

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created Monday, February 09, 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 Lawrence Charter School
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	Burton Sacks	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Public/Media Contact Person	Ronald Woo	646-734-3133	education_law@yahoo.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).

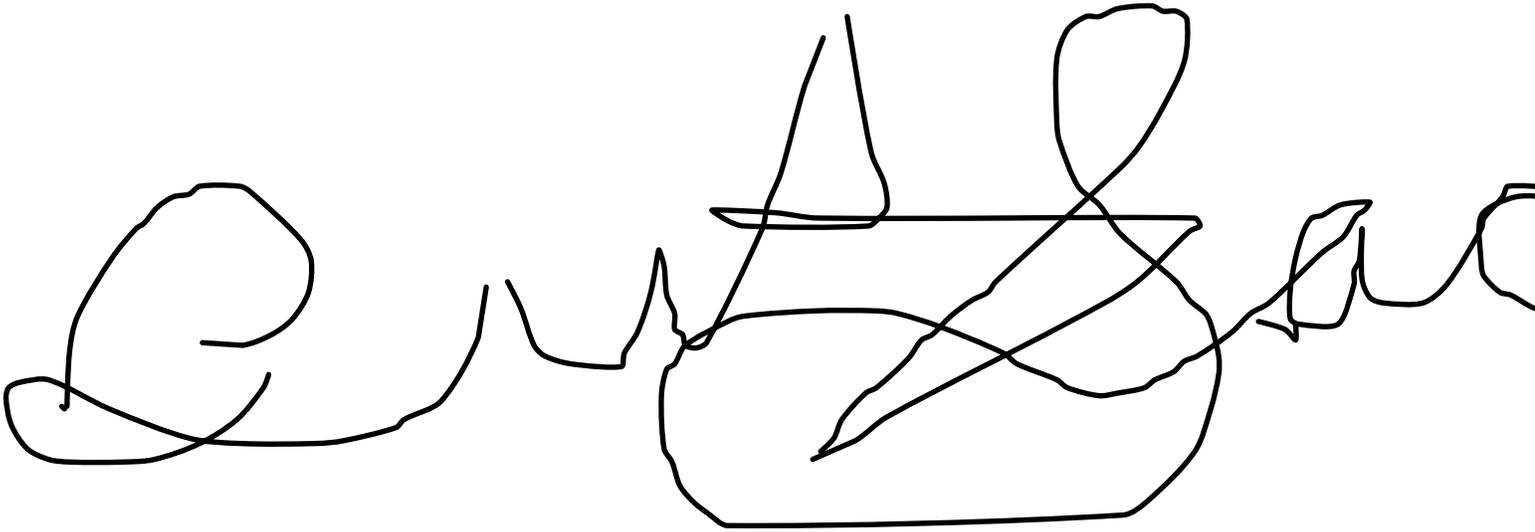
Proposed Management Company
Partner Organization 1

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, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke, written across the page.

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

2015/02/09

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

LETTER OF INTENT FOR THE LAWRENCE CHARTER SCHOOL
February 10, 2015

I. Applicant Group Information

- ab. See attached Table 1.
- c. **Public contact:** Ronald Woo, 646-734-3133, education_law@yahoo.com.
- d. **Application history:** On August 12, 2014, many members of the application group submitted a proposal for the New American Leadership Academy Charter School to be located in Lawrence, New York. Applicants participated in the capacity interview and subsequently withdrew the application. While many of the same individuals are members of this application group, the proposed school's organization and curriculum are significantly different and take into account NY SED comments on the earlier application.

