LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY
Science Math Arts Research Technology (S.M.A.R.T)
SMART University Preparatory Charter School

I. Applicant Information

a. **Lead Applicant:** Cynthia Smith, [redacted]

[redacted]
Cynthia Smith has over twenty years of experience ranging from elementary to Middle school teacher. She presently works as an Assistant Principal at Renaissance Middle School in Queens New York.

b. **Media Contact**

Timolin James
917 903-6262, timolin3@gmail.com

c. Applicant Founding Group

Cynthia Smith is a seasoned educator with over 20 years of experience in the NYC Department of Educator. Ms. Smith entered education through alternative certification having been trained as a biologist who worked as a biomedical researcher before coming to the school setting. She holds a BS in Biology and a MS in Educational Leadership. Ms. Smith pursued a doctorate in Animal Nutrition at Pennsylvania State University. Ms. Smith's role in the SMART University Preparatory Charter School will be to serve as its' Executive Director.

Timolin James is a doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership who has a love and passion for seeing young minds grow and blossom. She has been in the Department of Education for over 20 years and has served in many capacities including School Safety. Ms. James earned a reputation in middle school as being able to take the "at-risk" children and finding the best in them. She developed her love of literacy in having to teach middle school students to read who were three or more grade level behind their peers and had severe discipline problems. Because of this, she continued her studies in literacy to better understand the issues in teaching children to read. She is a certified Literacy Specialist in grades birth-12. To that end, Ms. James will serve as the Principal of the SMART University Preparatory Charter School.

Mr. Alfred Garry is a seasoned veteran of the NYC department of Education, who has worked as a para-professional teacher, and supervisor. He brings High School experience as a master math teacher and understands the need for academic rigor to prepare middle school students for successfully mastering the high school curriculum. Mr. Garry has also worked in the middle school and knows the uniqueness of the middle school learner. He has a good understanding of child development and excellent communication skills with parents. He has a master's degree in education and will serve as Assistant Principal in the Smart University Preparatory Charter School.

Omotayo Noisette is a young educator with ten years of experience. She is a dedicated science teacher who is innovative and creative in her teaching delivery. She is an excellent teacher and has developed a science curriculum that covers basic curriculum and is inclusive of accelerated topics for students who are on an accelerated academic track. Ms. Noisette has great oral and written communication skills and has developed after-school and Saturday programs for "at-promise" as well as advanced students. She is an educator who has constantly sought to stay current in her craft. She holds degrees in science and science education and has a master's degree in Education Administration. Ms. Noisette has a great rapport with her peers, parents and students. She is not a teacher who is bound by her contract and believes in working with the team to move children to achieve their greatest possibilities. She is a dependable and reliable person who will serve as the Lead Teacher of the SMART University Preparatory Charter School.

d. **Board of Trustees**

A**lma Summors,** is a recently retired school principal with over twenty five years of experience as an educator. Mrs. Summors began her career with the city in the Henry Street Settlement Houses and worked for several years with Manhattan District Attorney Morganthou. She moved into education based on her desire to impact young minds before they made life-altering mistakes. Mrs. Summors is a Bank Street trained educator having completed the Principal's Institute Program. She will bring her wealth of leadership and knowledge to this initiative.

Thermal Stewart, CPA is a certified public accountant. He is the Vice President of Finance for Fox 4 communications. He is a member of the broadcasting association and will bring his vast knowledge of finance and voice to this initiative.

David Glover is a retired NYS auditor and is facilitator of the youth program at his church. He has expertise experience in business management and finance. He will bring his knowledge of business management to this initiative.

Brenetta Blackwell, ESQ is a member of the NYS Bar Association and a NYC Middle School teacher. She has taught 6, 7 and 8th grades, was a lead teaching coach and helped students to achieve outstanding academic success. She will bring her knowledge of curriculum to this initiative.

Michael Williams is a public health advisor for the NYC Department of Health. He is an expert in training staff in various aspects of bureau policy and procedure. He will bring his knowledge of policy, statues and procedures to this initiative.

Carlos Nieves is a stationary fireman with the NYC Department of Education. He is an expert in building maintenance and safety. He will bring his expertise of maintaining a safe and secure school environment to this initiative.

e. **Replication or Network Information:** non-applicable

f. **Application History:**

In 2010, Cynthia Smith applied to the New York City Department of Education office of charter schools to open SMART University Preparatory school and the application was rejected. Our final proposal was turned in on time and misplaced by the Charter office personnel. Subsequently the wrong proposal was read and rejected. We applied to NYSED Round 2 Charter School proposal and was advised that the proposal was uploaded to the wrong web address resulting in the proposal not being read.

