

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created Sunday, February 08, 2015
Updated Tuesday, February 10, 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	SISDA Charter School for Performing Arts, College and Career Readiness
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	6-10
Number of Students During Initial Term	500

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	Stuart Austein		
Public/Media Contact Person	Frank Steele	347-860-5390	FrankSteele720@gmail.com

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

(No response)

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	Charter School Business Management
Partner Organization 1	Simpson Street Development Association (SISDA)

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, consisting of two distinct, rounded shapes connected by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends across the width of the page.

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

2015/02/10

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

I. Application Group Information

c. Public contact: Frank Steele at Frank.Steele720@gmail.com or (347) 860- 5390

d. Application History: All applicant group members filed & withdrew an application for SISDA CTE School in 2011 after the Capacity Interview. The same individuals filed an application for SISDA School in 2012, which was denied by NYSED. All group members filed a Letter of Intent with the NYSED to open the Bronx Academy for College and Career Readiness on Sept. 4, 2013, but were not invited to submit a full application. In 2014 we submitted an approved Letter of Intent but due to death of a proposed Trustee and a serious, life-threatening illness of an applicant a full application was not submitted.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. School Name: SISDA Charter School for Performing Arts, College and Career Readiness

b. School Location: We are requesting to be located in a DOE facility and also seek to lease a facility within the District 8.

c. Planned Grades and Enrollment: The SISDA Charter School for Performing Arts, College and Career Readiness will serve grades 6-12. Our first year, 2015-2016, will have only a 6th grade class of 100 students. In subsequent years we will introduce a new 6th grade class of 100 students & retain all previous students, reaching full capacity of 700 students by Sept. 2022.

d. Proposed Management Company and/or Partner Organizations: Charter School Business Management will provide back office financial services. Our partner organizations are:

1. SISDA, a nonprofit CBO founded in 1964, provides education, employment training, counseling, Immigrant assistance, ESL, & family support services. They will offer Summer Youth Employment Program opportunities, internship opportunities, academic interventions during & after school, and sports & recreation opportunities for our students. They will offer social services to our families, including GED & ESL classes.

2. TCI College of Technology has provided training and education in the fields of business & legal studies, health sciences & technologies, and engineering & facilities technologies for over 15 years. TCI will provide internship opportunities for students who are academically, socially, & emotionally ready. TCI is committed to sponsoring a number of full & partial scholarships for select graduating students who wish to attend their Institute. They will teach computer literacy classes at our school & offer more advanced computer classes at their campus, during after school and Saturdays. They will also support our parent involvement program by offering health / nutrition classes and financial planning workshops.

3. Hostos Community College's Science & Technology Entry Program (STEP), prepares South Bronx high school students for the reality of higher education and the college experience by offering them an opportunity to take advanced courses in science, technology, engineering, & math. STEP will collaborate with the SISDA Charter School to offer students that qualify the opportunity to participate in the program giving students exposure to the college experience & motivating them to continue with their post-secondary school studies.

4. Hostos Liberty Partnership Program, Division of Continuing Education & Workforce Development" will provide our students with the opportunity to participate in after school, weekend and summer programs which will assist our students in developing their academic skills and to introduce them to a college environment, thereby strengthening our college ready mission. They will also provide the following: support in the implementation of our performing arts music program by providing guest musicians to work with our students; internships for qualifying students; mentoring; opportunities for students to take Liberty Partnerships courses such as Music, Digital Media, Empowering Young Ladies/Young Men.

4. The Frederick A.O. Schwarz Children’s Center at the Museum of the City of New York (MCNY) offers programs designed to provide students and teachers with a rich historical perspective of New York City’s history and their place in it. Our teachers will participate in professional development events focused on aligning curriculum & instructional priorities with Common Core State Standards. Students will participate in a rich array of classes held at MCNY. They will also provide field trips in alignment with the curriculum for our students.

5. Lehman College will provide our academically ready, socially responsible seniors with the opportunity to enroll in courses for college credit. Together we will establish a service program that aids Lehman students in volunteering, providing mentoring & tutoring support to our students. Lehman will provide our students with free tickets to Lehman College performances and our teachers with master classes with professional theatre & dance artists to support their ability to oversee our school’s performing arts program.

6. Unitas is a community mental health organization dedicated to preventing & treating a wide range of emotional, behavioral & social problems of youth through family, school & peer interventions and by creating networks of mutual aid between older & younger youth. Unitas will enrich the social-emotional development of our students, enabling them to achieve academic success by providing effective mentoring and advisory support services.

