



# PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Last updated: 06/23/2015

## Basic Contact and Application Information

### 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	JABEA Boys Academy Charter School
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	7-11
Number of Students During Initial Term	600

### **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	Hoffman Moka Lantum	585-820-6403	<a href="mailto:talk2moka@gmail.com">talk2moka@gmail.com</a>
Public/Media Contact Person	Hoffman Moka Lantum	585-820-6403	<a href="mailto:talk2moka@gmail.com">talk2moka@gmail.com</a>

### **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	N/A
Partner Organization 1	N/A
Partner Organization 2	N/A

**Proposed Board Chair Signature**

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



**Date**

2015/06/23

**Thank you for completing this form.**

**LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY  
JABEA Boys Academy Charter School**

**I. APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION**

- a. **Name, Contact Information, & Current Employment:** See Attachments for Table 1.
  - b. **Role; Relevant Experience, Skills, and/or Qualifications:** See Attachments for Table 1.
  - c. **Public Contact:** Hoffman Moka Lantum, Phone: 585-820-6403, EMAIL: [talk2moka@gmail.com](mailto:talk2moka@gmail.com)
  - d. **Application History:** The founders of JABEA Boys Academy Charter School previously submitted a letter of intent to apply to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute for a charter in 2013 under the name JABEA Community Charter School. The group was not invited to apply; the founders decided to reconstitute the initial board and strengthen the school design.
- Required Attachments:** Attachment 5a contains the New Applicant and Prospective School Trustee Background Information forms and supporting documents for the proposed trustees. Also attached is the Signed Statement of Assurance.

**II. PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION**

- a. **Proposed School Name:** JABEA Boys Academy Charter School (“JABEA”)
- b. **Proposed School Location:** JABEA Boys Academy Charter School intends to locate in Rochester, NY.
- c. **Planned Grades & Enrollment:**

GRADE LEVEL	FIRST CHARTER TERM					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Grade 7	120	120	120	120	120	120
Grade 8		120	120	120	120	120
Grade 9			120	120	120	120
Grade 10				120	120	120
Grade 11					120	120
Grade 12						120
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>720</b>

- d. **Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization:** None
- e. **Proposed School Mission:** JABEA will be a place where every child thrives, is nurtured to seek excellence, and is primed to be academically and professionally competitive. JABEA will develop in each child a lifelong sense of self, purpose and opportunity
- f. **School Overview:** JABEA means gift. Knowledge, confidence, independence, hope, and self-discipline are gifts we owe to the next generation. JABEA is designed to impart these gifts to young men, preparing them for success in the community, in college, and in their chosen field. We do this through **rigorous academics, extensive culturally responsive support and affirming connections to the community, and self-driven career exploration.** These gifts should be treated with respect, nurtured and cultivated by students with the commitment to engage, strive, and succeed. JABEA will provide rigorous academic instruction to young men who are actively engaged in their education, eager to explore their own potential, and united in pursuit of excellence. JABEA’s extraordinary teaching staff will integrate applied technology and hands-on creativity in compelling lessons that challenge and inspire a diverse student body.

**Committed to academic excellence**

- *NYS certified teachers:* JABEA anticipates that all teachers will be NYS certified and highly qualified.
- *Curriculum based on New York State and Common Core Learning Standards*
- *Extensive professional development and support for academic staff:* teachers will receive intensive initial training (before the start of the school year) and ongoing professional development in the use of Big Ideas, Read 180, culturally relevant instruction, PBIS, RTI, the use of data to drive instruction, team teaching, and other elements of the school. Each teacher has both individual planning time and

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common planning time each day. The teachers will be supported by dedicated team of instructional leaders who will maximize the effectiveness of the teachers' common planning time, as well as facilitating the integration of common themes across lesson plans and subject areas.

- *Saturday remediation and test prep:* three hours on Saturday are reserved for remediation, test prep, and supervised recreation; mentors may also meet with students during this time.
- *In-school independent work time:* At home, students are often “little parents”—looking after siblings or helping with other household tasks; parents tell us that they are unable to help students with their homework; students often live in chaotic surroundings where there is no quiet place for study. Therefore, JABEA has built in a mandatory supervised homework period each day, during which students will practice the skills learned in the classroom and prepare for the following day's lessons; teachers will coordinate so that the homework can be accomplished within the time allotted.
- *Summer learning program:* JABEA intends to offer summer instruction and recreation so that students remain engaged in learning and do not backslide; higher performing students can advance in coursework during the summer in order to take advanced classes; and students who did not perform well on assessments can retake them with success and advance to the next grade.
- *Peer mentoring program:* In addition to adult-to-student mentoring, JABEA will provide opportunities for students to serve as mentors to other students, whether in mixed ability project work, or upper level students assisting younger ones with literacy or presentation skills.