Attachment 5: New Applicant and Prospective School Trustee Background Information Sheet and Signed Assurance Statement: See attached forms for all proposed trustees.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

- a. **Proposed school name:** The Lawrence Charter School
- b. **Proposed school location:** Lawrence Union Free School District. The applicant group will requested that the school be sited in school district facilities subsequent to an invitation to submit a full application.
- c. **Planned grades and enrollment for each year of the 5-year charter school term:**

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Year 1: 16-17</i>	<i>Year 2: 17-18</i>	<i>Year 3: 18-19</i>	<i>Year 4: 19-20</i>	<i>Year 5: 20-21</i>
K	60	60	60	60	60
1	60	60	60	60	60
2		60	60	60	60
3			60	60	60
4				60	60
5					60
<i>Total</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>240</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>360</i>

- d. **Proposed management and/or partner organization:** Not applicable.
- e. **Proposed school mission:** The Lawrence Charter School prepares students for academic, personal, and civic success in a safe and nurturing environment. As a Core Knowledge school, we set challenging academic standards, establish a culture of high expectations, and develop the whole child through emphasis on knowledge and skills acquisition, hands-on learning, critical thinking, and preparation for college and career.
- f. **School overview:** We will implement a locally developed model integrating selected effective charter school practices that address the needs and concerns of the local community (see Section IV). The planning group reviewed research on effective charter schools and identified the highest performing charter schools in New York State (based on percent proficient in English Language Arts and mathematics on New York State 2014 test results) and codified their practices. Approaches were selected based on community preferences and coherence of overall school design.

Organizational Structure. The school will offer an extended school day beginning at approximately 7:30 AM and continuing until approximately 4:00 PM. An additional four to six days of instruction will extend the school year. Tutoring will be provided on weekends for students in need of additional assistance. Class size will average 15 students to a teacher for the core academic subjects of reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Looping, over two years, may be implemented based on feedback from parents.

Culture of High Expectations and Respect. A hallmark of many successful charter schools is a culture of success and respect—one in which students are expected to succeed, are supported by faculty and parents, are taught to persevere, are rewarded for success, and are respected as individuals. Curriculum will be challenging; for example, the school will adopt the Core Knowledge curriculum. Communication between school and home will be frequent, with an open-door policy for parents to visit children’s classrooms. Faculty will be expected to demonstrate progress in student learning through informal assessments, child study groups, and periodic assessments. Parents will be expected to support learning at home. Student, parent, and faculty successes will be rewarded. The school will design and implement a clear discipline policy with defined consequences tempered by understanding that each child and family is unique. A dress code will be established. The faculty will be held accountable by the school leader, and the school leader will be held accountable by the Board of Trustees and community.

Curriculum. For language arts, the school will adopt the Core Knowledge Curriculum disseminated by the Core Knowledge Foundation. Offering an extended literacy period (120 minutes/day through grade 2 and 150 minutes a day for grades 3-5), the program is consistent with the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and provides a structured framework and materials for developing decoding and comprehension capacity. Each classroom will have a library of fiction and nonfiction grades at multiple reading levels and students will take home books to read/listen to with parents. Extended writing will be part of the school day.

For mathematics, the school will adopt a structured mathematics curriculum consistent with the Common Core State Standards in mathematics. One program under consideration is *Investigations*, a complete K-5 mathematics curriculum, developed at TERC in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It is designed to help all children understand fundamental ideas of number and operations, geometry, data, measurement, and early algebra. For science, the school will adopt a hands-on, experiential curriculum consistent with New York State science standards. One program under consideration is the *Full Option Science System (FOSS)* developed by the Lawrence (California) Hall of Science. For social studies, the school will implement locally developed, project-based curriculum responsive to the *New York K-8 Social Studies Framework* and the *New York State K-12 Social Studies Guide*. Staff will not need to start from scratch. Many grade-appropriate social studies units are available for use/adaptation. Final decisions on curriculum will involve the school leader and staff. Art and physical education will be taught on alternating days. Consistent with the Common Core Curriculum, students will read/listen to/write about challenging nonfiction and fictional texts across content areas.

Assessment. The school will adopt a periodic assessments. One possible combination is *Fountas and Pinnel* for K-2 and the *Acuity Predictive Assessments* (McGraw-Hill) for grades 3-5. These will garner information to adjust instruction, provide feedback to parents, and predict success on state assessments. Classroom based assessments—tests, classroom observations, and student portfolios— will provide day to day feedback.

Professional Development. Professional development will take place each summer and at least once a week during the school day when children are engaged in activities outside the core curriculum. Content will focus on pedagogic knowledge and skills required to successfully implement the school’s design. This will include the school’s mission and its focus on preparation for higher education and work, the school’s curriculum and assessment strategies, and standards for student work. Working with external curriculum consultants will help ensure students’ work is benchmarked to high standards.

