



PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created: 06/10/2015

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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	STEM Initiative Charter School
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	K-5
Number of Students During Initial Term	144

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	Jeremiah Grant	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Public/Media Contact Person	Lycia Grant	347-809-0173	lygrant1@gmail.com

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

(No response)

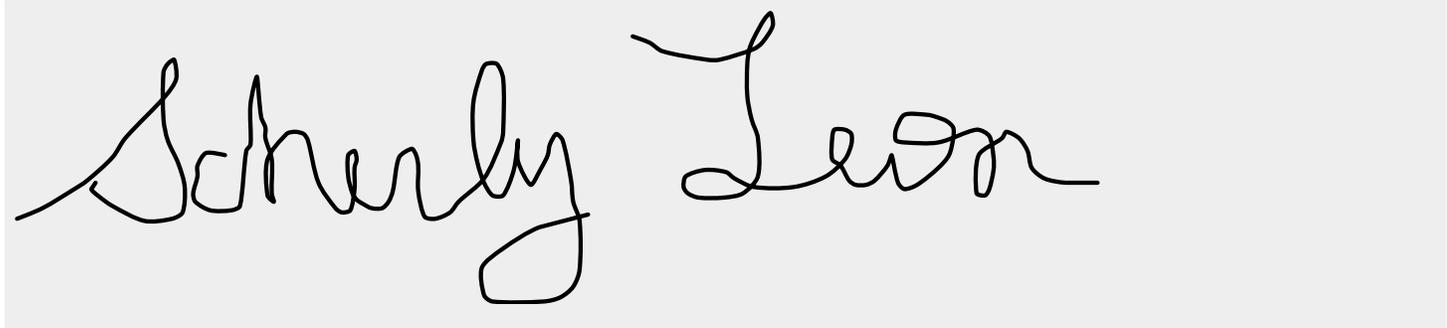
Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s), such as a charter or educational management company or a university, academic program partner, or whole school change partner.

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

Proposed Management Company	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).

A large, light gray rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Scherly Leon".

Date

2015/06/10

Thank you for completing this form.

I. Applicant Information

a. Lead Applicant

Jeremiah Grant
218-19 100 Ave., Queens Village, NY 11429
Tel: (347) 626-9253 E-mail: jrmhgrant38@gmail.com
Jeremiah Grant is a community resident and a former school administrator.

b. Media Contact

Lycia Grant
Tel: (347)-809-0173) E-mail: steminitiative25@gmail.com

c. Applicant Group Information

Jeremiah Grant is a community resident and a former K-12 school administrator for Bethlehem Christian Academy and Oxford Christian Academy in Richmond Hill, NY. He previously served as Adjunct Professor for Penn Valley Community College in Kansas City, Missouri where he successfully co-pioneered two family development programs. He also served as Head Start Site Manager for KCMC Child Development Corporation as well as other large corporations. Jeremiah and Lycia first conceived the idea of the school. He holds degrees in several disciplines including a Master's degree in Business Management. **Gregory Pietrzak** is an attorney with bar admissions in the states of New York and New Jersey representing a wide range of immigration matters, including family-based petitions, employment related petitions and counsel to employers on I-9 compliance law. He has been involved in a number of pro bono activities. He is well acquainted with the issues faced by immigrant families and children. Mr. Pietrzak will serve as Board Vice Chair. **Lycia Grant** has served as a K-5 Assistant Principal and classroom teacher and holds degrees in Education, Marketing, and Communication Studies. She also has a background in training and real estate. She is currently Director of the Learning Solution Center and a current community resident. **Dr. Scherly Leon, M.D., M.S** is a practicing physician with New York Hospital of Queens. Dr. Leon has published and given several presentations on medical topics. In addition to her medical experience, some of her other skills include fundraising and research. Dr. Leon will serve as Board Chair. **Lenora Allen-Hines** brings a perspective from the administrative side of advertising/marketing and sales industry. She is a retired Executive Secretary who worked with Black Entertainment Television. **Horace Aiken** is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with over twenty years of experience in accounting and auditing. Several of those years have been in the not-for-profit industry as an auditor as well as Chief Financial Officer. His experience includes working with both private and charter schools. He is also a current community resident. Mr. Aiken will serve as Board Treasurer. **Carola Craig** is the Parent Coordinator for Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School. Her responsibilities include building and maintaining parent partnership at the school. She has provided several years of successful parent engagement and advocacy at the school. Ms. Craig serves a diverse community of parents and has a great understanding of cultural diversity and how to work with a variety of parent groups. She is also a current community resident and will serve as Board Secretary. **Twinkle Morgan** serves as Executive Director for a scholarship and college success program for students in New Jersey. She also launched and has operated a college-prep program for young men of color in New York City for the past four years. Twinkle brings experience from these roles as well as experience in working with charter schools and in fundraising from her work with the charter management organization, Uncommon Schools-NYC. Twinkle managed numerous projects required to ensure the successful start-up of Uncommon Schools and she also served as Director of Development over

