

LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY

I. Applicant Information

a. Applicant(s) information:

- Frank M. Mulhern [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] school administrator
- Dwight Paine, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Community Resident; Teacher, administrator;
- Allison Withers, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] community resident. Teacher, administrator
- Bitsy Johnson [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Community resident, parent
- Carmen McGill [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] community resident, college administrator
- Karen Coleman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Community resident, parent
- Nalo Hampton, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] community resident, executive director
of education for non-profit SHARE (Sexual Health and Reproductive Education)

- b. **Media contact:** Frank Mulhern franktheeagle@aol.com
Dwight Paine dpainefpcs@gmail.com

c. The names of each member of the applicant founding group:

- 1) Dwight Paine: community resident. Teacher, administrator, educator since 1968 (retired 2011) including department chairperson (Mathematics), head of upper school, assistant director, acting head of school, co founder of Circle of Courage Learning Community, assistant to superintendent. Presently volunteer tutor in Poughkeepsie City School District, member of community collaboration committee (PCSD), member of Citizens Advisory Committee (PCSD), community connector. Dwight's years of experience as a teacher and as an administrator have enabled him to provide professional development to many teachers and to provide critical insight for parents struggling with the needs and development of their children. With his work over the last ten years, as an employee and then a volunteer, he has extensive knowledge of the Poughkeepsie City School District and the youth in the city.
- 2) Frank Mulhern: Community Resident of Dutchess County, Mr. Mulhern has 24 years of experience as a school administrator currently serving as Director of PPS Services in Beacon City School District. As a NYS Certified School Administrator with a Masters in Special Education from New Paltz, Mulhern previously worked as a Special Education Coordinator in Poughkeepsie School District and a Special Education Director in Hudson City School District. Mr. Mulhern was the CEO/Superintendent for Anderson School in Dutchess County from 1983-1997. Mr. Mulhern is the founding board member of the Mid-Hudson Coalition (MHC) for the Development of Direct Care Practice providing educational supports for para-professional staff in school and residential settings. He also served as Director of Professional Development for social welfare agencies in Bronx, NY. He has been highly involved in developing Parent University Programs in small city school districts. Mr. Mulhern brings strong administrative leadership, extensive knowledge of creative school

designs for challenged learners and useful professional development for faculty and educational staff.

- 3) Allison Withers, teacher, administrator, educator since 1964, (retired 2011) including department chairperson (Foreign Languages), head of middle school. Presently library board member, literacy volunteer in the city of Poughkeepsie. A careful and thoughtful listener, Allison combines these attributes with extensive knowledge of middle school age youth and has in turn been an important, sometimes necessary, resource for other middle school teachers and parents of middle school students. Her years of experience with language learning and now with ESL as a literacy volunteer with an unusually diverse population in Poughkeepsie are significant assets for working with youth.
- 4) Carmen McGill is a Poughkeepsie resident, community activist, and parent of children who attended the Poughkeepsie City School District. She is the director of admission at Dutchess Community College. She has a passion to improve the human condition which usually involves her with many community activities.
- 5) Bitsy Johnson has been a Poughkeepsie resident for many years and is an active member of her church and community. She and her husband have worked as advocates for the youth in the city, assisting with court advocacy and youth development projects. She worked part time in the Poughkeepsie City School District for many years after retiring from IBM.
- 6) Karen Coleman has been a Poughkeepsie resident her whole life, as her family has been in residence for over 50 years. Her children attend the Poughkeepsie City Schools, and she is an active advocate for a stronger and healthier community.

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.

Dwight Paine; Carmen McGill; Frank Mulhern; Allison Withers, William Sanchez: Dutchess County Youth Bureau Director (former); bilingual, youth advocate; Jane C. Ebaugh, Ph.D. in literacy, is a community resident of Dutchess County and is certified as a NYS Certified School District Administrator; and has teacher certifications in general education, special education and reading.

e. Replication or Network Information: N/A

f. Application History: A letter of intent was first submitted in 2011, and the prospectus was not accepted for application at that time. A letter of intent was submitted and accepted in January 2012 to NYSED. However, the Board decided to submit an application in the next round so that all community outreach activities that were required could be scheduled, and additional support from the community was evident.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

- a. **Proposed school name.** Four Pillars Charter School
- b. **Proposed school location** Poughkeepsie City School District
- c. **Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term.**

Grades	Projected Enrollment Table				
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
K					54
1st				54	54
2nd			54	54	54
3rd		54	54	54	54
4 th	54	54	54	54	54
5 th	54	54	54	54	54
6 th	66	66	66	66	66
7 th	66	66	66	66	66
8 th		66	66	66	66
Totals	240	360	414	468	522

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.

PPY, Inc. a non-profit, 501 (c)(3) educational corporation will assist in the development and implementation of policies, procedures and programs to help the Four Pillars Charter School meet its charter contract obligations and objectives. PPY, Inc. will provide guidance and support to the Four Pillars Charter School in the areas of (i) finance, (ii) administration, (iii) academic operations, (iv) compliance with local, state and federal regulation (v) program growth and sustainability, and (vi) marketing and enrollment support.