### **Committed to cultural responsiveness**

- *Opportunity for self-reflection and self-knowledge are built into each school day:* students will explore their interests and talents through career exploration, personal writing, and project work.
- *Strong code of conduct and discipline policy:* JABEA will create a safe environment focused on learning; students will be trained to use conflict coaching to de-escalate peer conflicts.
- *School uniforms:* uniforms will foster a sense of togetherness, structure, teamwork and community, as well as minimize a potential source of conflict or anxiety associated with appearance.
- *Student support services:* we anticipate that our students will face many challenges; JABEA will support their efforts to rise to meet them. To those ends, a dean of students, family and community liaison, and counselor will be on staff; nursing and related services will be contracted through RCSD. JABEA intends to develop a mentoring program and every student will have as an advocate at least one caring adult at the school.
- *Student government:* in keeping with the school's mission, JABEA will develop students' leadership and critical thinking skills which may be demonstrated through participation in student government.
- *Parent engagement:* Parents and families are partners in the education of our students. The family and community liaison will serve as an information resource for family services, as well as develop programming (such as quarterly project presentations) that will bring families into to the school. JABEA anticipates many opportunities for volunteers within the school, and a parent representative will be an active member of the board of trustees.
- *Partnerships with community arts organizations:* JABEA is working with The Baobab Cultural Center ([www.thebaobab.org](http://www.thebaobab.org)) to enrich students' sense of their cultural heritage through student-led exhibits, performing arts, music events, and a film/speaker series. The Baobab will also serve as a resource for professional development of teachers and staff on culturally responsive thinking and curriculum development. Survey responses have recommended additional arts connections that we will pursue.
- *School community:* JABEA's community will be built on seven principles of the *Nguzo Saba*, a Pan-African Heritage Value System, known to improve the community-centeredness and self-esteem of youth and adults, alike. These principles will be explored in homeroom and incorporated throughout the school day:

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- **Unity:** To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race: *Umoja*.
- **Self Determination:** To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves instead of being defined, named, created for, and spoken for by others: *Kujichagulia*
- **Collective Work & Responsibility:** To build and maintain our community together and make our sisters' and brothers' problems our problems and to solve them together: *Ujima*
- **Cooperative Economics:** To build and maintain our stores, shops, and other business and profit them together: *Ujamaa*
- **Purpose:** To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness: *Nia*
- **Creativity:** To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it: *Kuumba*
- **Faith:** To believe with all our hearts in our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our (daily) struggle: *Imani*

**Committed to career preparation**

- *Career and interest exploration opportunities:* Daily time devoted to career exploration including the Boy Scouts' Exploring program for career education, speakers, and internships; daily time devoted to discovering interests and building 21<sup>st</sup> century job readiness skills through a variety of means including memo writing, video production, public speaking and presentations, and multi-disciplinary project work.
- *Partnerships with local employers:* Through the Boy Scouts Exploring program and other direct links to employers, JABEA will offer internship opportunities to 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who are in good standing. Students will earn elective credits for their internships.
- *School clubs and interest-based organizations:* students will have the opportunity to form school-based clubs and organizations based on their interests. Examples include chess club, debate club, student government, student newspaper/blog, basketball, drill team, film club, etc. The school will be open every Saturday for student activities.
- *Partnership with community college:* JABEA is establishing a partnership with Monroe County Community College for study skills and college preparedness courses, parent financial aid seminars, mentors, and shadowing opportunities for students.
- *Partnerships with four-year colleges for college preparedness and exposure:* JABEA is partnered with SUNY Brockport to offer placement for student teachers willing to work with parents to help them understand college financial aid and admission processes, provide on-campus shadowing opportunities to JABEA students, offer campus tours, and—potentially—offer credit bearing courses for advanced students either online or on-site.