STEM Initiative Charter School

public and private fundraising across its first 11 schools during its launch and the first four years of operations. She also brings experience from her work as a Wall Street executive and as a management consultant for over ten years. Ms. Morgan will serve as a board member. **Lorna Lightfoot** is an Accounts Payable/Receivable Manager with her company. She has experience in finance and college admissions. She is a Notary Public and has a keen sense of operational responsibilities. **Marie-Alix Emmanuel** is a retired school administrator with the NYC DOE, CSD 29Q. She holds licenses in several areas including bilingual education. She has spent several years as a school leader and worked extensively with ELLs, SWD and at-risk students. Mrs. Emmanuel will serve as a board member. **Dr. Jude Jolibois** is an educator with the NYC DOE who has served in various capacities including, dean, programmer and data specialist. He holds advanced degrees in Economics and Organizational Leadership in addition to his Education degree. Dr. Jolibois will serve as a board member. Each founding group member has been on the board for a significant amount of time and contributed to the development of the proposed plan.

- d. **Initial Board of Trustees Information:** The response to I.c. above indicates the relevant experience, skills, amount of time involved with the planning group and key contribution. Gregory Pietrzak; Horace Aiken; Dr. Scherly Leon; Carola Craig; Twinkle Morgan; Marie-Alix Emmanuel and Dr. Jude Joliboise will serve on the initial Board of Trustees. Vacancy is reserved for a parent representative.
- e. **Replication or Network Information:** STEM Initiative Charter School (SICS) is not a replication of another school model; thus, we are not seeking to invoke the language of the law in the current NYS Charter School Act and receive a charter as a replication. SICS' carefully designed model is grounded in research, based on best practices and draws upon the works of education theorists such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, John Dewey and Howard Gardner.
- f. **Application History:** In 2014 Rounds 1&2, Jeremiah Grant submitted applications to the New York State Education Department (Board of Regents) to open Questbridge Preparatory Charter School (QPCS), a predecessor to STEM Initiative Charter School (SICS). The applications were withdrawn in order to further develop the school program.

II. Proposed Charter School Information (name, location, grades, partners)

- a. **Proposed School Name:** STEM Initiative Charter School
- b. **Proposed School Location:** Community School District 29 in Queens, NYC
- c. **Planned Grades and Enrollment for Each Year:** Grades K-5

Growth Chart

Grade	Ages	Year 1 2016-17	Year 2 2017-18	Year 3 2018-19	Year 4 2019-20	Year 5 2020-21
K	4-5	72	72	72	72	72
1	5-6	72	72	72	72	72
2	6-7		72	72	72	72
3	7-8			72	72	72
4	8-9				72	72
5	9-10					72
Total		144	216	288	360	432

The school intends to start in September 2016 with 144 students in grades K-1, and then phase in an additional grade each year until the school reaches grade 5. At that time the complete elementary school will service 432 students.

SICS will partner with Columbia University Teachers College, Pace University STEM Consortium, the Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST), Buck Institute for Education, Logo Foundation and Leed Green Associates. These institutions and organizations will provide staff development, curriculum development and professional support as needed to ensure the success of the school as we facilitate our students' learning. SICS has consulted with Education Consultant Renee Willemsen-Goode, professors at St. John's University Education Department, the organizations listed above, Stuyvesant High School, The Bankstreet School for Children, as well as visited and spoken with several charter schools leaders in this process for relationship building and student success.

