

Letter of Intent: Contact Information Form

Created Thursday, June 19, 2014

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All applicants seeking to establish a charter school authorized by the Board of Regents to open in 2014 must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply, which requires completion of this contact form, and an upload of your 5 page Letter of Intent to Apply as outlined in the 2014 RFP and Application Kit. Please submit these tasks by 3:00 PM on February 3, 2014. Applicants who do not submit a complete Letter of Intent to Apply by the 3:00 PM deadline will not be permitted to submit a Full Application.

a. 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).

SMART Academy Charter School

b. Preferred school location.

Select the preferred geographical area on the left and then select the preferred school district or community school district on the right.

Upstate School Districts: Buffalo City School District (not BOCES)

Select a second geographical area on left and then select the school district or community school district on right.

Upstate School Districts: Buffalo City School District (not BOCES)

If necessary, select a third geographical area on left and then select the school district or community school district on right.

None

c. 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.

(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	Street Address, City, State, Zip
Lead Applicant	Dr. Frank Herstek	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

As the Lead Applicant(s), I (we) can best be described as a:

(Multiple responses permitted)

- Community Resident

d. Contact Person: please provide a phone number and/or email address to which public inquires about the proposed charter school may be addressed.

	First and Last Name	Best Phone Number (###-###-####)	Email Address	URL (type web address or the word "none")
Media Contact	Fred Saia	716-913-6766	fsaia@oniedagroup.com	none

e. Planned grades and enrollment in each year of the proposed charter term.

	Ages (or age ranges)	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
K	4-5	88	88	88	88	88
1st	5-6	88	88	88	88	88
2nd	6-7	88	88	88	88	88
3rd	7-8	88	88	88	88	88
4th	8-9	88	88	88	88	88
5th	9-10	88	88	88	88	88
6th	10-11	0	88	88	88	88
7th	11-12	0	0	88	88	88
8th	12-13	0	0	0	88	88
9th	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
10th	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
11th	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
12th	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Ungraded	N/A	0	0	0	0	0
Total		528	616	704	792	792

f. 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 40 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

Lead Applicant(s) Signature and Date

You have the option of adding your signature(s) as the Lead Applicant or Co-Lead Applicants directly on the bottom of your Letter of Intent before you scan and upload it into the portal.

OR you may sign below using the mouse on your PC or stylus on your mobile device to sign

your name.

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).

•

Date Signed (Lead or Co-Applicant)

(No response)

Co-Applicant listed in section c above

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

Date Signed (Co-Applicant)

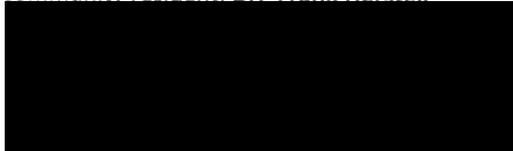
(No response)

Thank you for completing the Contact Form which will be duplicative of some information contained in your letter of intent. Having information in this form allows the Department to merge applicant contact information into our existing data system. Please proceed to upload your signed and dated 5 page Letter of Intent to Apply.

Letter of Intent: SMART Academy Charter School
(Science, Mathematics, Arts, Reading, Technology)

I. Applicant Information

a. Lead Applicant: community resident, **Dr. Frank Herstek**



b. Public/Media Contact: **Fred Saia**
(716) 913-6766
Fsaia@oniedagroup.com

c. Applicant Founding Group:

The members of the SMART Academy Charter School (SACS) applicant team are listed below and each one of these individuals will serve on the school's Board of Trustees. SACS's applicants/Board of Trustees are highly skilled, professionals and committed individuals. Their collective experience, expertise and prior charter school success will support SMART Academy Charter School's goal of becoming a school of excellence.

Dr. Frank Herstek, Lead Applicant

Frank is an experienced educator with more than 40-years experience in education. He has served as a teacher, supervisor, coordinator of parent education, college professor, family resource developer, educational consultant, assistant superintendent, and as a reader for Pearson. He is a published author who has worked in rural, suburban and urban districts. Frank has volunteered his services and years of expertise to sit on seven non-for-profit boards.

