

PHASE I: Letter of Intent

Created Friday, February 06, 2015

Updated Tuesday, February 10, 2015

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	Hebrew Language Academy Charter School 2
Grades Served (K-5, .6-8, 9-12, etc.) During Initial Term	K-5
Number of Students During Initial Term	474

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	Sara Berman	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Public/Media Contact Person	Mark Fink	212-792-6234	mark@hebrewcharters.org

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

www.hla2.org

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).

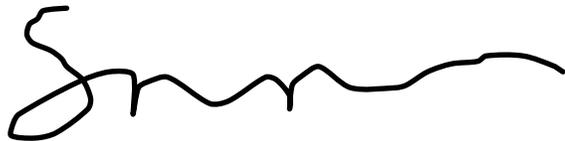
Proposed Management Company	Hebrew Charter School Center
Partner Organization 1	
Partner Organization 2	

Lead Applicant(s) Signature and Date

Use your PC mouse or your mobile device stylus to sign your name below.

Lead or Co-Applicant listed in section c above.

(Internet Explorer may not support this feature. Open the portal using Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. M.', written on a white background.

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

2015/02/10

Thank you for completing this survey so that the Department may plan its review panel accordingly.

I. Applicant Group Information

- a. Applicant group members, initial proposed board of trustees, and any proposed school employees: See Table 1.
- b. Roles and Experience of Applicant Group Members: See Table 1.
- c. Public Contact: Mark Fink, 212-792-6234, mark@hebrewcharters.org
- d. Application History: No Applicant Group member has previously applied to any charter entity to open Hebrew Language Academy Charter School 2. However, Sara Berman and David Gedzelman have previously applied to NYS authorizers for other charter schools. In 2008, Sara and David applied to the NYCDOE for the Hebrew Language Academy Charter School (HLA) in Community School District (CSD) 22 in Brooklyn, NY. HLA was approved by the NYCDOE and authorized by the NYS Board of Regents in 2009 and is now in its sixth year of operation. In 2011, Sara and David applied to NYSED for the Harlem Hebrew Language Academy Charter School (Harlem Hebrew) in CSD 3 in Manhattan, NY. They withdrew the application in 2011 and successfully re-applied in 2012. Harlem Hebrew was authorized by the NYS Board of Regents in 2012 and is now in its second year of operation. In 2011, Sara and David applied to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute for the Sosúa Hebrew Language Academy Charter School in CSD 6 in Manhattan. They withdrew the application in 2011 and decided against reapplying.

Attachment 5(a): New Applicant and Prospective School Trustee Background Information.

II. Propose Charter School Information

- a. Proposed School Name: Hebrew Language Academy Charter School 2 (HLA 2)
- b. Proposed School Location: Brooklyn, New York City, CSD 21. We will request to be sited in school district facilities while also actively exploring private facility solutions.
- c. Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term.

Grade	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
K	83	83	83	83	83
1	83	83	83	83	83
2		83	83	83	83
3			79	79	79
4				75	75
5					71
Total	166	249	328	403	474

*Table takes into account student attrition.

- d. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organization(s): HLA 2 will be managed by the charter management organization (CMO), Hebrew Charter School Center (HCSC).
- e. Proposed school mission: Hebrew Language Academy Charter School 2 will provide its students with the academic and personal foundation necessary to successfully pursue advanced studies and achieve continued personal growth as ethical and informed global citizens. In order to accomplish this, Hebrew Language Academy Charter School 2 will offer an academically rigorous K-5 curriculum, which includes intensive instruction in the Hebrew language. Students in a diverse student body will also develop a strong sense of social and civic responsibility through the integration of service learning and community service across the curriculum.

f. School Overview: HLA 2 is a proposed K-5 charter school that will be located in Brooklyn's CSD 21. It is modeled after two existing NYC charter schools: HLA, which opened in CSD 22 in 2009 and Harlem Hebrew which opened in CSD 3 in 2013. Like HLA and Harlem Hebrew, an integral part of HLA 2's mission is the study of the Modern Hebrew language. Incorporating an intensive focus on Modern Hebrew in the curriculum fosters positive learning and developmental outcomes in students. There is ample

research that points to the advantages children gain when they begin the study of a foreign language at an early age, not the least of which is their development as individuals who are bilingual, bi-literate, and cross-culturally competent, better preparing them to be active participants in the global community.