- d. **Proposed Management/Partner Organization:** Not applicable
- e. **Proposed School Mission:** SICS' mission is to prepare a diverse community of K-5 students to excel in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) for the 21st Century, and to create an environment where students are inspired and supported to always do their best. In order to do so, students will be provided with a rigorous, well-rounded, project-based and experienced-centered curriculum that will prepare them for excellence in school and life.

f. **School Overview:**

SICS will incorporate key design elements that are grounded in research, evidence based and successfully implemented in schools in many areas of the United States, including New York City. It will welcome all students, including students at risk of academic failure, Students with Disabilities (SWD), English Language Learners (ELLs), Title I students and provide a viable and successful educational option for them and their families. Cognizant that not all students come prepared at the same level, the school will implement critical instructional and interventional strategies across the grades to ensure academic success. Our instructional approach incorporates project-based learning /direct instruction (PB/DI), which supports all students. A unique part of our mission and rigorous curriculum is an intense focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). The curriculum will be aligned with the Common Core Standards. By focusing intensely in these areas, we believe our students will be better prepared to meet the demands of a knowledge society. Special attention will be given to English language arts, social studies and the arts. Students' learning will be further enhanced through the study of Spanish and computer programming. As we endeavor to develop the whole child, physical education, academic service learning as well as our after-school and green components will play a critical role in the school program. These components will also provide students with opportunities to participate in projects that develop their sense of caring and appreciation for each other, their community and the earth.

Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) will be used as our overarching instructional model paired with PB/DI and Columbia University's Teachers College Reading Writing Workshop (RWW), the specific model for ELA. In this way, our students will be engaged in rich literacy content while at the same time developing the skills inherent in critical thinking, strategic reading and writing. In addition to helping our young learners to become avid, skilled readers, writers, and reflective thinkers, a goal of the Reading and Writing Workshop is to "support expert literacy instruction through research and the

professional development of teachers and school leaders.” By gradually assuming increased responsibility for their learning, students will thrive, as they become competent, independent learners. Importantly, the peer learning aspect of these methodologies is highly effective in working with students of all groups, including, SWD, ELLs, Title I students and at-risk students. PB/DI, GRR and RWW provide excellent opportunities for teachers to differentiate instruction. Assessment will inform instruction. This ensures student needs are identified and instruction is tailored to address recognized concerns. An important part of our mission is to instill in students the values of understanding and respect for others through an integration of the Six Pillars of Character and the Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST) models. These approaches promote personal and social responsibility through a process of actions and reflection, enabling students to develop the skills necessary for leading productive lives.

Our instructional staffing model and class schedule will allow two teachers to provide instruction within each K-5 classroom of 24 students. Our organizational design elements include extended time on task for students. SICS will offer a longer school day and year so that all students will have a greater opportunity to meet proficiency standards in all subject areas. Teachers will engage in collaboration as they work with students in small groups providing effective scaffolding. A comprehensive professional development program will support the instructional staff. SICS will create a culture of high expectations for both staff and students. Collaboration, reflection, teamwork, mutual respect, accountability, and innovative thinking will be shared values within the school.

Developing and nurturing relationships with families will be a critical component of the school. Parents are seen as partners in their child’s success. Community involvement will also play a critical role in building and maintaining a successful school. These design elements as well as the overall staffing plan meet the diverse needs of all students including at-risk students. Our fiscal plan supports these elements through direct allocation of resources as well as in-kind services such as pro bono work for our facility preparation and technology set up provided by some of our partners, saving us thousands of dollars in start-up costs. These design elements reflect SICS’ mission, goals, and each of the objectives delineated in Education Law 2850(2).

Extended Year

Students will receive an additional 5 days of instruction per year (185 days) as compared to their district peers of 180 days.

