

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created 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	Brooklyn Laboratory Charter High School
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	9-12
Number of Students During Initial Term	822

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	Kevin Heffel	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Public/Media Contact Person	Erin Mote	347-593-8369	erin@innovateedunyc.org

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

<http://www.brooklynlabhighschool.org>

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
Partner Organization 2

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 several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

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.

Brooklyn Laboratory Charter High School

www.brooklynlabhighschool.org

I. APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION

a. Applicant Group: The applicant group for Brooklyn Laboratory Charter High School comprises leaders in urban education with deep experience: (i) designing and governing schools to meet the learning needs and raise the achievement the highest-need students and students at-risk of academic failure; (ii) improving productivity and results through technology and personalization of learning; (iii) using assessment data to serve, inform, and enhance teaching and learning; and (iv) managing complex public organizations. **See Table 1 for details.**

b. Current or Proposed Roles of Applicant Group: See Table 1 for details.

c. Public Contact: Erin E. Mote, (347) 593-8369, erin@innovateedunyc.org

d. Application History: The Trustees of Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School, a middle school serving grades 6-8 in downtown Brooklyn, applied for and successfully received a charter from the NYSED Board of Regents to open in the 2014-15 school year. Erin Mote was part of the applicant group. This application is for a separate high school with an independent Board.

II. PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

a. Proposed School Name: Brooklyn Laboratory Charter High School (LAB HS).

b. Proposed School Location: The proposed location is NYC Community School District (CSD) 13. LAB HS will submit a request to NYCDOE's Office of Portfolio for co-location.

c. Planned grades/enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term

Grades	Ages	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
9 th	14-15	117	132	230	230	230
10 th	15-16		117	132	230	230
11 th	16-17			117	132	230
12 th	17-18				117	132
Ungraded		0	0	0	0	0
Totals		117	249	479	709	822

d. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s): Not Applicable.

e. Proposed School Mission: The mission of Brooklyn Laboratory Charter High School (LAB HS) is to prepare 9th-12th grade students with the academic foundation, digital literacy, and leadership skills necessary to excel in college and professional life while they grow as ethical leaders. LAB HS is dedicated to serving the highest need students of Brooklyn regardless of academic level, English language proficiency, or disability.

f. School Overview: LAB HS will couple a culture of high expectations with an innovative competency-based, Common Core-aligned, Next Generation learning model designed to drastically improve scholar academic success. It will establish an environment conducive to intellectual curiosity and competence by:

- Privileging research- and evidence-based writing and close reading of foundational works of literature, poetry, philosophy, history, economics, mathematics, and science;
- Developing in students mathematical understanding, computational thinking, and the ability to apply these skills to solve problems in everyday life, college, and the workplace;

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- Ensuring every graduate is prepared for, and admitted to, a selective four-year college;
- Putting every graduate on a pathway to career success through an innovative experiential internship program in grades 11 and 12;
- Inspiring scholars to take responsibility for, and joy in, their own education;
- Facilitating entrepreneurial learning, cultivating dispositions for life-long learning; and
- Fostering leadership, a commitment to social justice, and compassion.

LAB HS's academic approach will ensure that all of our scholars graduate from high school having mastered New York State Learning Standards, and that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and careers of their choosing. LAB HS cultivates these skills through the following approaches:

