

## LETTER OF INTENT

To: Charter School Office  
New York State Education Department

From: Lester Long, Lead Applicant  
South Bronx Classical Charter School

Date: Tuesday, January 17, 2012

Re: Letter of Intent to seek approval for South Bronx Classical Charter School II

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This Letter of Intent hereby signifies the Lead Applicant’s interest in submitting a Charter Application to the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) in response to the Request for Proposal (“RFP”) published in January 2012.

**I) Applicant Information**

- a. Applicant(s) information, including mailing address, phone number, and email address, and information establishing that the applicant(s) is a parent, teacher, school administrator or community resident.
- b. Media contact: please provide a phone number and/or email address to which public inquiries about the proposed charter school may be addressed.

Lead Applicant	Media Contact
Lester Long, Executive Director South Bronx Classical Charter School 977 Fox Street, Bronx, NY 10459 (718) 860-4340 llong@southbronxclassical.org	Leena Konda, Director South Bronx Classical Charter School 977 Fox Street, Bronx, NY 10459 (718) 860-4340 lkonda@southbronxclassical.org

- c. The names of each member of the applicant founding group, including all applicants, along with a very brief description of relevant experience and skills. Please identify the current or prospective role that each member has or will hold in relation to the proposed charter school.

<u>Lester Long, Lead Applicant</u> Founder & Executive Director, SBCCS Proposed Executive Director, SBCCS II	<u>C. Stephen Baldwin</u> Board Chair, SBCCS Proposed Board Chair, SBCCS II
<u>Leena Konda</u> Founding Operations Manager, SBCCS Proposed School Director, SBCCS II	<u>Shawn-Ann Mullen</u> Business Manager, SBCCS Proposed Director of Business, SBCCS II
<u>Jacqueline Davis</u> Fifth Grade Team Leader, SBCCS	

**d. The names of proposed members the school’s initial board of trustees, which must include a minimum of five members, along with a very brief description of relevant experience and skills if not provided above.**

Consistent with the Charter School Law of 1998, as amended, the proposed Board of Trustees will consist of the Board of Trustees of South Bronx Classical Charter School.

C. Stephen Baldwin	Founding Board Chair of SBCCS since 2006. Former third grade teacher and attorney at the United Nations.
Kathryn Moore Heleniak	Vice Chair of SBCCS since 2008. Professor, Fordham University.
J. Kevin Murphy	Founding Board Secretary of SBCCS since 2006. Nine years of elementary school teaching experience and over 30 years of financial advisement experience.
Melissa Brown	Current Treasurer of SBCCS since 2009. Vice President, Barclays Bank. Williams College and Harvard Business School.
Louisa Childs	Trustee of SBCCS since 2010. Counsel at the Dwight International School. Dartmouth College and NYU School of Law.
Kristi Jacques	Trustee of SBCCS since 2010. Associate, King & Spalding. Duke University School of Law.
Bill Higgins	Founding Trustee of SBCCS since 2006. Retired, United States Naval Reserve.
James Maher	Trustee of SBCCS since 2010. Vice President, BlackRock, Inc. Brown University and NYU Master’s in Real Estate Finance and Investment.
Larry Hirsch	Founding Trustee of SBCCS since 2006. Senior Representative, US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.

**e. Replication or Network Information: If the proposed charter school is a replication of another school model or intended to be part of a network, identify the charter school being replicated (inside or outside New York State) and provide a brief description of the network. Please also indicate if the applicant group, in part or in whole, sits on the board of trustees of an existing charter school, and if the applicant group is submitting other applications during this round.**

The Proposed Charter School is a replication of SBCCS and will have the same Board of Trustees. The Lead Applicant has not submitted other applications during this round.

**f. Application History: If you or another member of the current or a previous founding group has ever applied to this or another charter entity to open this proposed school or another charter school, either in New York State or outside of New York State, please indicate the date the application(s) was/were submitted and to which charter entity, and briefly describe the outcome of the charter entity’s decision.**

The Lead Applicant and Applicant Founding Group have only previously applied for a charter for South Bronx Classical Charter School, in November 2005, which was approved in December 2006.

**II. Proposed Charter School Information**

**a. Proposed school name.**

South Bronx Classical Charter School II (“SBCCS II”)

**b. Proposed school location (school district or community school district in NYC).  
Community School Districts 12, 8, 7, 9, or 11 (in order of preference)**

**c. Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term.**

Year	Year	K	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Total
1	13-14	60	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120
2	14-15	60	60	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	177
3	15-16	60	60	57	54	-	-	-	-	-	231
4	16-17	60	60	57	54	51	-	-	-	-	282
5	17-18	60	60	57	54	51	48	-	-	-	330

**d. 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.**

The proposed school will be a partner with SBCCS.

**e. Proposed school mission.**

South Bronx Classical Charter School II prepares K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the South Bronx to excel in college-preparatory high schools. Through a classical curriculum and highly structured setting, students become liberated scholars and citizens of impeccable character who achieve proficiency in and advanced mastery of New York State Performance Standards.

**f. School overview: A brief description of the school model, especially any innovative design elements that might require specific expertise to evaluate during the review process.**

SBCCS II will closely resemble the school model of SBCCS. In addition to the focus on the fundamentals of reading, writing, and math, the school offers character education to all its scholars, Latin starting in third grade, and Debate starting in fourth grade. Finally, consistent with a liberal arts education, the school seeks to ensure that scholars graduate with a diverse array of skills and appreciation in Art and Music.