Extended Day

7:00 a.m. - 7:45a.m. Breakfast

7:45 a.m.- 3:45p.m. Instruction

3:45p.m. - 5:30p.m. After-School Program

g. Target Population

Students will be recruited from the District 29Q community. SICS will welcome all students including students at-risk of academic failure, English Language Learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities (SWD). SICS expects to serve a diverse community of students from CSD 29Q. Based on NYSED data, District 29Q student population is: 66% Black, 14% Hispanic, 15% Asian or native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, and 2% White, 2% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% Multiracial. The district’s school population reflects the demographic trends of the general population. According to the NYC GEOG DIST #29 Queens Enrollment (2013-14), of the 25,956 K-12 students, 16% Students with Disabilities, 7% Limited English Proficient Students, 77% Economically Disadvantaged Students. Overall, students in this district score poorly on both

the ELA and Math Standardized tests. In 2014 only 24% of students scored at or above proficiency level in ELA and only 25% in Math. These scores were the lowest in the borough. Students in CSD 29Q have historically struggled academically. SICS' program is intended to change that. According to the 2013-14 New York State Report Card, 77% of the students in CSD 29Q were eligible for free lunch.

III. Enrollment and Retention of Students with disabilities, ELLs and eligible for FRPL

SICS will welcome all students, including students at-risk of academic failure, SWD, ELLs and Title I students. We will engage in a focused effort to attract, recruit, and ultimately retain all students, particularly the populations mentioned above. Our outreach program will extend to all district elementary school programs. We will retain our students, particularly those from these at-risk populations, because of our comprehensive system of support, family engagement and instructional model that not only uses data to inform instruction; but provide scaffolding and intervention strategies that ensure no child falls through the cracks. We will market our school to neighborhoods in CSD 29Q where a predominance of low income/poverty-level families and non-English speaking families reside. We will leverage the community-base contacts of our team and the many community leaders we have engaged, including clergy, elected officials, nonprofit administrators, directors of preschool and Head Start programs, among other stake holders who serve non-English speaking and/or economically disadvantaged as well as SWD constituency. These meetings will highlight the academic program; inclusive school culture; academic support and intervention services specifically focused on ELLs, SWD and Title I children. We will also target preschools serving SWD and network with early intervention providers. All recruitment and application material will be available in the predominant languages of the community.

SICS' representatives will communicate the school's mission to as many families through school fairs and events, information sessions within the identified communities, such as in houses of worship; local CBO and organizations serving low income children, ELLs and SWD; flyers; website and newspapers including those focused on minority populations. Based on our assessment of community interest we are confident that we will be able to reach our anticipated enrollment. The three charter schools currently in the district have been experiencing an overwhelming demand for seats with each school maintaining a waiting list of over 500 students. We will meet or exceed enrollment and retention requirements for these students as required by New York Statues Sec. 2852(9) (b) (i).

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

To date, founding group members have presented at houses of worship such as the Greater Allen A.M.E Cathedral of NY, Beth-El Baptist Church and other organizations in District 29. The founding group have conducted community meetings and presented to Community Board 13Q public meeting, Queens Village Civic Association public meeting, CDEC 29Q, President's Council 29Q and PTA, Queens Village Public library, St. Albans Public Library, Cambria Heights Public Library, local YMCA, NAACP, elected officials, community leaders, created a Facebook page and survey, received newspaper publicity (Queens Chronicle) and have secured letters of support. We are continuing to reach out to parents and gathering signatures. We are receiving eager support from parents and the community who welcome this venture and believe that this option is critical for the future success of the children.


Scherly Leon


Date

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)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Dr. Scherly Leon	[REDACTED]	State University of New York Down State Medical Center	As a physician Dr. Leon promotes and advocate for the consideration of health and well-being of all students in planning of school program. Other skills and experience include: working knowledge of dealing and handling concerns and issues of populations in underserved areas including CSD 29Q, community outreach, research, leadership, excellent decision-making, problem solving, collaboration, technology, social media, working with various people groups, working with stakeholders, knowledge of STEM programs and speaks more than one language. Dr. Leon is currently a board member.	Trustee	Board Chair	1 yr	Yes
Gregory B. Pietrzak	[REDACTED]	Macina & Pietrzak, LLC, New York, NY	Knowledge of general law including laws that apply to children and immigrants. The CSD 29Q has a growing immigration population. His experience and skills also include: working with diverse population, negotiation, working with stakeholders, public speaking, community outreach, working with and advocating for families and ensuring families are heard, problem solving, excellent decision-making, collaboration, and relationship building. Mr. Pietrzak is currently a board member.	Trustee	Board Vice Chair	1 yr	Yes
Horace J. Aiken	[REDACTED]	Trey Whitfield School	School finance, corporate finance, financial and compliance auditing; accounting and auditing for government, not-for-profits and for-profits agencies and organizations, problem solving, working with stakeholders, negotiation, relationship building, and excellent decision-making. Mr. Aiken is currently the Board Treasurer.	Trustee	Board Treasurer	1 yr	Yes

