



PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created: 06/18/2015

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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	Prime Public Charter School
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	6-8
Number of Students During Initial Term	354

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	Tony Siddall	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Public/Media Contact Person	Jonathan Skolnick	917-699-9819	jonskolnick@gmail.com

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

www.primepublicschools.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	(No response)
Partner Organization 1	(No response)
Partner Organization 2	(No response)

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.

PRIME Public Charter School

LETTER OF INTENT

I. Applicant Group Information

a. & b. See Table 1

c. **Public Contact:** Jonathan Skolnick, Phone: 917-699-9819, Email: jonskolnick@gmail.com

d. **Applicant History:** We submitted a Letter of Intent in Round 1 of the 2015 application cycle and were invited to submit a full charter application, which we did in March 2015. We received significant feedback on our application and have made changes to several sections as a result. For example, we are updating our teacher schedules and calendar, adding detail regarding our curriculum, and clarifying our promotional standards, among other changes.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. **Proposed School Name:** Prime Public Charter School (Prime)

b. **Proposed School Location:** Prime Public Charter School will be located in CSD13 in Brooklyn. We plan to go through the process to apply for public space, but we are in discussions with real estate brokers (e.g. CPEX) who work in CSD 13 to secure private space if necessary.

c. Planned Grades and Enrollment

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Grade 6	118	118	118	118	118
Grade 7		118	118	118	118
Grade 8			118	118	118
Total	118	236	354	354	354

Note: The above table represents maximum enrollment. Our initial goal is to enroll 108 students in each grade, but we have the ability to add more students, up to 118 per grade.

d. **Proposed Management and/or Partner Organizations:** N/A

e. **Mission Statement:** Prime Public Charter School will ensure that **all** students master college- and career-ready standards, demonstrate healthy habits of mind and body, and develop creative or career-driven expertise in an area of their choice. We achieve this through an innovative process that allows families to learn about and match to one of several professional teaching teams (“Teaching Practices”), each of which has a unique approach. By allowing teachers to grow their practices over time in ways that help each student find the right match, we enable every child to realize his or her highest academic and personal potential within a caring and challenging community.

f. **School Overview:** Prime Public is a groundbreaking new middle school with a personalized learning model enabled by professional, flexible, and high-quality teaching. In order to achieve our mission of a) mastery of college- and career-ready standards b) social-emotional development and c) enabling career or passion-driven expertise, our model brings together the culture of high expectations and talent development used in high-performing charter management organizations while adding relevance, deep relationships, and deeper learning to the student experience. Specifically, students learn each day in three environments:

Prime Core: Teams of 2-3 teachers, with support from a certified special education teacher, work together in a Teaching Practice to cover STEM and Humanities content that aligns to rigorous Common Core State Standards. Students, families, and the principal work to match each

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student to a Teaching Practice. Students spend approximately 5 hours daily working in Prime Core. The teacher-student ratio is approximately 18:1.

Prime Journeys: Teachers from Prime Core lead these teams of 12-16 students with support from outside social workers and guidance counselors. They implement a robust personal development and college-readiness curriculum to ensure that students leave Prime Public with the social-emotional toolkit necessary to thrive in high school and beyond. Students spend about 1 hour daily in Prime Journeys.

Prime Studio: In Prime Studio, students gain exposure to careers, creative pursuits, and college. Prime Studio Specialist teachers lead this work, which consists of first exposing students to career or creative options, allowing them to explore those options, and then ensuring that students gain expertise in one or more area. The specialists work with outside members of the community to offer students authentic opportunities to discover a new career or passion through the creation of real products and projects on behalf of the outside organization. Students spend 1-2 hours per day in Prime Studio.

These three unique environments help us to realize rigorous **personalized learning** and **professionalized teaching** in order to enable student success.

