction.

- **Significance of K-5 Success (Growth):** Future academic and occupational success is contingent on successful mastery of elementary school subjects. Students who fail to establish a strong foundation of knowledge and skills in the elementary grades are likely to fall further behind as they move on to middle school, high school and beyond.
- **Pedagogical Model (Constructivism)** SIGCSED's founding team bases its educational model on John Dewey's Constructivist learning theory and Jean Piaget's stages of cognitive development. Our experience in education supports the idea that hands-on and experience-based learning, coupled with direct instructional support, is the most effective way of teaching young students. The curriculum our planning team developed, using the Environmentally Integrated Concept of learning, is embedded in the psychological and educational research of Jean Piaget. The most significant include:
 - *Learning is a dynamic activity; acquiring knowledge is not just memorizing facts.*
 - *For students to be successful, teachers must actively engage them as partners in the learning process. Motivation is a key element of learning for students and teachers.*
 - *Hands on experiments and activities are useful learning tools-especially for diverse students; however, real learning requires more direct one-to-one instruction.*
 - *Learning takes time and is not instantaneous. For significant learning to occur, ideas need to be revisited, discussed, evaluated and used.*

SIGCSED teachers will be trained to use environmental themes as a partner in the Common Core Learning Standards, and will address socially responsible environmental issues in writing, reading, math, social studies, art, music and health and wellness.

Based on these cornerstones, other school design features have been developed on best practices from the nation's best STEM and Science Schools, i.e. New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math. Specific practices include:

- **School Success from the Start:** SIGCSED's initial classes will begin in Kindergarten, allowing our students to "grow" with our program to achieve full success using the academic model of our school. Students will be assessed during the early part of the Kindergarten program to identify areas of strength and need for intervention. Parents will be a partner in the Foundation of Learning Program at our school. This is included in our full proposal.
- **School Leader:** We will hire a school leader who has demonstrated success in areas essential for developing and maintaining an outstanding educational program for underserved students; these include: setting and implementing vision and values, building managing budget and delivering results as evidenced by student test scores and assessments both formative, and summative. The school leader will be held accountable for results by the governing board. Our team will be enrolled in the HARVARD DATA-WISE Program during our Pre-Opening period. Teachers will be trained using Data-Wise and Making Learning Visible from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. A strong school culture for learning and self-awareness will be established before the school opens to ensure that teachers, parents and the community stakeholders are all focusing on the cornerstones of the school.
- **Stem Education-** (Science, Technology Engineering, and Math) - SIGCSED will use the STEM education program, specifically designed to prepare students to develop the knowledge and skills essential for academic and occupational success for the economically and environmentally challenging circumstances of the 21st century.
- **Media and Technology-** SIGCSED teachers will incorporate advanced computer hardware and software applications to expand and enhance learning opportunities. Our review of curriculum and teaching methods of successful STEM schools (as indicated by test data results) indicates a wide range of excellent technological resources are available for students and teachers. Some data suggests implementation of computer programs into classroom learning is associated with improved levels of student motivation,

engagement and learning. Once chartered, SIGCSED teaching staff will identify the most appropriate and effective material(s) for each grade, ELL student, and students with disabilities.

III. Enrollment and Student Population

A. School's Target Population and community: SIGCSED will serve a combination of low socio-economic families, students with disabilities and ELL students who reside on the North Shore of Staten Island as well as other neighborhoods. We will hold a lottery on April 1, 2016, and will train parents on how to apply through the lottery system, as many parents are unaware of the process.

Need for alternative school options for North Shore residents and other neighborhoods are supported by Data from the NYSED (wwwP-12, NYSED) and the NYC Department of Education 2013-2014 clearly indicates that all students including ELL and SWD are performing well below proficiency standards in all of Staten Island schools. Level 3 and 4 percentages are listed below. The data from NYS test scores for the previous year were actually 3-8% lower for all students. Clearly we must represent the needs of all students as we carve out a clear pathway to achievement using multiple assessments as the point of entry to measure progress and growth.

Grade	ELA-2014	SWD-2014	ELL-2014	Math	SWD	ELL
Grade 3	36.0	10.9	6.3	52.0	20.8	16.9
Grade 4	35.0	9.4	4.0	54.0	14.7	11.1
Grade 5	33.0	7.9	3.4	14.5	13.5	9.1

Our parent surveys reported that our future applicants would have a 20% SWD population, as well as 9% would be students who do not speak English as a first home language. Support will be provided to assist this growing population through our support services.

B. Strategies to attract, recruit, and retain students:

- *Admissions preference:* SIGCSED will target students who meet federal/state guidelines for low socio-economic families and/or who are eligible for federal meal programs, on the North Shore of Staten Island. At least 77% of students will qualify for free or reduced lunch. Our team is dedicated to improving quality education for our poorest children. We will seek them out through the use of data collected by Councilwoman, Debi Rose.
- *We intend to review data and analyze students in need of intervention, by working with groups like Parent To Parent for SWD, El Centro for ELL students, and attend parent social meetings, parent workshops, and community parent engagement meetings with the Community Education Council.* We intend to lead and train parents to enroll in community workshops that will help parents develop the organizational skills needed to provide guidance and structure for their children. Parents requested this to be in our full proposal.