Carola Craig	[REDACTED]	Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School	As a Parent Coordinator for one of the most successful PTAs in the district, Ms. Craig's experience and skills include: parent advocacy, working knowledge of issues impacting families of diverse backgrounds, real world solutions for working with families, problem solving, excellent decision-making, computer, helping parents bridge the gap between school and home, working and supporting students on a daily basis. Ms. Craig is currently the Board Secretary.	Trustee	Board Secretary	1 yr	Yes
Twinkle Morgan-McDor	[REDACTED]	Cooperman Scholars Program	Charter school development, strategic planning, student recruitment, fundraising, finance, development and operation of various educational programs, negotiation, works with diverse populations, data management, collaboration, ability to bring people of various backgrounds together, excellent decision-making, worked in areas of STEM and knowledgeable about STEM programs, program start-up, business management, developing and administrating organizational systems. problem solving, and excellent decision-making. Mrs. Morgan-McDonald is currently a board member.	Trustee	Member	1 yr	Yes
Marie-Alix Emmanuel	[REDACTED]	Retired School Administrator	Department of Education (DOE) school administrator, pedagogy, program development, school curriculum, taught and supervised ESL programs, worked with and supervised programs for students with disabilities, staff development, coaching, family engagement, community engagement, collaboration, facility management, data management, problem solving, excellent decision-making and speaks more than one language. Mrs. Emmanuel is currently a board member.	Trustee	Member	1 yr	Yes

Jude Jolibois		High School for Medical Profession	Department of Education (DOE) teacher, Dean, Program Chair, and Data Specialist, curriculum development, organizational leadership, school systems, school schedule programming, pedagogy, classroom management, Common Core State Standards and curriculum integration, economics, technology, deconstruction of the Danielson Framework, unit planning, lesson planning, problem solving, excellent decision-making, working with diverse populations, family engagement, school operation and speaks more than one language. Dr. Jolibois is currently a board member.	Trustee	Member	1 yr	Yes
M. Lycia Grant		The Learning Solution Center, LLC	School administrator, classroom teacher, pedagogy, curriculum development, project-based learning, integration of STEM into curriculum, building STEM collaborations, staff training, data analysis, planning and monitoring student outcome, marketing, student recruitment and enrollment, facility management, school budgeting, community outreach, fundraising, negotiation, family engagement, working with diverse populations, working with special education students, problem solving, technology, mentoring, coaching, mediation, conflict resolution, developing policies, classroom management, staff supervision, conducting professional development, parent workshops and seminars, adherence to state regulations and policies, grants writing, community engagement, business management, collaboration, excellent decision-making. Mrs. Grant is currently the Board Vice Chair.	Employee			
Lenora Allen-Hines		Retired BET Executive Secretary	Scheduling, creating media kit, organizational skills, interpersonal communication, administrative support, research, presentations, excellent decision-making, problem solving, and community outreach. Mrs. Allen-Hines is currently a board member.	No Continuing Role			

Lorna Lightfoot	lorna98@msn.com	Marlin Mechanical	Project management, research, Notary Public, organizational skills, community outreach, problem solving, and excellent decision-making. Ms. Lightfoot is currently a board member.	No Continuing Role			
Jeremiah Grant	[REDACTED]	The Learning Solution Center, LLC	School administration, engineering, Project-based learning, Head Start site management, recruitment & enrollment of students and staff, business management, fundraising, revenue management, working with diverse people groups and cultures, budgeting & payroll, facility management, growth forecast, hiring and staff management, classroom teacher, strategic planning, staff evaluation, classroom management, staff development, student assessment, marketing, parent & community engagement, negotiation, high impact coaching, profit and loss analysis, data analysis, needs analysis, organizational development, problem solving, excellent decision-making, and interpersonal communication. Mr. Grant is currently Board Chair.	No Continuing Role			