Parent Involvement. Based on review of high performing charter schools, the school will welcome parents to visit their children’s classes, provide continuing feedback on children’s progress, and strongly encourage participation by parents in their children’s education by ensuring students are prepared each day for school (for example, follow dress code, arrive at school on time), read to and with their child, reward children at home for their successes, encourage and reward perseverance. Communication with home will be frequent and two seats on the Board of Trustees will reserved for parents of children attending the school. Open houses for parents and prospective parents will be held periodically at a variety of times.

Management Services. We will work with the Charter School Business Management Inc., 237 West 35th St., Suite 301, New York, NY 10001.

- g. **Target population/community served: target population and the community to be served:** The school will be located within the boundaries of the Lawrence Union Free School District in Nassau County, Long Island. The district includes parts of the demographically diverse communities of Inwood, Cedarhurst, Lawrence, Atlantic Beach, and North Woodmere. The district currently has five schools: one primary, three elementary, one middle, and one high school. (One elementary will be leased to an outside organization beginning in fall 2015.) Although the district has a wealth weighing of 3.845—above the state average and one of the highest on Long Island—many public school students are performing poorly, and the district has been identified by the NY State Controller as in significant financial distress. Many families send their children to nonpublic schools, including religious day schools. The demographics of the public school student population differ significantly from the overall school-age population:

	<i>School Age Population (5-17) (2013 Census)</i>	<i>District Public School Population 2013 NYS Report Card</i>
# School-Age Population	7,089	2,834
# /% of 5-17 Population in Poverty/ Economically Disadvantaged Students	842 (12%)	1,658 (59%)

Results of the 2014 New York State assessment program indicate that district students underperform the expectations for a wealthy community, perhaps because 146 of 200

third graders were economically disadvantaged. The following are results for unmatched students taking the grade 3 2014 ELA assessment.

<i>Student Group</i>	<i>Number Tested</i>	<i>Percent Proficient (Levels 3+4)</i>
All students	200	36%
Females	97	41%
Males	103	30%
Black or African American	52	25%
Hispanic or Latino	96	30%
White	42	57%
General Education Students	171	39%
Students with Disabilities	29	10%
Limited English Proficient	32	6%
Economically Disadvantaged	146	30%

The Lawrence Charter School will provide extensive supports for at-risk students (Section III). It is anticipated that the charter schools will reflect the demographics of children currently attending Lawrence public schools. (There is little expectation that students currently attending non-secular nonpublic schools will enroll.)

h. **Replication of High Quality School Models:** Not applicable

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.** Of the students enrolled K-12 in the Lawrence public schools in 2012-13, 43% were Latino, 26% were White, 23% were Black or African American, 6% were Asian, and 2 % were American Indian or multiracial and 59% were economically disadvantaged. To recruit from all these populations, we will use various approaches, in English and translated into Spanish. These include public forums across the various communities; distribution of flyers in person and/or by mail; development of a school website with key facts and FAQs; publicizing of contact information; and presentations to community groups including faith-based institutions, nonprofit organizations and service organizations. Outreach to preschool programs is important since the first two grades served are kindergarten and first grade.

To ensure economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, and special education students are represented in the school population, we will reach out to Head Start programs, special education prekindergarten programs, and nonprofits and faith-based organizations serving and/or located in communities/neighborhoods with significant numbers of lower-income and Latino families. We will highlight components of the school program specifically designed to address individual needs. See below.

Retention is a product of both academic excellence and strong parent outreach. Specific instructional approaches include (1) an enriched curriculum for all students, (2) differentiated instruction by highly qualified teachers, (3) in-class special education instruction and/or supports for students with disabilities consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan by teachers trained in special education, (4) in-class support for English language learners with teachers who speak the student's home language and/or

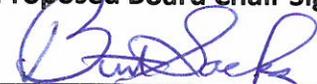
are trained in English as a second language methodology, (5) academic tutorial assistance for struggling English language learners in the home language, (6) additional English as a second language sessions for English language learners, (7) remediation for students who require additional assistance, and (8) curriculum enrichment programs for other students.