Personalization:

- **The Teacher-Student Match:** Upon matriculation, the principal meets with each student and his or her family to determine which Teaching Practice is the right fit, based on a match of cognitive style, personality, curricular themes, and instructional expertise. Families can watch videos of Teaching Practices beforehand to help determine the right fit.
- **Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs):** All students at Prime are given diagnostic assessments and surveys that help teachers and students to craft a Personalized Learning Plan. The PLP serves as a way for students and teachers to set and monitor individual goals and demonstrations of mastery over time.
- **Self-Paced Progress Toward Mastery:** In Prime Core, teachers use a variety of methods, from blended learning rotations (in which students rotate from small-group to collaborative to online adaptive learning) to peer tutoring, to ensure that students master standards at the pace described in their PLP. At the same time, teachers plan rigorous, whole-group, differentiated class discussions that allow students at all levels to learn together, utilizing the principles of Universal Design for Learning, a model that gives students a variety of ways to access content within the same learning environment.
- **Data-Driven Instruction and Intervention:** Prime teachers will use planning time to look at formative data (behavioral as well as academic) at regular intervals to ensure that students are on track toward grade-level mastery. This allows us to intervene early with students who may initially struggle with a more self-paced learning environment. To ensure high levels of rigor and appropriate progress, we will use the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to identify at-risk students and provide them with support. Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) will have PLPs that match them to special education-licensed teachers, and English Language Learners will likewise have PLPs that use tools such as the NYSITELL to determine ELL status and match them to teachers with expertise in ELL instruction.
- **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:** Following the principles of the NYCDOE's Expanded Success Initiative, Prime will bring the ideas of culturally relevant and responsive curriculum to the middle school level, with a special eye to engaging adolescent Black and Latino males.

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Prime's pedagogy will address the need for academic rigor, youth development, and school culture, which have been shown to help engage and retain young men of color in school¹.

Teacher Professionalization:

- **Teaching Practices:** Rather than assigning the same number of students randomly to each teacher, we match students to a variable-sized Prime Core Practice that teaches the core subjects. Each Practice has 2-3 teachers who work together to adapt the curriculum, schedule, technology, and environment to meet student needs. Under the supervision of the principal, Prime Core Practices will have substantial autonomy, within a set of mandated structures, to organize their classrooms, as well as the allocation of resources that the school provides to each team. Because teachers work in teams and across content areas, they have much lower total student loads, which has been shown to increase student achievement.² Finally, to ensure professionalization, new teachers will work as Teaching Residents, while more experienced teachers work as Fellows or Partners who lead their own Practices.
- **Teacher Growth:** Prime will have several support programs for new teachers and specified pathways, based on proven results shown by student growth and achievement, to progress through a continuum of roles, each with greater autonomy, responsibility, and compensation as it is earned. Our three initial roles are Resident, Fellow, and Partner.
- **Teacher Support:** To ensure that teachers develop as professionals, we provide them with significant support (six weeks per year, in addition to daily planning time, ongoing Instructional Rounds, and weekly workshops) and hold them to high standards in three areas: Performance, Pedagogy, and Personal Development. Performance is assessed through student work products, student surveys, and student test score growth. Pedagogy is assessed through frequent administrative and peer classroom observations and videos. Prime will use the [Marshall Teacher Evaluation Rubric](#) to give staff a common vocabulary around excellent pedagogy. Teachers will also maintain a portfolio of unit and lesson plans, conduct one-on-one reflections, and showcase knowledge of key teaching concepts. Personal development is assessed through 360 reviews from students, peers, and families, as well as a personal reflection process detailing the ways in which teachers demonstrate personal growth.

g. Target Population/Community Served: Prime Public Charter School's target population should roughly mirror the demographics of CSD13, but with a specific goal to reach our enrollment targets for underserved students. We believe that public schools represent a sacred charge to provide an engine for social mobility for all students. We have chosen CSD13 because it is an area with a wealth of cultural resources that nonetheless struggles with sharp disparities in academic achievement across schools and neighborhoods. CSD13 serves over 22,500 public school students in grades pre-k through 12; we have chosen to start a rigorous, high-performing middle school to address persistent middle school achievement gaps in the district. In the most recent NYCDOE School Quality Reports, within CSD13 K-8 and middle schools, nearly 70% were either not meeting or approaching School Progress or Student Achievement targets, and 76% were either not meeting or approaching School Environment targets. High-quality options within CSD13, including P.S. 8, Arts & Letters, and Brooklyn Prospect Charter School, all enroll students from their elementary schools, leaving few available seats for rising 6th graders.

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

¹ See Harper (2014).

² See Ouchi (2009).