High retention rates for all SIGCSED students will result from providing:

- Enhanced learning opportunities using Data Driven Instruction that incorporates hands-on, individual and small group experiential learning aligned with Common Core and NY State Common Core Learning Standards. The DDI method using assessments such as Din Brigance, Early Childhood Development screens for K-1 assessments for readiness, and for ELL students using the NYSITELL for entrance and the NYSESLAT for ongoing assessment. Students in grades 2-6 will be assessed using MWEA- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Both assessments will be used in fall, winter and spring to measure baseline assessment for each student and to guide intervention and discussion around the instructional methods needed to support student progress. Home Language Inventory will be used as a pre-assessment for all incoming students.
- SIGCSED approach to core learning subjects will be based on successful learning models including: 5 E (engage, explore, explain, elaborate and evaluate) Learning Cycle Model, (Barman, 1989; Ramsey; 1993); the EIC model (using the environment as an integrated context for improving student performance SIC/SEER model). Our Environmental Education will incorporate experiential learning to actively engage students in developing the capacity for inquiry as well as the desire and ability to learn. The EIC approach to learning will use the natural environment as a theme for student work in ELA,

Math, Science, and Social Studies. Students will align projects, individual, and group work to NY State and Common Core Standards, which in turn will increase competency for the NY State Testing program.

- Character Education and health programs will be part of a program designed to facilitate students' capacity to develop respect for: themselves, family members, friends, peers, teachers, staff, and community members. An anti-drug education program will be taught using community programs geared to align the community and the environment as an integrated context for learning.
- Parents will receive support for effective "AT HOME" assistance with homework and projects via our website, and teacher conferences, aligned to weekly progress reports.

To effectively serve (and retain) ELL students, SIGCSED will:

- Students whose home language is other than English will be assessed to identify those who will require additional support. As per the NYSED procedures, all ELL students will be identified through a process that includes: home language questionnaires, informal interviews with students in English and their native language as well as LAB-R. All teachers will be trained to not only identify students who have a deficiency in English but also how to effectively communicate with both student and parent.
- English language learners will be provided classroom support through individual and small peer group opportunities. ELL students requiring more intensive interventions will receive services via a pullout program and/or intervention with a paraprofessional or associate teacher using tablets where necessary for guided instruction and assessment.
- Ongoing student English language literacy and proficiency progress will be conducted to determine if continued special services are warranted. All ELL students will be given the NYSESLAT examination annually to assess student progress.

To effectively serve (and retain) Special Education students, SIGCSED will:

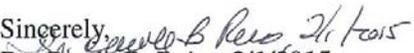
- Students with disabilities will be provided service in the least restrictive environment in accordance with Federal and State regulations including section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 and ~Education Law 2853 (4) and applicable federal laws and regulations in accordance with IEP recommended by the CSE of the students' school district of residence.
- All students with existing IEP's will be admitted and provided with appropriate services according to their IEP, and our abilities to accommodate them.
- Develop a special education team that includes: speech teachers, school psychologist, a physical therapist, occupational therapist and, when needed, using outside agencies.
- SIGCSED will use an extensive 3-tiered RTI (Response to Intervention) process to ensure that the needs of all students who are struggling will be identified ASAP, thereby avoiding whenever possible the need for more intensive levels of intervention.
- SIGCSED will coordinate students' evaluations and services with teachers, Student Achievement Coordinator, and Parent(s).
- SIGCSED will provide training and support for all general education teachers to ensure they are knowledgeable about the needs of students with disabilities by providing the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) to all teachers.

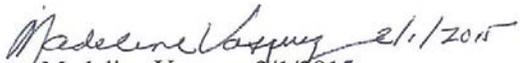
IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

The Founders of SIGCSED have reached out to and have met with the local political leaders, and community organizations, as well as extensive outreach to parents. We have obtained 875 signatures from the community in support of our school through public meetings at local Day Cares, Libraries, Pre-K and Kindergarten Fairs, Recycling Projects, Beach Cleanups, Health Walks at Clove Lake Park, Presentations at the Staten Island, and Children's Museum, Barnes and Noble, Panera Bread, Starbuck's District 31 Community Education Council, Facebook, Twitter, as well as the Staten Island Zoo, the N.Y. Aquarium and The Coney Island Alliance in Brooklyn, District 21.

As a result of these meetings, we have obtained community support letters, petitions, letters of commitment, a loan from Victory State Bank and an offer to apply to Santander for a Small Business Loan and to Victory State

Bank, and Valley National Bank, who will support this school with loans in the pre-operating and first 2 years. We can supply commitment letters from the banks mentioned as well as from private citizens. The Friends of The Staten Island Green Charter School has a 501c3 since March 2013. FJC also serves as a fiscal sponsor. Our

Sincerely,

Dr. Carolé B. Reiss. 2/1/2015


Madeline Vasquez 2/1/2015

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
Madeline Vasquez	[REDACTED]	St.Mental Health society
Danielle Dotson	[REDACTED]	Staten Island Mental Health
Shawnteley Williams	[REDACTED]	Humanfirst.org
Vincent J. Maligno PhD	[REDACTED]	St. John's University
Jeff Lipton	[REDACTED]	Paraprofessional
Carole Reiss, Phd	[REDACTED]	Teacher
Scott Fried	[REDACTED]	Teacher
Regina Abraham	[REDACTED]	Author, Playwright, Teacher
	[REDACTED]	
Debbie Hansen	[REDACTED]	Banker/ Loan Officer

TABLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION***Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees**

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ROLE ON APPLICANT GROUP (Key Words)	PROPOSED ROLE (if any) (Trustee, Employee, Consultant, or None Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Business and Outreach	Trustee	officer	1 year	yes
community outreach	Trustee	officer	1 year	yes
waiver service provider	Trustee	officer	1 year	yes
NYCDOE Administrator	Trustee	Board Chair	1 year	yes
communications director	Trustee	officer	1 year	yes
Regional Instruction Specialist	Executive director	none	0	no
Not-for-Profit Organization	Trustee	officer	2 year	yes
Reading Specialist	Trustee	Trustee	1 year	yes
Fundraising				
Business Management	Trustee	Treasurer	2 year	yes