HLA 2 will devote significant instructional time to core academic subjects to ensure student mastery of NYS Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and will set high standards for and expect high levels of achievement from all its students. Each week, students will have 10 hours of English Language Arts (ELA), 5 hours of Math, 3 hours of Social Studies, 2¼ hours of Science and 5 hours of Modern Hebrew. In addition, students will participate in 3 hours of physical education, 3 hours of art and music and 1 hour of Chess weekly. HLA 2 will have a longer school day and school year: 190 instructional days per year and a school day that begins 8:00 am and ends at 3:30 pm. This increased time on task is necessary for all students, especially those students at-risk of academic failure, to meet and exceed proficiency standards in all subject areas.

HLA 2 will use the workshop model of instruction, which is highly effective in working with heterogeneous classrooms of students, including students with disabilities (SWD), English language learners (ELLs) and Title I students. The workshop model is consistent with our commitment to a balanced instructional approach and builds capacity in teachers to differentiate instruction through the use of assessment data to identify students' needs and inform instruction. HLA 2's comprehensive assessment program will include a variety of formative and summative tools.

The Proficiency Approach (PA) will be used to teach Hebrew. PA is the most effective tool to enable students to *acquire*¹ language in a classroom setting and is considered the gold standard for teaching foreign language by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages. PA incorporates robust formative and summative assessment tools. Hebrew classes will be conducted exclusively in Hebrew so students hear the language as it is naturally spoken. Hebrew instruction will be enriched by the exploration of the language's attendant history and culture in the context of both American and world histories. It will also be integrated in other subjects in authentic moments by the Hebrew teacher who serves as a co-teacher during Social Studies and Science. Such integration allows students to build facility and capacity in the foreign language.

A unique instructional element will be HLA 2's co-teaching model allowing students to benefit from the instructional intensity that is derived from having two teachers in the classroom. Co-teaching will manifest itself through two general studies teachers co-teaching in Readers Workshop and Math. In Hebrew class, students will benefit from a Hebrew teacher and a Hebrew instructor in the class supporting targeted leveled instruction in a classroom of students with diverse Hebrew language abilities. In science and social studies, the co-teaching team will consist of the general studies and Hebrew teacher or Hebrew instructor.

An important part of our mission is to impact students with values of understanding and respect for others through the integration of an experiential service learning curriculum that promotes social responsibility through a cycle of action and reflection. Students will work collaboratively through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems.

We will invest in strong leadership and highly qualified and experienced teachers. Our approach emphasizes embedded professional development as reflected in a full-time Director of General Studies Curriculum and Instruction and Director of Hebrew Curriculum and Instruction, in addition to the Head of

¹ In the field of second language teaching, academics distinguish between *learning* a language and *acquiring* a language. When one *learns* a language, one accumulates knowledge about the language, its behavior and its structure: one relates to it as an outsider. When one *acquires* a language one internalizes its structure and its behavior, and as a result of this internalization one begins to use its linguistic components automatically to either understand or create meaningful messages.

School who acts as educational leader. Embedded staff development ensures teachers are fully supported and their instructional capacity is strengthened and deepened as the school continues to grow and develop.