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III. Enrollment and Retention: Prime is committed to serving a diverse group of students, both to ensure that our student body reflects CSD13, and because we believe that integrated, diverse learning environments are a critical component of any 21st century global education. We have reached out to Ingersoll Community Center/University Settlement and plan to work with Auburn Family Shelter to recruit families who are struggling financially and students with special needs. We will actively canvass for students at community events, local places of worship, and public housing complexes. We will track our progress in recruiting students in each sub-category and adjust our strategies if we are not meeting our targets. Our promotional materials note that we are specifically interested in hearing from foster care families, families of newcomer immigrants, and families of children with special needs.

Free and Reduced Priced Lunch (FRPL): We have analyzed the data on CSD13 elementary schools with high percentages of students eligible for FRPL, and as a result we will reach out specifically to the principals of PS 133 (100%), PS 44 (96%), PS 93 (94%), and PS 56 (91%).

Students with Disabilities: We have done the same data analysis for special education students, and will reach out specifically to the principals of PS 307 (29%), PS 270 (21%), and PS 54 (19%). We are meeting with the principal of PS 307 on June 30. We will work with the Brooklyn CSE to evaluate any students who may have disabilities.

English Language Learners: While CSD13 does not have a relatively high level of ELLs (<5%), we will translate and distribute our informational fliers in multiple languages and reach out to the above social service organizations to see if there are recent immigrants whose families are interested in attending Prime. We will also seek out community organizations that specifically serve families where English is not the language spoken at home.

Retention of Students with Disabilities: The three different learning environments in our model (see above) ensure that we will retain students with disabilities. We have built-in structures so that families can watch videos of Teaching Practices and work with the principal to select a practice with an expertise in supporting students with particular disabilities. Our Personal Development Teams will be particularly attractive to students who have suffered from trauma or who need to process complex and challenging emotions in safe and healthy ways.

Retention of English Language Learners: Due in part to our Personalized Learning Plans, matching process, and personal development curriculum, our model works well to retain English Language Learners (ELL) who need customized support to ensure that they develop their first language while learning to speak, read, write, and listen in English at and above grade level. We believe in an English as a Second Language (ESL) model and will ensure that we have teachers with ESL expertise who can help all teachers address the needs of ELL students.

Retention of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch: Research shows that income level is highly associated with academic performance, and that students living in poverty often experience high levels of anxiety. Our school's design, with its daily community meeting, close teacher-student relationships, PLPs, culturally relevant pedagogy, and Personal Development Teams, all help to ensure that students are held to high expectations while given scaffolds they need to address the stress caused by persistent poverty.

For students with disabilities and ELLs, as well as students generally, our Board will monitor and assess our recruitment and retention rates based on our targets set by the State as well as our own goals. We intend to backfill any seats lost to attrition over time. If we are not meeting targets, the Board will request implementation of action plans from staff, and if necessary, amend the charter to create admissions preferences for ELLs and/or special needs students.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

PRIME Public Charter School

Public Outreach: Prime Public Charter School was founded and designed as a direct result of the need in CSD13 neighborhoods for high-quality middle school options. One of our founding team members is a CSD13 parent with a child in elementary school. On 1/19/15, we held a community meeting with local elected officials, prospective Board members, and community parent members with children who go to schools in CSD13 (parents from P.S. 11, P.S. 9, and Compass Charter School were all present). On 1/23/15, we attended P.S. 11's PTA read-a-thon celebration and talked directly with parents of students entering 6th grade in 2016-17 about Prime. On 1/25/15, we attended the Compass Charter School Book Fair and talked with parents of students in grades K and 1 about the possible opening of Prime. In advance of our 2/27/15 family meeting, we sent a press release to the Brooklyn Reader and the NYTimes Brooklyn blog to let the entire community know about our plans and to invite their input. We then sent an additional press release to announce our next public meeting on 4/19/15. We plan to hold an additional public meeting on July 28, 2015 and once we confirm the location we will send a press release to local newspapers and parent listservs.