Fred Saia, Applicant, Board of Trustees President and Media Contact

Fred is a knowledgeable charter school advocate. He is a founder of Charter School for Applied Technologies (CSAT). Fred served as board president, for CSAT, for twelve years. He was also the lead applicant for Health Sciences Charter School. As the current president and owner of Oneida Sales and Service, Fred is an entrepreneur who founded several successful businesses, including: Oneida Fence, Oneida Trucking, Heron's Landing and Iroquois Bar Corporation. Inc. magazine honored one of Fred's businesses for being one of 500 of the fastest growing private companies in the United States and for the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. Ernst and Young named Fred as Entrepreneur of the Year and recognized him with a Lifetime Achievement award. Fred is an active community member and has served on the board of the Buffalo Zoo, the Erie County Industrial Agency, Buffalo Niagara Partnership and WNED. As the president of SACS, Fred will oversee all aspects of the school's operations.

Marc Adler, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Marc, owner of Why Not Marketing, LLC, has 32 years experience marketing products from all over the world including several WNY area schools: Oracle Charter School, CSAT, Elmwood Franklin School, Buffalo Seminary, St. Francis High School, Niagara Catholic High School, Hilbert College, and University at Buffalo (UB). Since 1995, he has served as an Adjunct Lecturer at UB teaching courses on Advertising, Marketing and Entrepreneurship. In addition, he presently is on the UB School of Management Alumni Association board, The UB Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership Alumni Association board, and the UB Intercollegiate Athletic board. Marc has also served on the boards of the Buffalo Zoo, Leadership Buffalo, and UB Alumni Association.

Charles D. J. Case, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Since 2004, Charles has been practicing law, with experience in corporate governance, litigation, education law and regulation, and labor and employment. He has participated in SUNY Buffalo's Education Law Clinic, where he advocated for students with disabilities, to support the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Christopher T. Dunstan, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Founder and owner of CT Dunstan LCC, Christopher has over 30-years of experience in corporate, executive, and turnaround management. Christopher is the former CFO of RICH Products corporation, CFO and treasurer of Adelpia Cable corporation, CFO of Sentry Group, CFO of Trico Products, Director of strategic planning for Schlegel Corporation, CPA for Peat Marwick, and Sales Manager for General Electric Credit corporation. He served on the John R. Oishei Foundation board for over sixteen years. He currently sits on the Executive Advisory Committee and Dean's Council, at the Simon School of Business, at the University of Rochester. Christopher is the founding chair

of Launch New York, a non-profit, venture-development organization. He has also served on the boards of Blue Shield of Western New York, the Easter Seals, and the Botanical Society of Buffalo.

Laurie Irish Jones, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Former educator and law clerk, Laurie is the CEO of Irish Welding Supply Corp. Laurie has extensive board experience, having served as president of the Center of Entrepreneurship Advisory Board at UB, president of the School of Management Alumni Board at UB, chairman of the New York Propane and Gas Association, chairman of the International Beverage and Equipment Association, vice president of the Hope Chest board, and member of the Journey's End Refugee board. She has also served as a tutor in the Lawyers for Learning Program, at Buffalo Public School #18.

Stephanie Grace Pennington, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Stephanie is the diversity and inclusion manager at LPCiminelli. She is responsible for diversity compliance management on multiple projects. Stephanie managed the fourth and fifth phase of a \$1.45 billion Buffalo Public Schools reconstruction program by overseeing diversity and inclusion at twelve schools. Prior to joining LPCiminelli, she served as Site Director of Abt Associates, Inc's BOND Project, which was done in conjunction with the Social Security Administration. Stephanie was Coordinator of Policy Services at Erie 1 BOCES, where she developed, administered, and maintained policy and administrative-related items for over forty school districts. She has served on the Canisius College Women's Business Center board, the Niagara Frontier Education and Industry Council board, the Literacy Volunteers of America board, and the School Administrators' Association of New York Region 12 board. Stephanie currently serves on the Erie 1 BOCES Management Executive board.