To support HLA 2 in implementing its charter school model, achieving its charter goals and realizing its mission, we will engage the Hebrew Charter School Center (HCSC) as our CMO. We believe that with CMO support in both the educational and operational realms, HLA 2's leadership will be better able to direct its focus on continual improvement of student performance.

g. Target Population/Community Served: HLA 2 will serve students in Brooklyn's CSD 21. An important part of HLA 2's mission is to educate a diverse student body; as such, CSD 21 is an ideal district as it reflects the racial, economic and language diversity we seek. According to the 2012-13 NYS District Report Card, CSD 21 was comprised of 17% Black, 24% Hispanic, 26% Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander and 32% White students; 81% qualified for free- or reduced-priced lunch (FRL)²; and 16% were ELLs. In addition, 16% were designated as SWD. According to the 2013 Student Demographic Report from the NYCDOE Office of English Language Learners, the top 5 home languages for all students in CSD 21 in 2012 were Spanish (27%), Chinese (24%), Russian (22%), Urdu (10%) and Arabic (3%). HLA 2 expects that its student population will reflect this diversity. CSD 21 is also in need of strong public school options as evident by student performance on the 2014 NYS ELA and math assessments³. On the ELA assessment, 40% of Grade 3-8 students met proficiency standards and the achievement gap between the ELA performance of at-risk groups and their non-at-risk peers is wide. Only 4% of ELLs met proficiency standards versus 46% of English proficient students; 9% of SWD versus 46% of general education students (GE); 34% of FRL students versus 70% of non-FRL students and 19% of black and 21% of Hispanic students versus 52% of Asian and 49% of white students. The results on the 2014 NYS Math assessment showed similar challenges—49% of all students met proficiency standards while the disaggregated data shows the achievement gap persists: 21% of ELLs, 55% of English proficient, 18% of SWD, 56% of GE, 45% of FRL students, 76% of non-FRL, and 19% of black, 29% of Hispanic, 68% of Asian and 57% of white students met proficiency standards. Clearly, HLA 2 will be an important charter school option in a district with currently only two elementary charter schools to which parents can apply.

h. Replication of High Quality School Models: Not Applicable.

III. Enrollment and Retention of SWD, ELLs and FRL students.

Enrollment: We will engage in a focused effort to attract and recruit ELLs, SWD and FRL. Outreach to families of these special populations will stress our ability to serve these students with our supportive academic model that has the staffing, programs and interventions in place to effectively welcome these students and meet their individual needs. To meet enrollment targets, we will market HLA 2 to neighborhoods in CSD 21 where a predominance of low-income/poverty-level families and non-English speaking/immigrant families reside. We will utilize our community-based contacts and the many community leaders we have engaged and will continue to engage, including clergy, elected officials, nonprofit administrators, directors of preschools and Head Start programs, among other stakeholders who serve immigrant/non-English speaking and/or economically disadvantaged constituencies. All recruitment and application materials will be available, including on the school's website, in the dominant languages of the community. We will host family information sessions in such venues as houses of worship and local CBOs (especially those that have preschool programs serving low-income children, ELLs and SWD). These

² It should be noted that the current FRL data for CSD 21 is not a true representation of the average aggregate percentages of FRL students in the district. If a school elects to become an overall free lunch school, then they consider 100% of their students as eligible for free lunch, when in fact the actual percentage of FRL children may be lower.

³ <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/data/TestResults/ELAandMathTestResults>

meetings will highlight the academic program, inclusive school culture, intervention services and instructional specialists specifically focused on ELLs, SWD and Title I students. We will also target preschools which serve SWD and network with early intervention providers to reach parents of SWD. We will conduct mass mailings of our marketing materials and applications to targeted zip codes and will place ads in local papers, including those read by immigrant and minority populations.