- **Entrepreneurial learning:** LAB HS's goal is to cultivate entrepreneurial learners. Schools must prepare 9th graders to succeed in jobs and industries we can hardly imagine: the exponential rate of digital innovation is rapidly reordering the contours of both knowledge and work. In his book, *Too Big to Know*, Harvard's David Weinberg argues that we are moving from a world where knowledge meant facts from books and experts to a world of ubiquitous free information. In this era, John Seely Brown argues that "good questions are more important than answers."¹ Thus, students must learn to craft meaningful questions and assess the quality, sufficiency, and relevance of claims and evidence. LAB HS will offer experiences that foster interest-driven learning and instill in students a sense of awe and curiosity in the face of challenges. Working alongside industry and entrepreneurs, LAB HS gives scholars opportunities to explore new challenges and learn from others.²
- **Culture of high expectations:** At LAB HS, we believe that every student is capable of graduating from high school and achieving college and career success. LAB HS upholds uncompromising standards for attendance, homework and course work, behavior, and participation to prepare each scholar for post-secondary success. We encourage students to discover success through focusing on mastery of Common Core standards and we expect all LAB HS students to complete a Regents diploma.
- **Effective instruction:** Research shows that effective instruction is the most cost-effective investment schools can make.³ LAB HS will recruit, train, and support highly skilled teachers who can transform our students' lives and infuse joy and rigor into every lesson. Individualized professional development amplifies teachers' strengths and cultivates talent that serves school and scholar needs. Academic leadership is cultivated internally.
- **Rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum:** LAB HS will offer a college-preparatory program of study in mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies that fosters the desire and capacity to learn independently, think critically, and communicate proficiently. LAB HS's curriculum privileges the Common Core.
- **Focus on college-level reading and writing:** Literacy is the cornerstone academic skill upon which all future skill and knowledge acquisition rests. LAB HS devotes hours every day to targeted college level literacy and writing instruction to ensure that scholars can read with comprehension and insight to analyze and effectively respond to texts across disciplines.
- **Ensuring a pathway to college completion:** LAB HS will partner with a college, ideally one of the many colleges located within the Brooklyn Tech Triangle, to allow for LAB HS

¹ Brown, J. S. (2012). Learning in and for the 21st Century. *CJ Koh Professorial Lecture Series No. 4*. Lecture conducted from National Institute of Education Singapore, Singapore. <http://www.johnseelybrown.com/CJKoh.pdf>

² IES. (2007). Organizing instruction and study to improve student learning: A practice guide. NCER 2007-2004, U.S. Department of Education. Heppen, J. B., Walters, K., Clements, M., Faria, A., Tobey, C., Sorensen, N., & Culp, K. (2012). *Access to Algebra I: The effects of online mathematics for grade 8 students* (NCEE 2012-4021). Washington, DC: IES.

³ Hanushek, E. A. (2011). The economic value of higher teacher quality. *Economics of Education Review*, 55, 466-479.

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classes in the 11th and 12th grades to be eligible for some portion of college credit, with the goal of drastically reducing the cost and effort of transitioning to college for our scholars.

- **Mastery-based progression:** LAB HS provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate evidence of mastery through assessments embedded in learning experiences. Scholars can accelerate or recuperate skills and dispositions based on demonstration of their levels of mastery. Through hard work they can produce evidence of mastery and competence.
- **Experiential learning through internships:** LAB HS will provide students in the 11th and 12th grades with opportunities to participate in internships with local companies, organizations, and colleges within the Brooklyn Tech Triangle to maximize career readiness and further entrepreneurial learning.
- **Extended personalized learning time:** LAB HS leverages high-dosage peer to peer and small group tutoring with blended instruction via Cortex, a proprietary learning management system and formative assessment engine that generates Personal Learning Plans, to extend the school day, week, and year, and ultimately deliver breakthroughs in learning.
- **Data-driven instruction:** LAB HS embraces continuous, data-driven improvement in all aspects of the school, from lesson planning, to professional development, to curriculum. Our faculty and staff are united by a relentless improvement ethic and employ varied, real-time diagnostic data to serve and inform practice, and improve academic outcomes.
- **Next Generation learning and assessment:** Teachers use digital courseware and real-time diagnostic assessments to improve lessons and enhance small group tutoring sessions through Cortex. The school aims to match learning modality and focus with student strengths and to use assessment to serve, inform, and enhance teaching and learning.
- **Family partnership:** Our scholars' families are critical to their success and ours. LAB HS will continuously communicate with families about the academic and behavioral progress of students, as well as create robust opportunities for families to engage with the school including regularly scheduled family nights and a parent leadership council.
- **Continual improvement and operational excellence:** LAB HS regularly reviews and iterates upon operational systems and approaches. It privileges the purposeful use of time, talent, and technology to optimize effectiveness of teaching and learning.

