



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

Proposed or Current Board Chair and Public Contact information, including mailing address, phone number, and email address.

(The entire chart may not be visible on your screen. Use the "tab" key to move from column to column. The first column will remain static as you do so).

	First and Last Name	Best Phone Number (###-###-####)	Email Address
Proposed/Current Board Chair	Stuart Austein	██████████	██████████
Public/Media Contact Person	Margarita Smith	718-589-1510	SISDAInc@AOL.com

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

(No response)

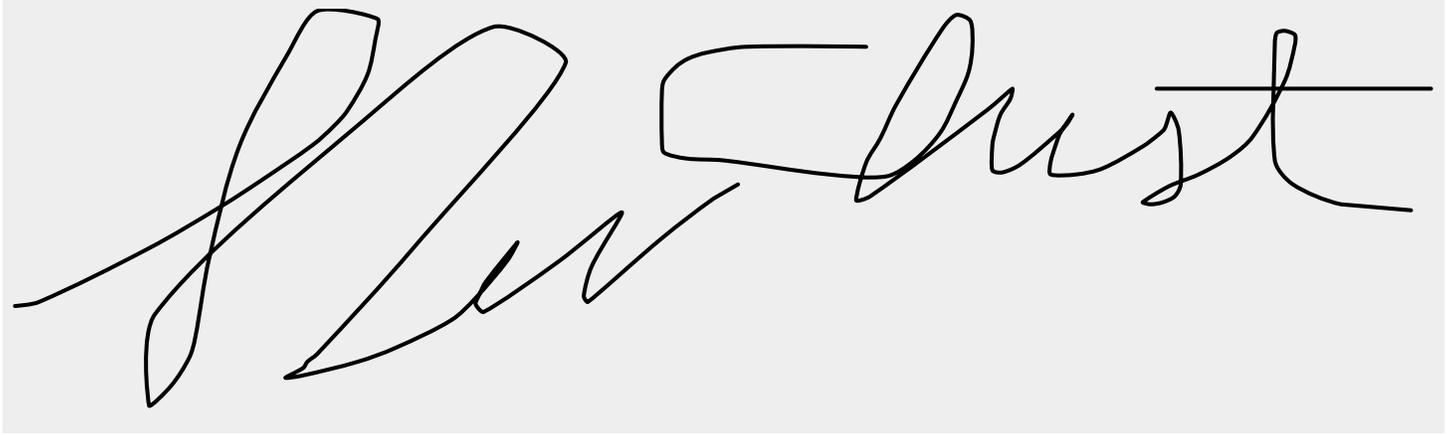
Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner.

(See pages 45-46 of the application kit for definitions and guidance as only "substantial" partnerships should be listed here).

Proposed Management Company	(No response)
Partner Organization 1	Simpson Street Development Association, Inc. (SISDA)
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).

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "L. J. Rust".

Date

2015/06/23

Thank you for completing this form.

I. Application Group Information

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

d. Application History: All applicant group members filed & withdrew an application for SISDA CTE School in 2011 after the Capacity Interview. We filed an application for SISDA School in 2012, which was denied by NYSED. We filed a Letter of Intent with the NYSED to open the Bronx Academy for College and Career Readiness on Sept. 4, 2013, but were not invited to submit a full application. In 2014 we submitted an approved Letter of Intent but due to death of a proposed Trustee we did not file a full application. In 2015, we submitted a Letter of Intent during Round 1 but were denied to file an application.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

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

b. School Location: We request location in a District 8 DOE facility & will lease space if needed

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. Med-Alliance Medical Health Services will offer students health & wellness workshops and internships for qualifying students, exposing them to medical health services career options.

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

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

Our performing arts focus on music (band & chorus), dance, & drama motivates students by giving them an avenue of expression. Our founding members have experience in successfully

using this theme as a vehicle to develop students' reading, writing, speaking, & listening skills. Student performances contribute to our school's team spirit in addition to improving students' self-confidence. Our PBL is implemented across the curriculum and motivates students as they design their own in-depth research project. PBL furthers students' literacy & technology skills while providing opportunities to differentiate instruction based on student needs & interests.

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

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

will be provided. SpEd students will receive their mandated services of their IEP and be placed in the least restrictive environment. There will be a focus on health & wellness for students & parents. To support learning outside school day hours, SISDA will provide remedial & enrichment services at the school site afterschool, on weekends, and during holiday & summer academies. A comprehensive annual school plan will be developed in alignment with our charter and student needs. This plan will be evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the school year and will guide the implementation & evaluation of all programs.