7. Med-Alliance Medical Health Services will offer our students workshops on health & wellness as well as internships for qualifying students providing them with an exposure to career options with the medical health services.

e. Proposed school mission: The SISDA Charter School for Performing Arts, College and Career Readiness is dedicated to improving the future of the South Bronx & neighboring communities by providing quality education that effectively prepares students for college & career readiness, in particular the underserved student populations in our community, Title I, ELL, students with disabilities, and at risk students.. Our School will impart the core values of empathy, civic responsibility, & self-confidence. These values partnered with supportive teachers, high expectations & collaboration among all constituencies, will ensure that our students achieve academic success as measured by common core standards and the State standardized exams, becoming lifelong learners who effect positive change in their community.

f. School overview: Our school’s educational model is built on the belief that parents, teachers, administrators, & community members can work collaboratively to make a great school. Student success is based on the instructional effectiveness of the classroom teacher, and inclusive classrooms that will best engage & inspire children to learn. To foster such classrooms, all teachers will be state certified and classes will be capped at 24 students. Each class will have a certified teacher as well as a trained teacher assistant. We understand that many incoming students are from failing district schools and will need remediation in literacy & mathematics; however we recognize that our model of data-driven differentiation of instruction along with our supplementary instruction provided by an extended day and school year will allow us to prepare these students for high school, college and career readiness. We will provide for greater staff to pupil interaction by having a teacher and a teacher assistant in every class. All teachers will become teachers of literacy, addressing common core literacy standards in each of their respective content areas. Technology will be integrated into every classroom through the use of tablets for all students to use for research, PBL, and E- books to help engage students. Embedded in all instructional practices will be Project-Based Learning (PBL) aligned with Common Core State Standards & our data-driven, differentiated instruction.

Our performing arts focus on music (band & chorus), dance, & drama motivates students by giving them an avenue of expression. Our founding members have experience in successfully using this theme as a vehicle to develop students' reading, writing, speaking, & listening skills. Student performances contribute to our school's team spirit in addition to improving students' self-confidence. Our PBL is implemented across the curriculum and motivates students as they design their own in-depth research project. PBL furthers students' literacy & technology skills while providing opportunities to differentiate instruction based on student needs & interests.

Our teachers & counselors will receive individualized comprehensive, intensive and on going professional development (PD), prior to the start of each school year and throughout the year based on ongoing student data analysis, informal and formal observation of teaching practice and teacher PD survey requests. P.D. in many schools becomes a one shot presentation with no follow up and structured evaluation of its' effectiveness. Teachers will be provided with feedback and the necessary support they need to improve their teaching practice.

Student achievement outcomes will increase with a combination of rigorous academic coursework, data driven instruction and various support services. On going periodic assessment will drive instruction as well as keeping us informed of student progress. Danielson's *Teaching Framework*, J. Saphier's *The Skillful Teacher*, V. Bernhardt's *Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement & Measuring School Processes*, H. Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Education and Writing Objectives using Bloom's Taxonomy, and G. Wiggins & J. McTighe's *Understanding By Design* will underpin all professional development. An emphasis on teamwork will ensure the planning and implementation of a coherent and seamless curriculum across the school's grades. In our middle school students will loop with their teachers. Collaborative planning will also ensure that teachers share best practices on supporting all students as they work to reach the high expectations that we set, master the skills and content needed to perform successfully on summative state examinations, and cultivate the requisite skills for success in post-secondary school and careers. To better meet individual needs & interests, each student will collaboratively design their own short & long- term learning goals with their parents & teachers at our initial intake meetings; these goals will be placed in each student's individual Student Success Plan (SSP). During goal planning sessions, students will be encouraged to take Enrichment, Honors, & Advanced Placement courses that help them best achieve their goals in addition to fulfilling graduation requirements. Our College and Career Readiness Curriculum will help inform students as they formulate their personal long-term goals. We will develop a college and career readiness curriculum using the NYC DOE college and career readiness curriculum and the Naviance college and career readiness curriculum. Components of SISDA's Summer Youth Employment program resources will also be incorporated. SSPs & periodic assessments, both school-developed & commercial (e.g. Scantron), will be reviewed by teachers during common planning periods to gauge student progress & drive differentiated instruction. Advisory Periods partner a small group of students with a teacher (maximum ratio 12:1) who fosters character development & team building, helping each student realize that s/he is an integral part of our school & community. Advisors personally mentor students, address their social-emotional needs, & discuss their SSP & PBL projects. Our uniform policy helps students dress for success and creates a positive atmosphere conducive to learning. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports & Life Space Crisis Intervention will be implemented to enhance our school's culture & climate. These programs work particularly well with our priority special needs students. Students have the opportunity to complete preparation for the Internet and Computer Core Certification Exam. We will utilize

sheltered instruction & intensive ESL in small groups for our ELL students. Direct teacher instruction and before- & after- school sessions, Saturday programs, & push-in/pull-out services will be provided. SpEd students will receive their mandated services of their IEP and be placed in the least restrictive environment. There will be a focus on health & wellness for students & parents. To support learning outside school day hours, SISDA will provide remedial & enrichment services at the school site afterschool, on weekends, and during holiday & summer academies. A comprehensive annual school plan will be developed in alignment with our charter and student needs. This plan will be evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the school year and will guide the implementation & evaluation of all programs.

g. Target Population/Community Served: Our targeted population will be primarily students who are Title I, ELL, students with disabilities and at risk students within districts 8, 9 & 12. These school districts have substantial numbers of those underserved targeted populations.