**g. Target Population/Community Served:** JABEA expects to serve young males from the Rochester City School District, because that is the population of greatest need. In 2012, a Schott Foundation report, "The Urgency of Now" found that only 9% of African American males graduated from the Rochester City School District—the lowest rate in the nation. The need already is apparent in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, when only 2% of these students are proficient in ELA and only 5% proficient in Math (NYS Report Card 2014). We have designed JABEA to meet the needs of these students and to provide them with the structure, support, and self-awareness to succeed. Design elements include: a small school environment where every student is known and valued; high expectations for every student and clear guidelines for behavior; focus on career exploration so that students know what is possible for them and how to achieve their dreams; and integration and exploration of the African and African-American heritage into the curriculum to give students a sense of their own worth and role in the community.

**h. Replication of High Quality School Models:** N/A

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**III. ENROLLMENT & RETENTION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, ELL, & STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR THE FRLP.**

**Describe the school's strategies to attract and recruit its students:**

**a. Those identified in the school's mission:** JABEA founders have held and are planning to hold numerous community meetings throughout the area and will participate in Rochester's School Choice Day at which parents can learn about all the education options for their students. The founders plan to meet with boards of trustees of the three local charter schools that culminate at 6<sup>th</sup> grade, to request opportunities to discuss JABEA with parents and students as they seek options for 7<sup>th</sup> grade placement. JABEA founders will develop a web site and Facebook page; they plan to distribute additional literature (flyers and applications) at libraries and community organizations. Founders also will participate in print, radio and TV interviews for the local audience, as well as advertise in community publications.

**b. Students with disabilities:** Outreach efforts will include all of the above, as well as presentations to community organizations that serve students with disabilities and their families to let them know about the school, the available services, and our commitment to the success of students with disabilities. An advisor to the founders' group, Pat Willis, works for the Learning Disabilities Association and has offered to assist and facilitate communications.

**c. English language learners:** Outreach efforts will include all of the above, as well as presentations to organizations serving refugee and immigrant populations to let them know about the school, the available services, and our commitment to the success of English language learners; a number of the founders have excellent contacts among the refugee and immigrant communities and have offered to assist and facilitate communications. JABEA intends to translate its advertising and admissions materials into the most commonly used languages, and to have translators available to assist communications at community meetings and throughout the admissions process.

**d. Students who are eligible for the FRLP:** Outreach efforts will include all of the above, and presentations in disadvantaged neighborhoods. As 84% of RCSD students are eligible for the FRLP program and 90% are economically disadvantaged, we expect most of our students will be FRLP eligible.

**Describe the school's strategies to retain its students:**

**a. Those identified in the school's mission:** JABEA is focused on delivering its mission. We will be striving to set the stage for high academic achievement of all students. Parents will recognize the impact of JABEA on their student within the first six months. We know that many students will arrive with significant skills deficits that we will need to remediate while delivering grade-level coursework; our ultimate goal is to prepare students for advanced coursework and college preparation. In order to accomplish this daunting task, we have built in additional reading, writing and math practice. We will use the instructional methodology developed from the work and research of Coyne, Kume'enui, and Carnine, presented in "Effective Teaching Strategies". A central theme of their work is developing a child's ability to harness complex concepts using the theory of Big Ideas. This has been successful with diverse learners (including advanced students, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners). This approach helps students organize new material into an understood structure, such as: Problem, Solution, Effect. So students learn to recognize the problem, examine potential and actual solutions, and analyze the effects and consequences of the action. Teachers will receive extensive and ongoing training in integrating Big Ideas into instruction: designing conspicuous strategies, designing mediated scaffolding, designing strategic integration, designing primed background knowledge, designing judicious review, and developing and modifying instructional tools. The Big Idea of multiple perspectives will enhance our efforts to establish a school climate that respects each individual. This approach will give our students a platform on which to build knowledge, a known strategy with which to attack new material. With time and practice, they will develop a deeper understanding of content, moving from simple recognition to true understanding.

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**b. Students with disabilities:** In order to retain students with disabilities, JABEA will hire exceptional special education teachers and coordinators, and provide the services indicated on students' IEPs or 504 plans (e.g., push-in or pull-out instruction, testing accommodations, modified materials and equipment). JABEA will provide ongoing professional development to all teachers and staff on a variety of IEP and 504 plan issues (e.g., accommodations, discipline, effective strategies, resources, and communications). JABEA will contract with RCSD for the provision of related services. In addition, the Big Ideas approach will help students of all abilities approach new material in an integrated setting; other effective strategies include small group instruction, differentiated instruction, and teaching parents effective strategies at home.