Patricia U. Pitts, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Patricia has immeasurable experience in areas of educational leadership and management, public relations management, advocacy, fundraising, and community leadership. She currently serves as project manager for the Center of Educational Innovation-Public Education Association, managing \$9.2 million U. S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund grant supporting five WNY charter schools. Patricia is the former director of institutional management at the Charter School for Applied Technologies, communications manager for New York State Empire State Development, senior communications manager of Cannon Design, executive director of Buffalo Niagara Partnership's Charter School Initiative, public relations and marketing director for Hurwitz & Fine, P.C. and communications manager at M&T Bank. Patricia is a founder and former board member at the Charter School of Applied Technologies, founder and former board member of Buffalo ReformEd, former board chair for Holy Angels Academy, and former board member of Board of Catholic Education, Diocese of Buffalo.

Mark Phillips, Applicant and Board of Trustees Treasurer

As the current director of Ernst & Young LLP, Mark has 35 years of business development senior leadership and global account management experience. He oversees approximately \$3 billion in revenue. Mark is a former corporal, who served at the White House, in Security Clearance. He has over 25 years of volunteer service, currently serving as a board member for the Buffalo YMCA and he is a former member of the Annunciation Parish Finance Committee, the former chairman of the Annunciation School Board, and the business division chairman of the United Way. Mark has the skill set required to oversee fiscal operations at SACS.

Susan G. Toomey, Applicant and Board of Trustees Member

Susan is the executive director of the Niagara Frontier Education Council. She has 35 years of experience in the field of education. Susan is a former director of grant writing and development, a former high school principal, a former assistant principal, a former school psychologist, former coordinator of special education, and a former school counselor. While working at the Charter School for Applied Technologies, she managed grant writing and fundraising and obtained over \$600,000 during her two year tenure. She has a myriad of leadership experiences and she has served on numerous boards, both past and present. Susan will play a lead role in recruiting highly effective faculty, to support teaching and learning at SACS. She will also oversee grant writing and fundraising efforts.

d. The initial board of trustees for SACS will include all of the founding members. The founding members have been working since December of 2013, to plan and design SACS.

e. SMART Academy Charter School is not a replication of another school and not part of a network. None of the applicant team members are currently on the board of trustees for an existing charter school. The applicant team is not submitting other applications during this round.

f. Fred Saia and Patricia Pitts are founders of the Charter School for Applied Technologies, authorized by NYSED, in 2001. Mr. Saia is a founder of Health Sciences Charter School, authorized by NYSED, in 2010. Mrs. Pitts assisted the founders with the application process.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. Proposed School Name: SMART Academy Charter School (SACS)

b. Proposed School Location: 100 Forest Avenue, which is located on the West side of Buffalo, within the Buffalo Public School District. The president and owner of a construction management company, who has developed another Buffalo charter school, has affirmed that he would enter into a lease agreement, when the SMART Academy Charter School has been authorized.

c. Planned Grades and Enrollment

Grade	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
K	88	88	88	88	88
1	88	88	88	88	88
2	88	88	88	88	88
3	88	88	88	88	88
4	88	88	88	88	88
5	88	88	88	88	88
6	0	88	88	88	88
7	0	0	88	88	88
8	0	0	0	88	88
Total	528	616	704	792	792

d. Proposed Management and/or Partner Organizations: SMART Academy Charter School will not have a management and/or partner organization.

e. Proposed School Mission: SMART Academy Charter School makes reading the center of all learning.

f. School Overview: SMART Academy Charter School (SACS) will provide highly effective New York State Common Core Learning Standards-based instruction, using the modules for English Language Arts and mathematics; hands-on science kits, for implementation of Next Generations Science Standards; and the NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework, with equal access for all scholars. SACS will be a culturally proficient school house, focused on academic excellence and high expectations for all stakeholders. K-2 will focus on “learning to read”, using Magic Penny Reading Program for phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency instruction, supplemented with NYS ELA modules for comprehension and vocabulary building. 3-8 will focus on “reading to learn”, using the NYS ELA modules, supplemented with chapter books. Writer’s workshop will be implemented school-wide. Writing will be taught across all disciplines. At SACS, there will be a school-wide goal of meeting or exceeding the NYS CCLS, demonstrating proficiency, on the ELA, mathematics and science assessments.