Another key component is ongoing and communications with parents, in their home language or preferred mode of communication as appropriate, regarding the progress of their children and the school's programs. Strategies will include an on-staff parent liaison, recruitment of two parents to serve on the Board of Trustees, an open-door policy, periodic parents forums/open houses, and frequent communication between parents and school staff in person and via phone, email, and the Internet.

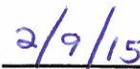
IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

- a. Public outreach began with the 2014 charter application and included meetings with school district and community civic and religious leaders. Feedback was solicited in person, via mail, on Facebook and other social-media sites, and through a specially created website. Highlights of this feedback are discussed below. Outreach for the current proposal has included: (a) presentations and focus groups in English and in Spanish in local faith based institutions and community based organizations, (b) in-person interviews with community leaders, (c) in-person interviews with parents of current Lawrence School District parents in English and in Spanish, (d) telephonic surveys in English and in Spanish, and (e) surveys in English and in Spanish. Outreach is ongoing.
- b. Our initial assessment of parent interest in a kindergarten through grade five charter school was very positive. There was unanimity about the need for a school with extended time, including remediation/tutorial and enrichment programs for all students, a nurturing environment supported by a clearly defined disciplinary code, ongoing and regular communications with parents in their home language or preferred mode of communication regarding their children's performance. Outreach/recruitment continues to be conducted in community based organizations, faith based organizations and establishments frequented by parents of our potential students. For example, we have conducted surveys and interviews, in English and Spanish, with parishioners at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church where more than two-thirds of the congregation is Spanish speaking. We also are reaching out to and recruiting at the local daycare/Head Start program at the Five Towns Community Center in Inwood. The executive director there has also allowed us space at the facility to continue to conduct surveys and interviews. We are casting a wide net to conduct surveys, including local laundromats and supermarkets. Please see attached letter from Dominique Dash for a statement of interest.

V. Proposed Board Chair Signature and Date



Burton Sacks



February 9, 2015

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)
Judith Bergtraum	[REDACTED]	Interim Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning, Construction and Management, The City University of New York	Senior administrator, The City University of New York and New York City; expertise in facilities management, procurement, data management, and education; member, (NYC) Mayor's Panel of Educational Policy; President, NYC Community School District 25 School Board and Community Educational Council; teacher of elementary and special education; admitted to NY State Bar.	Trustee	Trustee	tbd	Yes
Margaret Foley	[REDACTED]	Senior US Program Officer, US Probation Office, Brooklyn; Adjunct Instructor, St. Francis College	Senior probation officer and drug and alcohol treatment specialist, US Probation Office, Brooklyn; instructor, St. John's University; professional diploma in educational administration; master's degree in social work; community member	Trustee	Trustee	tbd	
Evelyn Gargano	[REDACTED]	Community Member; former options Floor Market Manager, Intercontinental Exchange, New York Board of Trade	Derivatives trader for more than 23 years; board member, Atlantic Beach Estates Civic Association, community member; community outreach	Trustee	Constituent Representative	tbd	Yes
Ellen Robbins	[REDACTED]	Retired; former Unit Coordinator and Job Coach at Brooklyn School for Career Development/Transition Site	Special education teacher for 25 years; early childhood teacher for 4 years; coordinator of school PTA, parent and grandparent; community member	Trustee	Trustee	tbd	Yes

Burton Sacks		Deputy Chief Operating Officer, The City University of New York	Senior administrator, NYC Department of Education, United Federation of Teachers, and The City University of New York; expertise in community school district affairs, funded programs, intergovernmental relations; elementary school teacher and guidance counselor; community member; community outreach	Trustee	Chair	tbd	Yes
Ronald Woo		New York University	Senior educational leadership positions at The City University of New York, NYU, NYC Department of Education; expertise in bilingual and special education, teacher preparation, court-ordered mandates and agreements, integrated services to schools, recruitment, and equal opportunities for students and staff; admitted to the NYS Bar.	Trustee	Trustee	tbd	