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.

To recruit Title 1 students SISDA will leverage its fifty year reputation for servicing families living in poverty and distribute our school's brochure in both English & Spanish; advertise in their newsletters and they will post fliers in their storefront which serves as notices of all SISDA events. We have started a Face Book Page and will use Social Media as an advertising agent. We will be distributing all advertisements for the school in both English and Spanish. Meeting with the New York City Housing Authority Tenants Associations and advertising in both languages in their NYCHA Tenants association Newsletter and then placing and posting fliers in the lobbies of their housing projects. SISDA has partnered with SEBCO, a nonprofit housing agency for low-income tenants. Brochures in both languages advertising the school will be posted and distributed in their lobbies. We will visit both NYCDOE and Charter School Middle school recruitment fairs whose feeder schools meet the targeted Title 1, SpEd and Ell populations we are targeting. SISDA & Unitas service the Spanish immigrant population in our proposed targeted districts and have agreed to publicize our school. We have addressed in both languages C.E.C 8,9 & 12 and many PTAs informing them of our school's mission and vision that have an abundance of students that meet the targeted population of the NYSEDOSO RFP. We have met with special education attorneys, the committee on Special Education, managers of nonprofit medical facilities, faith based groups, civic, social, business, and political organizations and they have agreed to place and post our fliers as well as offer us the opportunity to speak at their events. We will continue to do presentations for PTAs, CBOs and other community organizations for enrollment of our priority targeted student populations.

To retain students, we will have innovative and motivating instructional approaches to improve student outcomes, through the use of technologies (including blended instructional programs) which will include teaching literacy through the performing arts theme where students can celebrate their talent in art, music, dance, band, chorus and photography including talent shows followed by student academic and attendance awards celebrations. We will leverage SISDA's after school program for additional academic support for our students. We will also use PBL a motivational instructional process where students are allowed to make some choices about the products to be created, how they work, and how they use their time, guided by the teacher. Parents will be in a meaningful partnership with the school, affording them the opportunity to participate in writing the Annual School Plan, which will focus on specific objectives leading to continuous school improvement. There will be a parent representative on the Board of Trustees. An Advisory program will be scheduled during homeroom period where implementation of the

Individualized Student Success Plan will be reviewed and followed. This Student Success Plan will be crafted during a mandatory parent intake meeting where the parent describes the child's strengths and weaknesses and any other pertinent information regarding their child. Town Hall Assemblies celebrating student efforts & achievements will take place on an on- going basis. The implementation of PBIS and LSCI will also be an asset in retaining special needs students. The above mentioned strategies will culminate in the formation of a "Team Ego", critical to the collaboration needed for a successful school leading to increased student achievement. A Staff member will be designated for student recruitment, student retention and parental outreach to assist in implementing the strategies for the student recruitment and retention component of our annual comprehensive action plan.

III. Public Outreach & Community Support:

We have met with elected officials, community, business, civic, religious leaders, health service providers, C.B.s, CECs, CBOs, CSEs P.T.A.s, attorneys, social workers, and non-profit organizations. We have obtained letters of support from: Senator Diaz, Senator Klein, Assemblyman Crespo, New York City Hispanic Clergy Association, SISDA, Hostos, MCNY, & Lehman. During CEC 8, 9 & 12 meetings we addressed and surveyed committee members and attendees, noting their concerns and ultimately receiving support for our school. We have over 500 signatures supporting our school and survey evidence for the need for our school. Our community & parents agree that a school focused on performing arts and college & career readiness with an emphasis on serving ELLs, SpEd, Title 1 students is needed. SISDA will also assist in reaching out to recruit our primary targeted populations (i.e. Title I, Ell and students with disabilities) by reaching out to the parents and students that they serve in the Beacon and Summer Youth Employment programs. This select group that we are canvassing is nearly 90 percent of our targeted group. UNITAS will also assist in the recruitment of our primary targeted populations, Title I, ELL and students with disabilities. UNITAS serves the families of the South Bronx section that the school is proposed to be located. Their reputation amongst the families and the community at large gives us a tremendous recruitment advantage in making our goal of meeting and exceeding the targeted student populations in the charter school office RFP.