All SACS’s scholars will have the necessary skills to transition seamlessly to the next level of their educational journey. All will be adequately prepared to attend their high school of choice. At SACS, we believe that scholars and adults alike must be prepared to not only become “SMART” producers of technology, but must also become “SMART” consumers of information. SACS will accomplish this through its research-based innovative design elements:

- ✓ **Highly Effective Leadership, Faculty and Staff:** A national search will be conducted to hire the best and the brightest for each member of the leadership team, faculty and staff. The Danielson Framework for Evaluation will be the tool used to enhance professional practice.
- ✓ **Culturally-Responsive Teaching:** Culture is central to learning. It plays a role not only in communicating and receiving information, but also in shaping the thinking process of groups and individuals. A pedagogy that acknowledges, responds to, and celebrates fundamental cultures offers full, equitable access to education for students from all cultures.
- ✓ **4-Phase Data-Driven Dialogue Process ~ A Framework for Collaborative Inquiry:** SACS will have a collaboratorium, a designated area to disaggregate academic and behavioral data. This area will be the location for data walls. Using the data process for collaborative inquiry will provide structure for the on-going investigation of data, with the goal of improving teaching and learning. The school’s chief

information officer, the director of teaching and learning and three instructional coaches (literacy, numeracy and science) will lead data teams in collaborative inquiry. Data teams will become vital centers of collaboration, meeting regularly, as defined in the master schedule, to engage in data-driven dialogue, using multiple data sources, including common and formative assessments, to make research-based instructional improvements, and monitor scholar performance. A school-wide assessment matrix will be developed.

- ✓ **Innovative Master Schedule:** SACS's master schedule will support a model for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), departmentalization for ELA and mathematics and small group differentiated instruction. This structure will support vertical, horizontal, scholar-centered, professional dialogue and collaboration. Departmentalization for ELA and mathematics will permit faculty to become content specialists and effectively master the challenges of NYS CCLS module-based instruction, to deliver rigorous lessons.
- ✓ **Extended Instructional Day:** The instructional day at SACS will begin at 8:00 and end at 4:00, which is two hours longer than the home district.
- ✓ **Dress Code:** Formal uniform attire will be worn by all scholars. On days designated to science and/or project-based learning, scholars will wear lab coats.
- ✓ **Mentoring Program:** A formal mentoring program, for job-embedded learning, will be a requirement for employment. EQ: "What do administrators, faculty and staff need to know and be able to do to produce high achieving scholars?" SACS will use Paula Rutherford's Mentoring in the 21st Century model, for an effective mentoring program.
- ✓ **Family Involvement:** In compliance with Education Law 2851, SACS will be a school house in which the voices of families are valued and will impact the school's policies. A family engagement coordinator will provide opportunities such as: a family boot camp, social workers to provide family counseling, faculty and staff to bridge the family-home-school relationship gap, professional development to faculty and staff on effective communications skills, family events, helping family members improve their quality of life (i.e. GED tutoring, resume writing, healthy nutrition), learning how to best help their scholar at home (i.e. doing math with your child), understanding standards-based grade reporting, and participating in quarterly surveys to collect data on, "how the school is doing".
- ✓ **Grade Reporting:** SACS will use standards-based report cards, with each content area parceled into a list of skills and knowledge that scholars are responsible for learning, and identifying whether they have met, exceeded, or are approaching each standard.
- ✓ **Scholar Support:** SACS will support social and emotional development of all scholars. A social worker will be an active participant within three of the PLCs; K-1, 2-3, and 4-5 (year one).
- ✓ **Serene Time and Peace Circles:** Serene time will be a daily ritual devised for scholars to calm their inner selves, reduce stress, integrate their experiences and start their school learning with an ideal "mental palate". Music and body exercises will be used to take scholars, through their different senses, to a state of mind where they can be in touch with more of themselves. "Serene Time" will be a time when scholars can approach their inner selves through guided imagery, meditation, and reflective reading and writing. SACS will use Restorative Justice Peace circles to help scholars learn how their behavior affects their peers. Scholars will learn how to express their feelings and needs, in order to resolve conflict and learn through the reflections of others. Check-in, check-out will be implemented as a strategy to assist scholars who are identified as at-risk.
- ✓ **Professional Learning Opportunities:** A Professional Learning Opportunities calendar will be developed for deliberate, continuous pedagogical improvement. A Professional Opportunities Institute (POI) will convene at the start of each year. Once per month, scholars will be released early, so administration, faculty, and staff can participate in a school-wide professional learning opportunity, which will be determined through data-driven dialogue, with the goal of academic achievement for all scholars.