Retention: Our commitment to parental support and engagement in HLA 2's academic and school life will help us retain at-risk students. We will ensure all parents, particularly of these at-risk students, feel welcomed as an integral part of the community. We will be sensitive to the needs of parents (for instance who may have work or have childcare constraints due to their socioeconomic circumstances) by offering a flexible schedule for parents to attend parent teacher conferences, PTA meetings and other events that are necessary to support their child's education and engage them in the school community. We will also ensure these meetings and events are accessible to non-English speaking parents through translators. At-risk students will thrive in our highly responsive school model that promotes individualized student instruction. Our data-driven instructional model, co-teaching approach and range of support and intervention strategies and staff ensures that all children's needs are met. HLA 2 will have a comprehensive academic intervention program designed to support SWD, ELLs and Title I students' achieving NYS CCLS. HLA 2 will have a strong Response to Intervention process to identify struggling students through data and classroom observations and establish collaborative, evidence-based interventions supported by special education staff, ELL and reading specialists, and social workers. For SWD, HLA 2 intends to provide the following services that may be required by a student's IEP: resource room, Special Education Teacher Support Services and potentially Integrated Collaborative Teaching classrooms within a particular grade and will also contract with outside providers for related services not provided by HLA 2 staff. For ELLs, HLA 2 will have at least one ELL Specialist who will work with classroom teachers in incorporating specific strategies like sheltered instruction in their classrooms to support ELLs (and former ELLs) in reading and math skills and in acquiring content knowledge. The ELL Specialist will also provide direct instructional support to ELLs. Title I students may fall into a number of categories, including ELLs and SWD and will receive services accordingly. HLA 2 will have at least one reading specialist who, in addition to working directly with Title I students, will support classroom teachers in incorporating research-based interventions to support struggling students in their own classroom teaching.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

a. In early 2014, the initial members of our Applicant Group began a thoughtful community engagement process to inform a wide variety of CSD 21 stakeholders about HLA 2 and to seek their input regarding the school's design. Since this time, our Applicant Group has expanded to include new individuals who were brought on to represent key community constituencies, or who had needed professional backgrounds and experiences and expressed a keen interest in working towards the HLA 2's creation. HLA 2 launched its website, www.hla2.org, in the summer of 2014. The website provides information about the school, its mission and academic model. It also contains an online survey for stakeholders to provide input and feedback on the school design for us to analyze and consider. All outreach materials including the survey, it should be noted, are available in Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Mandarin, Urdu, Hebrew and Arabic in addition to English. HLA is also supporting HLA 2's outreach efforts by placing a link to HLA 2's website on its social media outlets. We have met with the leadership of local community-based organizations (CBOs), particularly those whose clients include parents of preschool children. These meetings have allowed us to share information about HLA 2, solicit their feedback and ascertain the need for the school by their constituents. Among the CBOs we have met with are the Shorefront Y and Coney Island Generation Gap whose Executive Directors both agreed to join the Applicant Group in order to play a greater role in the development of the charter application and the work to raise awareness about HLA 2. The preschool

community is a critical constituency for us. We have sent brochures and surveys to 25 preschool directors throughout the district to inform them about HLA 2 and request they turnkey this information to their parent body.

We are also targeting housing developments in the community. Given our commitment to building an economically diverse school, the outreach includes Amalgamated Warbasse and Trump Village, both Mitchell-Lama projects, where we have already posted flyers with information about the school and survey and also NYCHA public housing projects, such as those in Coney Island, where we will soon be engaging with tenant leaders in order to inform them of HLA 2, seek their input and request their help in sharing HLA 2 flyers and surveys with the NYCHA residents.

We hosted a parent meeting on 1/28/15 at HLA, where prospective CSD 21 parents had an opportunity to visit and tour one of the schools on which HLA 2 is based. We also hosted a general community meeting at the Shorefront Y on 2/3/15. We solicited feedback from the attendees at both meetings and took careful note of the suggestions and comments we received.

We have met with several elected officials representing CSD 21 including, U.S. Congressman Hakeem Jeffries, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, NYS Senator Martin Golden, NYS Senator Diane Savino, NYC Councilman Mark Treygar and Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny. Congressman Jeffries was particularly enthusiastic about our educational model, its focus on dual language proficiency, our commitment to creating meaningful diversity in the school and the careful and deliberate steps we are taking to achieve it. He, in fact, hopes to refer two individuals to join our Applicant Group. Congressman Jeffries, as well as others, valued the introduction of a new school in CSD 21 where they felt one is needed.