Also, we have spoken directly with school leaders from local schools to ensure that we are building healthy partnerships with local district and charter schools: Abedemi Hope, the assistant principal of P.S. 11, Cynthia McKnight, the co-President of P.S. 11's Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and Todd Sutler, Director of Strategic Development for Compass Charter School. We have also spoken with local elected officials, including District 35 Councilwoman Laurie Cumbo, New York State Assemblyman Walter Mosley, and U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries. We met with CSD13 Superintendent Barbara Freeman and shared our desire to work with the district closely. We have begun outreach to CSD13 elementary school principals to ensure their families know about and can give input on our plans. Finally, we have spoken with the following community organizations about partnering with us during the planning process: The CEC for District 13, Good Shepherd, SCO Family of Services/Center for Family Life, and P.S. 11 PTA. We are scheduled to meet with Brooklyn Community Board 2 on June 24. We have used our Facebook page (with over 225 'likes') and website (primepublicschools.org) to spread the word about Prime and solicit feedback on our plans.

Parent Interest: During our outreach phase, parents have clearly stated that a lack of quality middle school options in CSD13 is a concern for their families. Parents from P.S. 11 and Compass in particular have expressed that Prime's model feels like a natural extension of their high-quality and caring learning environments. We have spoken with and collected signatures of support/interest from over 100 families with children currently in CSD13 elementary schools. During our feedback sessions, parents said they want a school with highly qualified, committed teachers, and to address this we articulated three distinct teacher roles and will ensure that every Teaching Practice is led by an experienced educator. Parents also want a school where they play a key role: One parent noted, "I want to make sure that parents are not just seen as people to do a bake sale." We will incorporate this and similar feedback through structures for parents to learn about their children's academic progress, contribute their own expertise to Prime Studio experiences, and participate in the selection of their child's Teaching Practice.

V. Proposed Board Chair Signature and Date



Board Chair Date: 6/23/15

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 None)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Jonathan Skolnick	[REDACTED]	Harvard University - Resident with TNTP pursuing a Doctorate in Education Leadership (Expected May 2016)	Jonathan has 11 years of direct educational experience in the classroom; providing professional development; in the NYCDOE's Office of Innovation, and working with charter schools and CMOs serving high-needs students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctorate of Education Leadership, Harvard University (in progress) • Lead Author, Caliber Schools Charter Application Education Program (opened Aug 2014) • Senior Director, NYCDOE Office of Innovation • Founding team and Director of Field Operations, School of One • Project Manager at NYCDOE Office of School Leadership (led creation of Principals' Portal and Teacher Development Toolkit) • Instructional Designer at Omnilearn, a K-8 STEM company • NYC Teaching Fellow and HS Social Studies Teacher • MST Pace University, BA Brown University Key Skills: School Design, Startup	Executive Director	N/A	N/A	N/A

<p>Sompon Oerlemans</p>		<p>NYCDOE - Director of School Review, Policy, and Evaluation, Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships</p>
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Sammi has 14 years of instructional leadership experience at middle schools and high schools throughout NYC:
 Director on the Charter School Team at the • NYCDOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships
 • Deputy Network Leader, CFN107
 • NYC Leadership Academy Graduate (2008)
 • Founding Middle School English Teacher
 • MA New York University, BA New York University

Key Skills: Instructional leadership, teacher development, adult learning, developing professional learning communities, new community school development

Principal	N/A	N/A	N/A
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<p>April Gariepy</p>		<p>NYCDOE - Director of Special Projects, Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships</p>	<p>in leading CMOs and educational non- profits around community and parent engagement as well as performance management and strategic communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Special Projects, NYCDOE Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships • Achievement First - Director of Network Support Recruitment and Human Capital • P.S. 11 School Leadership Team (SLT) elected parent member • Compass Charter School Advisory Board member • TNTP - Performance Management Group • La Cima Elementary Charter School - Director of Strategy and Planning • NYCDOE Talent Office - Communications Director • MPA Baruch College (National Urban Fellow), BA Bridgewater State University <p>Skills: Human capital strategy / external relations</p> </p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
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<p>Guerschmid e Saint- Ange</p>		<p>Achievement First - Director of External Realtions</p>
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Guerschmide is an East New York native with eight years of experience engaging family voice and choice to assure a responsive, collaborative Board:

- Director of External Relations, NY - Achievement First
- Director of Advocacy and Parent Engagement, Achievement First
- School Support Specialist, Achievement Network
- 7th, 9th, 10th Grade English Teacher, Norfolk and Newport News, Virginia
- MA Harvard University, BA Hampton University