g. Target Population and Community to be Served: LAB HS seeks to serve the highest need students in CSD 13. CSD 13 is in northern Brooklyn and includes Downtown Brooklyn, Bedford Stuyvesant, Clinton Hill, Fort Greene, and Prospect Heights. CSD 13 lacks sufficient high-performing high school options for its students. We aim to recruit a student body into the admissions lottery that reflects CSD 13's diverse population. Of the 22,000 K-12 students enrolled in CSD 13 in 2013-2014, 52% are Black, 19% are Asian, 16% are Hispanic, and 11% are White.⁴ 71% of students in CSD 13 are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.⁵ 23% of high school students in CSD 13 did not graduate within four years.⁶ In 2013-14 the graduation rate of economically disadvantaged students in CSD 13 was 75%, and only 64% and 68% respectively for Latino and Black students. Only 36% of students with disabilities graduated – which remains below the statewide average.⁷

h. Replication of high quality school models: Not Applicable.

⁴ University of the State of New York. (2014). The New York State report card 2012-13: NYC GEOG DIST #13 – Brooklyn, 2-3.

⁵ University of the State of New York. (2014). The New York State report card 2012-13: NYC GEOG DIST #13 – Brooklyn.

⁶ University of the State of New York. (2014). The New York State Accountability Report 2012-13: NYC GEOG DIST #13 – Brooklyn, 20.

⁷ University of the State of New York. (2013). The New York State Accountability Report 2011-12: NYC GEOG DIST #13 – Brooklyn, 19.

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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

LAB HS has undertaken and will continue to conduct public outreach and student recruitment activities to reach our enrollment goals of serving the highest need students in CSD 13. Our ongoing recruitment and outreach will include visiting local middle schools, after-school programs, and youth centers; organizing open houses and information sessions at feeder middle schools, the Boys and Girls Club, the Brooklyn Public Library, the YMCA, health centers, new immigrant centers, and other local non-profits; canvassing door-to-door to further reach interested families and leave materials; reaching out to counselors, social workers, parents, and special education coordinators at public schools within CSDs 13, 14, and 16; posting flyers and notices in supermarkets, churches, community centers, health centers, school guidance counselors' offices, and apartment complexes; and utilizing web media to advertise LAB HS and its programs. Our expectation is that current middle school students at Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School, a middle school in downtown Brooklyn, will apply in large numbers to LAB HS.

LAB HS actively recruits students who are often least well-served by traditional middle schools. Our community outreach strategy and practice emphasizes that LAB HS's high-dosage tutoring program and experiential internship program are designed to serve English Language Learners (ELLs), students with special needs, and low-income, high need students particularly well. Our applicant group has experience in recruiting and retaining high need students. Looking at data from other charter schools in the area, we expect a significant proportion of our students to enter 9th grade one or more years behind grade level.

LAB HS is intent on recruiting an equal or higher proportion of ELLs and students with disabilities than CSD 13, such that they each constitute 20% of lottery applicants. To recruit ELLs and students with disabilities, LAB HS will conduct outreach to special education and ELL coordinators at all district schools in CSD 13; recruit families with ELL students or students with disabilities on charter waitlists; assign extra staff time to recruit special education and ELL students; recruit students from local houses of worship for non/limited-English speaking families; reach out through special education advocates, ELL advocates, therapists, immigrant centers, and other social service providers; and emphasize that we work with *all* students regardless of their previous academic achievement. LAB HS will provide translation services for promotional materials and person-to-person interactions.

LAB HS is focused on maximizing the number of students who successfully complete all school requirements and on preventing students from dropping out. LAB HS is designed to serve and retain students at risk of academic failure. From our staffing model, to our classroom routines, to our consistently high standards, LAB HS will ensure that all students succeed, regardless of academic level, special educational needs, or English language proficiency. LAB HS's academic plan involves high-dosage tutoring and peer to peer tutoring, which are proven effective for low-income students.⁸ This model ensures that all students receive adequate attention and support. Our mentorship program with volunteers, and internship program with local companies will also provide the experience and the social and emotional support necessary for our scholars to matriculate to college and succeed in careers of their choosing. LAB HS's focus on frequent assessment and continual data-driven improvements ensure that teachers, tutors, and administrators are providing the best possible curriculum and learning environment for our scholars, so that each and every one of them will succeed.