**c. English language learners:** In order to retain English language learners (ELL or ENL), JABEA will provide integrated core subject area instruction with home language supports and appropriate scaffolds as well as stand-alone ENL for language development; the number of units of stand-alone ENL will be determined by the student's level of proficiency. In addition, because so few incoming students are proficient in ELA, all instruction at JABEA will be focused on literacy, with all students learning English all the time. All students will be working to acquire new vocabulary, and building reading and writing skills across subject areas.

**d. Students who are eligible applicants for the FRLP:** Using the enrollment calculator, JABEA anticipates 89% FRLP students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 85% FRLP students in 7-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore, all programs have been designed to meet needs of students who may not have effective role models; who may have limited experiences and vocabulary; who may have little access to technology resources at home; and who may have few opportunities to connect with higher education or the workplace. JABEA is designed to expose students to new ideas and encourage them to consider new possibilities for themselves. The use of Big Ideas as a method of instruction will help students approach and integrate new knowledge with confidence.

**IV. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**a. Describe the public outreach:** In the past six months, founders have held at least 13 meetings with community members to discuss plans and solicit interest in JABEA. At least six additional meetings are scheduled while the application is being finalized; these meetings will be held at libraries, community centers, refugee agencies and at organizations serving students with disabilities. Founders have attended, and continue to attend area festivals and events to gather input and support. Founders also have met with personnel from RCSD, Monroe County Community College, SUNY Brockport, and an array of businesses and not-for-profit organizations (such as the Farash Foundation and Education Enterprise of NY) to discuss services and opportunities to enhance JABEA. Survey feedback shows 100% support for a strong discipline policy and code of conduct and greater than 89% support of other school features such as daily attention to self-reflection, community built around Nguzo Saba, student government, and partnerships with community arts organizations.

**b. Describe your initial assessment of parent interest:** In addition to all the interest expressed during outreach events and meetings, the founders have, to date, collected 142 signatures indicating support, including 59 with students of an age to attend the school. In addition, as of 2013-14, there are 1,125 male (and 2,177 total) 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in RCSD who will be seeking a 7<sup>th</sup> grade placement in fall 2016. In 2014-15, there were only 10 schools in good standing in RCSD, and only two of those offering 7<sup>th</sup> grade: meaning that **there are only 142 7<sup>th</sup> grade RCSD seats in schools in good standing**. All other RCSD schools are identified as local assistance plan (1), focus (27), or priority (15) schools. Parents—far in excess of the proposed enrollment of JABEA—are seeking high quality alternatives to the failing Rochester City Schools.

**V. PROPOSED BOARD CHAIR SIGNATURE AND DATE:**



23/06/15

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Table 1

Applicant Group Member Name Email Address	Current Employment	Relevant experience/skills & role on applicant group (Key Words)	Proposed role(s)	Proposed Position on board	Initial Term	Voting Member Y/N
Susan Cooper [REDACTED]	Retired RCSD teacher	Experience/skills: teacher, intervention/remediation, teacher training, youth development Role: Curriculum development, scheduling, staffing, professional development, assessment	Trustee	Trustee	1 year	Y
Jane Ewane Sobe [REDACTED] m	Counselor, Rochester Public Schools	Experience/skills: Certified administrator, School counselor, teacher Role: Founder; school environment, curriculum development, youth development, scheduling, staffing, community engagement, partnership development	Trustee & Employee	School Director, employee liaison	1 year	N
Hoffman Moka Lantum, MD, PhD [REDACTED]	Owner, 2020 MicroClinic Initiative	Experience/skills: business owner; NFP owner; organizational development, budget analysis, community engagement Role: Founder, program development, trustee recruitment, budget analysis, community engagement.	Trustee	Officer, Chair	1 year	Y
Valerie Nicholson [REDACTED]	Retired RCSD teacher; PT RCSD Office of Adult Career & Education Services	Experience/skills: teacher, job skills development, ESL Role: Curriculum development, scheduling, staffing, intervention, AIS, classroom management, community outreach	Trustee	Trustee	1 year	Y
Rob Riviello [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	EnCompass Resources for Learning	Experience/skills: Certified administrator, teacher, academic intervention, professional development, data driven decision making Role: Curriculum development, scheduling, staffing, instruction, assessment, technology, special education	Trustee	Officer, Secretary	1 year	Y

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<b>John Rodriguez</b> [REDACTED]	Director of Strategic Partnerships, Palacio Media Group	Experience/skills: Business owner, NFP owner, leadership development, marketing, communications, systems change, analytics Role: Community engagement, Communications, Small Business Development, outreach	<b>Trustee</b>	Officer, Treasurer	1 year	Y
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