g. Target Population: The target student population of SACS is projected to reflect the ethnic, economic and language diversity of the Buffalo community. Buffalo Public School's total enrollment is 30,902 scholars, to include: 53% African-American, 22% white, 16% Hispanic and 6% Asian. 77% of BPS scholars are eligible for free and reduced lunch, 17% are scholars with disabilities and 11% are ELLs. SACS is designed to meet the needs of those eligible applicants for the free and reduced lunch program, scholars with special needs and ELLs.

III. Enrollment and retention of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced lunch program:

Strategies to attract and recruit students:

- a. SACS recruitment will consist of a marketing campaign highlighting the school's emphasis on literacy as the gateway to produce self-sufficient life-long learners, and it will include information on the various interventions planned to meet the needs of the school's diverse targeted population.
- b. Marketing strategies to attract students with disabilities will focus on interventions designed to provide additional support, adjusting for historically insufficient yearly goals set in IEP's, to goals aimed at closing gaps and raising expectations for growth.
- c. Marketing to families of English language learners will include presentations of SACS' school overview at community centers which serve specific ethnic groups including but not limited to, the Native American Community Service, Hispanic Heritage Council of WNY, International Institute and Journey's End.
- d. Marketing to students eligible for free and reduced price lunch programs will focus on organizations that serve the needs of Buffalo's impoverished population.

Strategies to retain students will include:

- a. The retention of the targeted population will be enhanced by the family engagement coordinator's efforts.
- b. Strategies to retain students with disabilities will be facilitated by employing a model of inclusion with consultant teacher services and rigorous interventions to address deficits in student progress.
- c. Research-based design elements, including culturally responsive teaching, will help to retain English language learners.
- d. The opportunities to improve the quality of life of SACS family members provided by the family engagement coordinator and social workers will support retention of the students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

- a. All scholars have the right to equal access to a sound educational experience. Within the Buffalo Public Schools, 90% of schools have been designated as persistently low-achieving. During the 2013-2014 academic school year, 2112 scholars and families requested to be placed in a school in good standing. Only 450 of these transfer requests were honored. The data for 2014-2015 is not yet available. The District's Parent Coordinating Council, however has indicated that more requests are being made every day. During its extensive community outreach, SACS has experienced a significant amount of support from families, elected officials, and community leaders. All these groups believe there is an urgent need for alternatives to the existing options for Buffalo's scholars. The following organizations have endorsed our efforts to establish SACS: Native American Community Services (NACS), District Parent Coordinating Council (DPCC), civil rights attorney Dr. Kenneth Nixon, International Institute, Boys and Girls Club of America, People United Sustainable Housing (PUSH), New York State Senator Mark Grisanti, New York State Senator Patrick Gallivan and New York State Senator Timothy Kennedy. SACS has also engaged in a social media outreach campaign using Facebook.
- b. SACS distributed a survey to families within each of the city's four quadrants. Out of 223 surveys returned, all but one indicated they were dissatisfied with their current public school options. SACS's founders have also solicited verbal feedback from families and community members. All have articulated a critical need for additional schools to be added to the limited list of those with an accountability status of being in good standing.

V. Lead Applicant Signature and Date Signed

Dr. Frank Herstek, Lead Applicant  Date 7/7/14