⁸ Fryer, R.G. (2012). Learning from the successes and failures of charter schools. *The Hamilton Project*. Brookings.

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IV. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

a. Public Outreach Conducted to Date: LAB HS has conducted extensive public outreach to families in CSD 13 to solicit community input regarding the proposed LAB HS to serve grades 9 through 12. Parents express desire for more choice in Brooklyn high school options, particularly with a focus on college preparation and STEM education. Parents' concerns and desire for more school options were echoed in our open houses, the news media and advocacy groups, family events and projects at area schools that the applicant group have worked with, and meetings with principals and parent coordinators at elementary and middle schools in CSD 13.

We have widened our distribution of information by creating an interactive website with a contact form and mailing list sign up. Our active Twitter and Facebook pages have also helped us reach a broad audience. We have also done informational outreach by distributing flyers and brochures while speaking with families at the Ingersoll, Whitman, Farragut, Lafayette, and Bushwick public housing communities and at over 40 nearby community sites. LAB HS will hold regular open houses to provide interested families information about the school. Our meetings and outreach to community partners—Brooklyn Public Library, YMCA, local churches, and NYU-Poly—have helped with recruitment and forged partnerships for curriculum refinement and student enrichment.

b. Initial Assessment of Sufficient Interest:

After conversations and meetings with families of local elementary and middle school students, organization partners, and elected officials, we have determined that there is overwhelming demand for a college preparatory high school in downtown Brooklyn that supports high need CSD 13 students. The growth of residential development in downtown Brooklyn is increasing this demand exponentially. According to a recent report, nearly 6,000 apartments have been built in downtown Brooklyn since 2005. More than 4,000 are currently under construction and 8,000 are in the pipeline.⁹ This enormous growth of residential units has created increased demand for high school seats as well as led to overcrowding in district elementary and middle schools. Demonstrating an example of the interest in and demand for school seats in the neighborhood, in its inaugural year, Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School, a downtown Brooklyn middle school with which this applicant group has worked, met its 6th grade enrollment targets and has received over 1000 applications for 117 6th grade seats for the 2015-16 school year. We anticipate that many scholars who attend middle school at Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School will apply to LAB HS for 9th grade, given its close proximity and similar academic model. As of May 2013, 50,400 New York City families were on charter school waiting lists, including over 15,000 applicants in Brooklyn.¹⁰ Currently, the only charter high schools in the area are Urban Dove High School, whose school model privileges a student athlete philosophy, and New Dawn Charter School, a transfer school in Gowanus.

V. PROPOSED BOARD CHAIR SIGNATURE AND DATE



Kevin Heffel

2/9/2015

Date

⁹ <http://commercialobserver.com/2015/02/36-projects-in-the-pipeline-in-downtown-brooklyn-report/>

¹⁰ New York City Charter Center. (2013). New York City charter schools: 2012-2013 Enrollment lottery trends.

TABLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION							
*Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees							
NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	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)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Erin Mote	[REDACTED]	Executive Director, InnovateEDU	Lead applicant; organizational and fiscal planning and management; next generation learning expert; technology expert	Employee	None	N/A	No
Darnell Thomas	[REDACTED]	Master Teacher, Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School	School culture and climate; curriculum and instruction; professional development	Employee	None	N/A	No
Shaka Phillips	[REDACTED]	Dean of Culture, Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School	Special student populations; discipline; culture; assessment	Employee	None	N/A	No
Risa DeSilva	[REDACTED]	Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Brooklyn Laboratory Charter School	Curriculum and instruction; academic performance; teacher coaching	Employee	None	N/A	No
Sanda Balaban	[REDACTED]	Founder, Future of Learning and Innovative Programs Consulting	Future of learning; high school design; philanthropy; partnerships; curriculum design; racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students	Trustee	Trustee	1	Yes
Jeff Wetzler	[REDACTED]	EVP, Strategy, Innovation, and Organizational Development at Teach For America	Teacher recruitment and training; high quality assessments; instructional improvement systems; leadership techniques; CSD relationships; improving productivity through innovative use of technology	Trustee	Trustee	2	Yes