We also invited the community to attend one of two public hearings where our school program was presented and where comments & suggestions from the public was welcomed, discussed, and included in our proposal. Refreshments were served. Our first public hearing was held on March 19th at I.S. 217, located in district 12 at 977 Fox Street, Bronx, NY 10459. Our second public hearing occurred on March 25th at 997 E. 163 Street, Bronx, NY 10459 in Community District 8, where our proposed school will be located. We discussed valuable ideas for helping us create a school that best serves our future students, their families, and the community at large. We placed a half page ad in Spanish and English in the Bronx Times a weekly paper that serves our targeted community that advertised these public hearings.


Stuart Austein,
Board of Trustees Chairman


Frank Steele,
Applicant Group Member

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
Margari ta Smith	[REDACTED]	Executive Director SISDA CB(
Carmen Judith Taveras	[REDACTED]	Home Maker
Stuart Austein	[REDACTED]	DOE Guidance Counselor

Errik Arroyo	[REDACTED]	
Leini Peña	[REDACTED]	School Teacher
Louis R. Corominas	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant
John P. Musico	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant

Robert Restivo		Educational Consultant
Frank Steele		Educational Consultant

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 No Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)
<p>Margarita Smith is co-founder & Director of the Simpson Street Development Association, Inc. (SISDA), a community-based organization providing educational, employment, & ESL programs to predominantly Spanish-speaking immigrant families & students of the South Bronx since 1964. She successfully established SISDA's Beacon, Out-of-school Time, & Summer Youth Employment Programs, which target Title 1, ELL, SpEd, & over-age, under-credited</p>	Trustee	Board Co-Chair
<p>Carmen Judith Taveras is an education advisor to the Bronx Borough President with 20 years distinguished service on NYC education boards & councils who will leverage her position to advertise our mission to bring quality education to the Bronx & neighboring communities. Former PTA President of 12X116 & Community School District 12 School Board member, she is a dedicated community leader & advocate for children & families who will facilitate the sharing of our best practices with local failing</p>	Trustee	Chair, Community Relations Committee
<p>Stuart Austein has been a DOE guidance counselor for 15 years & was named 2009-2010 DOE Guidance Counselor of the Year. His work in Title 1 schools on youth development focuses on SpEd & over-age, under-credited students. As a Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports Coordinator certified in Life Space Crisis Intervention, he will inform the Board on continuous student behavior monitoring; data-driven decisions; & regular, universal</p>	Trustee	Board Chair

<p>Erik Arroyo is former Vice President of Banco Popular in Manhattan. He is a proven money manager, knowledgeable in sound financial & accounting practices, and is a seasoned fundraiser. Currently he is a real estate manager and mortgage specialist in commercial and retail space. He will advise the Board on securing and negotiating sufficient space for the school as well as well as overseeing finances & fundrasing for the</p>	<p>Trustee</p>	<p>Chair, Finance Committee</p>
<p>Leini Peña has a Master of Science in Education, dual NYSED certification in Early Childhood Education (Birth- Grade 2) and Students with Disabilities (Birth- Grade 2), Florida Department of Education certification in Exceptional Student Education (Grades K-12), and bilingual teaching experience. Having worked with each of the target student populations that our Charter School seeks to recruit and retain, she will advise the Board on continuous school improvement. She will advise on both faculty and student recruitment & retention. She is dedicated to serving students and their families in the community in which she lives</p>	<p>Trustee</p>	<p>Chair, Education Committee</p>
<p>Louis R. Corominas is a successful DOE educator with 35 years of experience, 17 as a middle school principal in the South Bronx. As principal, he aided the successful incubation of three charter schools of distinction. A recipient of a DOE Region 2 grant, he piloted a program to improve credit recovery & serve the over-age, under-</p>	<p>No Continuing Role</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>John P. Musico served the DOE for 36 years, including 7 years as Senior Superintendent of DOE schools. Additionally, he was Superintendent of Middle School Reform and Promotional Policy. He will advise the Board of Trustees on recruiting, serving, & retaining Title 1, ELL, SpEd, & over-age, under-credited</p>	<p>No Continuing Role</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p>Robert Restivo served 30 years in DOE's human resources & personnel administration where he focused on aligning human resources to student achievement & instruction. Having worked exclusively in Title 1 Districts with SpEd & ELL students and achieved over a 90% teacher retention rate, he will guide the board on ELL & Special Education teacher recruitment & retention policies. He will leverage his personal relationships with local college & university education departments to identify quality</p>	<p>No Continuing Role</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Frank Steele's 34 years of distinguished service in the DOE was spent exclusively in Title I schools, where he served as Assistant Principal in Brooklyn & South Bronx middle schools and was a Principal of a 6-12 grade charter school. As Supervisor for the Office of School and Youth Development's Alternate Learning Center he professionally developed teachers of SpEd, ELL, & over-age,</p>	<p>No Continuing Role</p>	<p>N/A</p>

LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
3 years	yes
3 years	yes
3 years	yes

3 years	yes
3 years	yes
N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A

N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A