Similar to SBCCS, the school’s instructional leadership will include the Executive Director and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and each grade will have a Grade Team Leader, who will be in charge of curricular refinement, observing and improving teachers in his or her grade, holding grade team meetings, and reporting to the Executive Director. This system provides organizational stability and a leadership pipeline for teachers to become Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, Principals, Literacy and Math coaches, or Deans of Students.

**g. Briefly describe the school’s target population and the community that the school intends to serve.**

The school’s target population is the families of the South Bronx, particularly in the Longwood, Hunts Point, Morrisania, and surrounding neighborhoods. These areas are highly diverse, and thus

demographic statistics vary greatly. Generally, however, the target population resides in areas in profound need of improved educational outcomes.

Bronx County: The proposed school is planned to be located in Bronx County, the 3<sup>rd</sup> most densely populated county in the United States (out of 3,300). Of all counties east of Texas, Bronx County has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest proportion of Hispanics, 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest proportion of non-Hispanic whites, and the highest rate of persons who self-identified as “some other race” or “multiracial”. Bronx County is one of five counties nationwide with over 30% of households headed by single women (three of the five are Indian reservations). Bronx County has the highest poverty, child poverty, murder, rape, and robbery rates in New York State,<sup>12</sup> as well as the highest pediatric asthma rate in New York.

Congressional District 16: The school is proposed to be located in Congressional District 16, which covers most of the South Bronx, and has the highest poverty rate in the United States as well as the lowest rate of “well off” households (defined as having incomes 500% of the poverty rate).

Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA): Used by the US Census Bureau as geographic regions, there are 2,071 PUMAs throughout the United States. The school is proposed to be located in PUMA 3710, which houses much of the South Bronx. PUMA 3710 has a higher proportion of Spanish speakers than the US as a whole, New York State, New York City, or the other 9 PUMAs within the Bronx. PUMA 3710 has the highest poverty, and child poverty, rates in the United States, with 34.2% of its residents in extreme poverty (annual income less than half the poverty line). Of the 153 PUMAs in the New York City Metropolitan Area, the three poorest PUMAs are in the South Bronx.

Community School Districts (CSDs): The school is proposed to be housed in Districts 12, 9, 7, or 8, ranking 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>, respectively, out of New York City’s 32 districts in ELA test scores.

**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. Describe the school’s strategies to attract, recruit, and retain its students, particularly those identified in the school’s mission and students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program.**

The proposed school will comply with all aspects of the Charter School Law of 1998, as amended and specifically including the amendments of 2010, which includes the development of specific strategies to attract students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students eligible for the free and reduce lunch program (“At-Risk Students”)

Similar to SBCCS, all SBCCS II marketing materials and student applications will include language (in both English and Spanish) encouraging At-Risk Students to apply to the school’s lottery. The school will hold several parent orientations, at the school, preschools, Headstart programs, and day-

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<sup>1</sup> <http://128.59.96.140/bronxbeat09/www/story.asp?id=342>

<sup>2</sup> These statistics were generously provided by Lehman College at <http://www.lehman.edu/deannss/bronxdatactr/discover/bxtext.htm>

care centers, to provide assistance to families of At-Risk Students. Our Special Education Coordinator will attend all such parent orientations and answer any questions parents of At-Risk Students may have, at the orientations or at any other time. Just as at SBCCS, a person who speaks Spanish will answer our phones and emails to ensure that interested parents are encouraged to apply.

**IV. Public Outreach and Community Support**

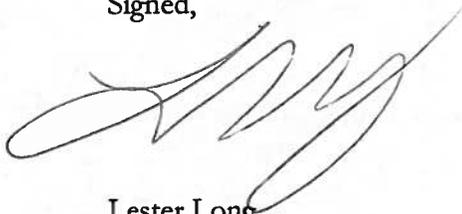
**Describe public outreach conducted to date to solicit community input regarding the proposed school, which may include public meetings held, discussions with community parents, stakeholders or organizations, public awareness campaigns, media coverage or results from surveys conducted. In addition, provide an initial assessment of sufficient interest in the proposed charter school to allow the school to reach its anticipated enrollment.**

Throughout the process of deciding to replicate, we have had numerous discussions with parents at SBCCS who have evidenced (including through the Learning Environment Survey) their satisfaction with SBCCS. In addition, we have consistently communicated with elected officials and community leaders about the school, and our desire to expand. Based on these conversations as well as our current successes, we expect SBCCS II to be very similar in its design.

The most important display of need for the proposed school is student application volume at the original school. As demonstrated below, SBCCS II will be able to easily fill its seats from the excess demand at SBCCS, with no additional marketing. Nevertheless, we intend to distribute flyers around the community to ensure equitable access and information.

School Year	Kindergarten Applicants	Siblings Accepted	Non-Siblings Accepted	Waitlisted Applicants
2007 - 2008	128	9	66	62
2008 - 2009	157	14	61	96
2009 - 2010	258	16	59	199
2010 - 2011	270	15	60	210
2011 - 2012	309	12	63	246

Signed,



Lester Long  
Lead Applicant