- Chief Finance Officer, Daniel Rishavy, is an expert at advising charter schools to achieve statutory compliance, financial planning and reporting, and the implementation of robust data analysis to accelerate academic performance. He has a Master of Finance, has completed MBA coursework, and graduate-level coursework in curriculum and instructional technology. He has worked and supported charter schools as an educational service provider to 28 charter schools since 2008. Mr. Rishavy was Chief Operating Officer at Charter Schools USA, as an ESP providing services to 22 charter schools during his time there.
- Chief Education Officer, Dr. Fern Aefsky, is an educator with over 30 years in public education, 16 years in higher education and two years experience with charter school operations. She received her Doctorate in educational leadership from Nova Southeastern University. For over 25 years, Dr. Aefsky served various public school districts in NY as Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Special Education, including over 8 years in small city school districts. Her expertise is in the areas of developing programs

for students with disabilities and at-risk student populations, and assessing outcomes with high expectation of student success through community and family partnerships.

- Human Resource Director, Mark Levenson is a human resource senior executive with SHRM certification and over 30 years of HR management experience, and 7 years of experience in providing HR support to K-12 charter schools.

e. Proposed school mission.

The mission of the Four Pillars Charter School is to provide increased educational opportunities and improve student learning and achievement as measured by state assessments and school assessments for students in low income communities who are at risk of academic failure in grades k-8, with possible expansion in a sister school through grade 12, and to facilitate school choice for parents and students in communities with high levels of persistent poverty and high minority populations (African American and Latino).

f. School overview:

The school model is one that will provide an instructional program that complies with all state and federal regulations, with focus on the National Common Core Curriculum Standards. A focus on S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) will promote thematically aligned integration of these core standards and will be evident in all grades and subject areas. A key component is nurturing the relationship between student success and family and community involvement. Technological focus throughout the curriculum will increase student motivation and opportunity through online courses, integration throughout the curriculum and community service projects. Partnerships with businesses and community agencies will be integrated into the core curriculum requirements to enhance student learning and success. Providing purposeful service learning (community service) and internships will be an integral part of the schools program.

The target population is students who are at risk for dropping out of school prior to high school graduation. In 2010-2011 (most recent data available), the New York State District Report Card Summary indicated that students in grades 3-8 demonstrated a range of 20% (grade 8) to 34% proficiency in Language Arts and 20% (grade 6) to 37% (grade 5) in Mathematics. Poughkeepsie has a graduation rate of approximately 57% and one middle school and one high school. Students who have not been successful in the public school can be successful in a smaller learning environment with targeted connections to literacy, service learning and project-based learning using technology and research-based instructional tools to increase student motivation. The community the school will be located in is a high poverty (82% free and reduced lunch) and high minority (84%) area. Within a 15 mile radius, other communities in the Mid Hudson Valley have demographics of demonstrated need for minority students and areas of poverty ranging from 52% to 86% as indicated by free and reduced lunch and minority statistics. These students would be eligible to attend and be transported to the charter school under current Education Law.

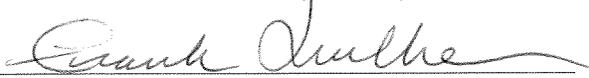
Ongoing assessment at the school, local and state level will provide data to inform instruction. Student performance will be measured monthly and quarterly, through benchmark assessments, curriculum based assessments and student performance on local assessments.

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.

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 include a robust public relations campaign. Fact sheets will be presented that explain that support for students with disabilities, English Language learners and students who are eligible applicants for free and reduced lunch program will receive services and supports that are available under NYS Part 100 and Part 200 regulations. Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and 504 plans will be requested and reviewed for entrants into the school to ensure that support is aligned with state and Federal requirements. Students with disabilities (SWD) will be provided appropriate levels of service as indicated on IEP’s and 504 plans by certified special education teachers and related service personnel. Student needs will be met in the least restrictive environment, based on the nature and severity of their educational disability. Teachers certified in ELL will provide appropriate levels of support and services to identified students, consistent with NYSED part 154 regulations. Community members, parents and students will be invited to attend informational meetings that are well-advertised, and encourage people to attend by offering refreshments and other motivational connections with community partners. Parental feedback has been solicited through informal conversations in the community and has been positive in support of a charter school. Parents have expressed their wish for more than one option for rigorous school programs, requesting options for students in this community without having to relocate.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

Discussions have occurred throughout this past year by the founding members and various members of the school community and community members in the Mid Hudson Valley, including members of various community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, local financial institutions, community foundations, private foundations, attorneys, businesses, parents, and college educators from Marist College, Vassar College, Bard College, and SUNY New Paltz. There is a great interest in the proposed charter school. Many people want to see more disengaged students succeed. Documented survey results will be provided in the application process. Leadership of the charter school has had conversations with the superintendent and the members of the local school board about the charter school. Public forums have been held, and survey data collected from attendees.


Signature FRANK MULHERN

6/25/12
Date


Signature DWIGHT PAINE

6/25/12
Date