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

III. Enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.

Our target districts have many students that fall under these categories: 81% of students in district 8 are economically disadvantaged, 24% have disabilities, and 12% have limited English proficiency while 91% of students in district 12 are economically disadvantaged, 22% have disabilities, and 19% have limited English proficiency according to the Student Information Repository System's enrollment data (data.nysed.gov). To best recruit RFL students SISDA will leverage its fifty year reputation for servicing families living in poverty and distribute our school's brochure in both English & Spanish; advertise in their newsletters and they will post fliers in their storefront which serves as notices of all SISDA events. We have started a Face Book Page and will use Social Media as an advertising agent. We will be distributing all advertisements for the school in both English and Spanish. Meeting with the New York City Housing Authority Tenants Associations and advertising in both languages in their NYCHA Tenants association Newsletter and then placing and posting fliers in the lobbies of their housing projects. SISDA has partnered with SEBCO, a nonprofit housing agency for low-income tenants. Brochures in both languages advertising the school will be posted and distributed in their lobbies. We will visit both NYCDOE and Charter School Middle school recruitment fairs whose feeder schools meet the targeted RFL, SpEd and Ell populations we are targeting. Our Applicant Group, SISDA, & Unitas service the Spanish immigrant population in our proposed targeted districts and each will publicize our school. We have addressed in both languages C.E.C 8,9 & 12 and many PTAs informing them of our school's mission and vision.

To recruit & retain SpEd students, we will harness SISDA's expertise of serving SpEd students & their families. SISDA has fostered relationships with the families of SpEd students throughout the years, enrolling the same students in multiple afterschool & summer programs that have had a significant impact on their long-term educational success. Our school will work with SISDA to identify, enroll, & retain our community's SpEd students. Additionally, we have met with SpEd attorneys, the committee on Special Education, managers of nonprofit medical facilities, faith based groups, and they have agreed to place and post our fliers as well as offer us the opportunity to speak at their events. We will continue to do presentations for PTAs, CBOs and other community organizations for enrollment of our priority targeted student populations.

To retain all students, we will have innovative and motivating instructional approaches to improve student outcomes, through the use of technologies (including blended instructional programs) which will include teaching literacy through the performing arts theme where students can celebrate their talent in art, music, dance, band, chorus and photography including talent shows followed by student academic and attendance awards celebrations. We will leverage SISDA's after school program for additional academic support for our students. We will also use

PBL a motivational instructional process where students are allowed to make some choices about the products to be created, how they work, and how they use their time, guided by the teacher. Parents will be in a meaningful partnership with the school, affording them the opportunity to participate in writing the Annual School Plan, which will focus on specific objectives leading to continuous school improvement. There will be a parent representative on the Board of Trustees. An Advisory program will be scheduled during homeroom period where implementation of the Individualized Student Success Plan will be reviewed and followed. This Student Success Plan will be crafted during a mandatory parent intake meeting where the parent describes the child's strengths and weaknesses and any other pertinent information regarding their child. Town Hall Assemblies celebrating student efforts & achievements will take place on an on- going basis. The implementation of PBIS and LSCI will also be an asset in retaining special needs students. The above mentioned strategies will culminate in the formation of a "Team Ego", critical to the collaboration needed for a successful school leading to increased student achievement. A Staff member will be designated for student recruitment, student retention and parental outreach to assist in implementing the strategies for the student recruitment and retention component of our annual comprehensive action plan.

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

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


Stuart Austein, Board of Trustees Chairman


Frank Steele, Applicant Group Member

NAME OF APPLICANT GROUP MEMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CURRENT EMPLOYMENT
Margarita Sm	[REDACTED]	Executive Director SISDA CB
men Judith Tav	[REDACTED]	Home Maker
Stuart Austein	[REDACTED]	DOE Guidance Counselor

Errik Arroyo	[REDACTED]	Financial Consultant
Leini Peña	[REDACTED]	School Teacher
Louis R. Coron	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant
John P. Music	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant

Robert Restivo	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant
Frank Steele	[REDACTED]	Educational Consultant

TABLE 1: APPLICANT GROUP INFORMATION

***Minimum of 5 members must be designated as Trustees**

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ROLE ON APPLICANT GROUP (Key Words)	PROPOSED ROLE (if any) (Trustee, Employee, Consultant, or No Continuing Role)	PROPOSED POSITION ON THE BOARD (e.g., officer, trustee, or constituent representative)
Margarita Smith is co-founder & Director of t	Trustee	Board Co-Chair
Carmen Judith Taveras education advisor to t	Trustee	Chair, Community Relations Committe
Stuart Austein has been a DOE guidance cour	Trustee	Board Chair

<p>Erik Arroyo is former Vice President of Banco</p>	<p>Trustee</p>	<p>Chair, Finance Committee</p>
<p>Leini Peña has a Master of Science in Educati</p>	<p>Trustee</p>	<p>Chair, Education Committee</p>
<p>Louis R. Corominas is a successful DOE educa</p>	<p>Consultant</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>John P. Musico served the DOE for 36 years, i</p>	<p>Consultant</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Robert Restivo served 30 years in DOE's hum

Consultant

N/A

Frank Steele's 34 years of distinguished serv

Consultant

N/A

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

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

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