Key Skills: Community Outreach and External Affairs

Trustee	Trustee	2 Years	Y
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Stacey Gillett	[REDACTED]	Bloomberg Philanthropies
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Stacey managed the budget for a \$70 million innovation division and will ensure that innovation and high-quality execution go hand-in-hand. She has expertise in government innovation and political engagement:

- Government Innovation, Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Exec. Dir. for Strategy and Sustainability, NYCDOE
- Deputy Chief of Innovation, NYCDOE
- Advisor, NYC Center for Economic Opportunity
- Legislative Aide, Office of Senator Charles Schumer
- Staff Assistant, U.S. House of Representatives
- MPA NYU, BA The George Washington University

Key Skills: Operations, Financial Management, Strategy, and Government Relations

Trustee	Trustee	1 Year	Y
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Tony Siddall	[REDACTED]	Amplify - Director of Bids and Proposals
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Tony has extensive experience reviewing and managing charter schools and charter school board processes and systems:

- Director of Bids & Proposals, Amplify, Inc.
- Senior Director, Growth Strategy - Achievement First
- Senior Director of Governance and Authorizer Relations - Achievement First
- Program Coordinator, Boston Public Schools
- Assistant Director, Charter School Accountability - Massachusetts Department of Education
- MBA University of Oxford, BA Brown University

Key Skills: Charter School Board Governance and Authorization / Technology

Trustee	Board Chair	2 Years	Y
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<p>Megan Adams</p>		<p>Lab Middle School for Collaborative Studies - Principal</p>
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Megan has 13 years of experience as one of NYC's most respected middle school principals:

- Principal, Lab Middle School for Collaborative Studies
- Middle School Leadership Initiative
- Cahn Fellowship for Distinguished Principals
- Ed.D. Educational Administration, Ed.M, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Educational Leadership in Public Schools, Teachers College, Columbia University
- BA, History, Art History and Political Science, the University of Iowa

Key Skills: Instruction, Instructional Leadership, School Budgeting, Talent Recruitment, Staff Development

Trustee	Trustee	2 Years	Y
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Jenya Green	[REDACTED]	New Classrooms - Business Affairs	<p>Jenya has 13 years of experience with non-profit compliance, transparency, and accountability, in addition to a deep commitment to personalized learning technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Affairs, New Classrooms • New York Mentorship Chair, The New Leaders Council • Consultant and Project Manager, Wireless Generation • Associate, External Affairs, Success Charter Network • Associate Attorney, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo, LLC • JD NYU School of Law, BA Cornell University <p>Key Skills: School Management; Legal Counsel; External Relations</p>	Trustee	Trustee	1 Year	Y
Carlos Saavedra	[REDACTED]	Kumon	<p>Carlos is a local entrepreneur in CSD13 with years of education, technology, and health care experience</p> <p>Owner, Kumon Math and Reading Center of Prospect Heights</p> <p>Clinical Software and Implementation Specialist at Integrated Medical Professionals</p>	Trustee	Trustee	1 Year	Y

Sara Sorbello	[REDACTED]	Local Initiatives Support Corporation	<p>Sara has more than 12 years of community development finance and public policy experience. Director of the Educational Facilities Financing Center, LISC Senior Manager and Credit Underwriter at Seedco Financial MA Columbia School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA)</p> <p>Key Skills: Public financing, community engagement, public policy</p>	Trustee	Trustee	2 Years	Y
Samantha Pownall	[REDACTED]	Adjunct Professor of Law at New York Law School and Relay Graduate School of Education	<p>Samantha is an expert on special education law and a former Spanish teacher in NYC Associate Attorney at Cuddy Law Firm Adjunct Professor of Law at New York Law School and Relay Graduate School of Education Equal Justice Works fellow and policy intern at NY Civil Liberties Union Wrote A,B,C,D,STPP: How School Discipline Feeds the School to Prison Pipeline</p> <p>Key Skills: Education law, special education law, communication, ethics of equity</p>	Trustee	Trustee	2 Years	Y
Joseph Robateau	[REDACTED]	NYCDOE - Data Applications Specialist	<p>Joseph has 8 years of experience as a middle school and high school biology teacher and data specialist. Key Skills: Science curriculum; data-driven instructional coaching</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N