We will continue our outreach during the charter application preparation stage, after the full application is submitted as well as post-authorization, should we be approved, reflecting our commitment to engaging the community in the school at all stages of its development. HLA 2 intends to use social media and will distribute brochures, surveys and other marketing materials in variety of venues, meet with community and individual stakeholders, place ads in local papers, issue press releases, reach out to preschools and CBOs serving parents of preschool age children and meet with elected officials.

b. Our initial assessment of interest indicates that there is sufficient demand to meet planned enrollment. To date, the stakeholders with whom we have met as well as survey responders have expressed a great desire for HLA 2. Its dual language program (and Hebrew language in particular) clearly resonates with the community as is evidenced by, among other factors, NYCDOE's plan to expand NYC dual language programs beginning this September. The one NYCDOE Hebrew dual language program, a proposed middle school program, will be in CSD 21 indicating NYCDOE's assessment of the relevance of and interest in Hebrew in the community. CSD 21 interest in a Hebrew dual language program is also borne out by HLA's experience. Although located in CSD 22, HLA draws significant interest from CSD 21 parents. Last year, 56 Kindergarteners and 28 first graders from CSD 21 applied for a seat in HLA even though there was no possibility of out of district applicants gaining enrollment in the school and all recruitment efforts were limited to CSD 22. As of 2/2/15 in this year's admissions process, HLA has received 57 Grade K and Grade 1 applicants from CSD 21. A Hebrew dual language school also appeals to a very diverse group of families as is evident by HLA's and Harlem Hebrew's demographics. Harlem Hebrew's population is 36% black, 20% Hispanic, 40% white and 4% multi-racial. HLA's population is 38% black, 4% Hispanic and 56% white. While further evidence of parent interest in the school will be secured, at this stage, it is clear there will be more than sufficient demand for HLA 2 to meet our proposed enrollment.

V. Proposed Board Chair Signature and Date



Sara Berman, Proposed Board Chair

February 10, 2015

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 representative)	LENGTH OF INITIAL TERM	VOTING MEMBER (YES OR NO)
Sara Berman	[REDACTED]	Freelance Journalist/Philanthropist	Charter School Governance, Charter School Development and Implementation, Fundraising	Trustee	Chair	2	Y
Stella Binkevich	[REDACTED]	Chief of Staff, Liaison Benefits	Community Relations and Engagement, Operational Management, Fundraising	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y
Susan Fox	[REDACTED]	Executive Director, Shorefront Y	Community Relations and Engagement, Nonprofit Administration and Management, Student Recruitment, Nonprofit Governance, Education	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y
David Gedzelman	[REDACTED].s	President & CEO, Steinhart Foundation	Charter School Governance, Charter School Development and Implementation, Fundraising, School Leadership Oversight, Nonprofit Administration and Management	Trustee	Treasurer	2	Y
Pam Harris	[REDACTED]	Executive Director, Coney Island Generation Gap	Community Relations and Engagement, Nonprofit Administration and Management, Student Recruitment, Youth Development	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y
Aaron Listhaus	[REDACTED]	Executive Director for Education, Hebrew Charter School Center	K-12 Curriculum and Instruction, Community Relations and Engagement, Charter School Governance, Charter School Management, Board and School Leader Development	Trustee	Secretary	2	Y
Adam Miller, Esq.	[REDACTED]	Attorney with Kauff, Laton & Miller LLP	Legal, Charter School Governance	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y
Eli Schaap	[REDACTED]	Senior Vice President, Steinhart Foundation	Real Estate and Facilities Development, Budgeting, Charter School Governance, School Assessment and Student Achievement Data Analysis, Human Resources, Organizational Design.	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y
Ella Zalkind, Esq.	[REDACTED]	Attorney with Siller, Wilk LLP	Legal, Charter School Governance, Community Relations and Engagement	Trustee	Trustee	1	Y