II. Proposed Charter School Information:

a. Proposed school name: SMART University Preparatory Charter School

b. Proposed school location: The SMART University Preparatory Charter School will be located in school district 29, Queens, NY. A site has been secured at 245-46 147th Drive, Rosedale, NY. The charter school is designed as a Middle School that will also welcome English Language Learners (ELL)/ESL (English as Second Language) and SWD's (Students with Disabilities). If the school is approved, during the first five years it will service 600 students in grades 6, 7 and 8.

c. Plan grades and enrollment:

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total year 5
6	200 students	200 students	200 students	200 students	200 students	200
7	0	200 students	200 students	200 students	200 students	200
8	0	0	200 students	200 students	200 students	200
Total	200 year 1	400 year 2	600 year 3	600 year 4	600 year 5	600

d. Proposed management/partner organizations: non-applicable

e. Proposed school mission: The school of Science, Math, Arts, Research and Technology is committed to the social development and academic growth of each child in a technically literate environment that is nurturing and academically rigorous.

f. School overview: The SMART University Preparatory Charter School will welcome all students regardless of backgrounds or socio-economic status. We will have high expectations for all our students. The SMART University Preparatory Charter School will guide each student toward his/her academic, social, emotional, and physical potential by: providing comprehensive

exposure in academic areas while also stressing individual needs. Promoting the necessity for each student to recognize and accept responsibility for his/her actions and for the result of these actions. The SMART University Prep School will assist each student with coping with stress by developing strengths and promoting a positive self-image. Introducing and encouraging good health practices toward physical well-being. In the SMART University Preparatory Charter School, instruction will be differentiated to meet the needs of the learner, thereby ensuring that IEP as well as regular education and ELL students are being taught with appropriate strategies for their specific needs. The rigor of the curriculum in the core subjects of math, science, ELA and social studies will be a continuation and enhancement of the background student's have from elementary school. The educational program will consist of best practices from research-based curriculums/programs in accordance with NYS Learning Standards such as Core Knowledge (E.D. Hirsch), Bank Street College Progressive Approach and America's Choice instructional strategies.

Students will have a track record of being actively engaged in non-academic activities (ie.dance, theater, scouting, choir, volunteerism, etc.). The SMART University Preparatory Charter School student will be one who sees higher education in their future and is supported by parents/guardians. The program will seek to provide a well-rounded program where students are exposed to the arts and non-traditional sports (fencing, lacrosse). Students who are not approaching NYS standards on standardized exams will not be excluded from consideration for entry into the program.

Instruction will follow the work-shop model as well as include a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. By the time students exit grade eight they will be well versed in the Socratic method of learning. Teaching and instruction will encompass the following: project based learning, research, performance based learning, tutorials, whole group and small group learning, homogeneous and heterogeneous instructional learning.

The curriculum at SMART University Preparatory Charter School is designed to provide all students with instruction that will prepare them for an advanced High School curriculum. The curriculum will be based on the New York State Standards. This curriculum will include English Language Arts, social studies, mathematics, science, technology, physical education, health education, arts, and music. The curriculum is aligned so as to ensure that students successfully meet/exceed goals and benchmarks of the New York State Standards, as well as perform well on the State Assessment Tests.

The school will meet standards of student achievement based on the following:

- Instruction using a rigorous academic curriculum
- Instruction using differentiated strategies and techniques
- By focusing on students' strengths and weaknesses through on-going assessments
- By implementing best practices through on-going workshops and professional development
- Through parental involvement opportunities
- By focusing on "Failure is Not an Option" by Allan Blakenstein to ensure the use of the six principles of success for every student
- Emphasis on the twelve powerful words throughout all subject areas, "Twelve Powerful Words" by Larry Bell

The curriculum will be rigorous bur not rigid. Changes will be made for specific components where the teachers/team deems that it needs to be to meet the needs of the students. Since the school has a philosophy of being "child-centered," staff is expected to "know" the students in multiple ways (i.e., family dynamics, extra-curricular activities and student interests, etc.) – not just from an academic perspective. The curriculum will emphasize both process skills and performance-based tasks, not just focus on results. The school will act on its belief that all children can learn by providing alternative strategies and programs that serve those who may not be adequately mastering the New York State Standards or those students with special needs. Accordingly, efforts will be made to provide before, during and after-school activities that speak to social and academic needs of our students.

g. Targeted Population: The SMART University Preparatory Charter School will consist of adverse student population. Demographically we anticipate a student group reflective of the community and the surrounding areas. Typically this will include but not be limited to students of African descent (African America, Caribbean Islands including recent Haitian Refugees, Latin American, South America, Canadian, European, African Nations, and East Indians descent.) Because the student population is expected to be ethnically diverse we anticipate students who speak another language than English. Current demographics suggest that Haitian Creole, Spanish, French, Urdu and Arabic will be the primary languages spoken by potential ELL students. Among the students that perhaps may be enrolled we acknowledge that some may have individual educational programs (IEP'S). Students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment and/or included with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's individualized education plan (IEP).

III: Enrollment and Retention of Students: Based on the law, students will be enrolled from the district 29 community by implementing the lottery and application process established by the State. District 29 has many overcrowded schools and a large diverse community. Students will be recruited by founding members making announcements at various community meetings, church services, conducting open houses, disseminating flyers, and attending information sessions at public/private elementary schools. To serve the ELL population recruitment will be conducted in various languages, home language questionnaires and informal interviews. Students who are eligible applicants for free and reduced price lunch program will have an admissions preference.

IV. Public outreach and Community Support: To date, our team has made announcements at several community meetings. Information flyers have been distributed and a listing has been placed on Craig's list website. Parents are eager, supportive and are seeking a charter school setting for their children. Meetings are also scheduled with officials from District 29.

Lead Applicants (s)

Cynthia Smith

Date: August 15, 2012