

Executive Summary

This document contains two sections.

Section A: Provides a brief overview of MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts (MCSSTA) and a discussion of its mission including key design elements of MCSSTA's educational program. It also addresses the reasons why I, Bishop Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales proposes to embark upon the significant challenge involved in the opening of MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts in Brooklyn, New York. It provides the rationale for why I consider myself appropriately qualified.

Section B: introduces and discusses the founding committee members' capacity to effectively oversee and govern the proposed school. It will also discuss how we are structuring our school in order to support this turnaround (and growth in general to increase learning opportunities for all students). It describes the role for each member of the team to support the process and the school. Details of both the organizational configuration and the management approach to establishing MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts are discussed in this section of the document.

Overview

I, Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales, am submitting this letter of intent in response to the New York State Education Department January 3, 2011, request for proposals to establish new Charter Schools authorized by the Board of Regents. I am the founder/president of Qkingdom Ministries, Inc., for the past 18 years. I have also been the Executive Director of MACADEMY School of Science and Technology, an Independent Elementary and Middle School, located in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, New York for over 15 years. The board of directors and I have successfully worked in the community to provide the best educational opportunities for low and middle income families working with urgency to elevate the nation's and New York lowest performing schools preparing every student for high school, college and citizenship.

Given my experiences I am very much interested in applying to establish, in 2012, MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts. I propose to establish a Middle Charter School from grades 5-8 with a total enrollment of 250 students and a class size of 16 students per class in order to produce significant gains in student achievement within a two and a half years period. Using extended learning time, increased academic rigor, cultural awareness, meaningful assessment data, targeted tutoring, parental communication, gifted/talented teachers and leaders and excellent professional development I am confident that we would eliminate and reverse achievement gaps for all underserved students attending our Charter School within that proposed time.

As indicated The MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts (MCSSTA) will consist of grades 5-8 and will be a lottery selective admissions school with the purpose to advance the intellectual students and be a model for gifted education. We will assist every student regardless of how far behind they start academically in their development of a positive attitude towards intellectual mastery and enhance their curiosity with the use of different teaching methods. In addition, strategies that focus on developing thinking and social skills along with innovative activities in Science, Technology and the Arts will be used to engage the developing minds, which would result in a high performance charter school improving student learning and achievement to help increase the performance of low performing public schools.

MCSSTA would strive to reflect the city it serves by admitting and educating a population of students who are culturally, socio-economically, and ethnically diverse. We seek to be a charter school model for combining excellence and equity, serving as a catalyst for change in New York City. Establishing to improve students' out-come would increase learning opportunities for all students with emphasis on implementation and development of an appropriate high scope curriculum with enriched programs of instruction that focus on prevention rather than remediation. Individualization of teaching and learning would be an emphasis with an increase availability and use of technology in an integrated /interdisciplinary curriculum which would expand the learning experience for students who are at risk of academic failure. Improving student ability to plan,

organize, make decision and connection, complete assignments, resulting in progressive cognitive intellectual development.

We strive to serve all students who demonstrate advanced cognitive ability, and will assist in the development of creative, intellectually curious, and original thinkers who are passionate about learning. Student development of competence in critical thinking through analytical skills, evaluative skills and synthesis skills would expand student understanding. Students with low performance achievement or learning disabilities would improve their ability in understanding and applying skills in content - Science & Math, Language Arts, Foreign Languages, Technology, Music (instrumental instruction) and Art appreciation.

All MCSSTA students will be prepared to be life-long learners and leaders. Our school will use the principles of gifted education, including depth, complexity, challenge, enrichment, integration and acceleration of the curriculum, to meet the needs of intellectually challenged and advanced students. Character and Social/Emotional development and Career Counseling improve students' abilities and options to interact socially, and to effectively solve problem using conflict resolution. Improving students' self-image and self-esteem as building blocks for character improves individual and community. Building appropriate social interactive skills such as sharing, negotiating, cooperating and increasing self – confidence with ability to develop social problem solving strategies would expand the progress of intellectual mastery for all students. Developing citizenship and connection through peer tutoring and volunteerism enhances our society. As a community, we are committed to the social and emotional well being of all our students. We seek to develop the individual potential of each MCSSTA student in a collaborative atmosphere that values intellectual freedom and inspiration for all students.

Quote: *“There can be no good individual apart from some conception of the character of a good society; and the good society is not something that is given by nature: it must be fashioned by the hands and brain of man.”* G.S. Counts (author).

Families will be our valuable partners in this work, and as partners in creating the school's unique environment it includes home – school partnership with increase parental participation in decision making and awareness of school programs. As a community we foster respect for and appreciation of individual and cultural differences; emphasize social responsibility and leadership, community service and good citizenship; and value civility and ethical behavior.

This proposed Charter School (MCSSTA) is planned to be located in a public school facility depending on availability in School District 17 in Brooklyn, New York. Our founding group consists of some outstanding professional members of the community who are committed to the advancement of education and the increase of academic performance in the lowest performing public school. Our founding group includes teachers, lawyers, judge, clergy, realtor, physicians, community leaders and parents all of whom live in the community some of whom are contributors to the work done for the improvement of our community for the past 18 years.

We are familiar with the New York State Charter School Act and Law and would be fully in compliance with the same. Our proposal will indicate a clear alignment with the education priorities as stated in the law.

Section A: Reasons to embark upon the significant challenge involved in establishing of Mac Charter School of Science Technology and the Arts (MCSSTA).

The purpose of MCSSTA embarking on this significant challenge is to strengthen and advance the intellectual ability of all students and prepare them with the inclusion of students who are at-risk, who have learning disabilities, who are English language learners, who are eligible for federal free and reduced lunch and students with an individual education program recommended by the committee or subcommittee on special education in the student's school district of residence. The New York Charter School Act (“the act”) prohibits discrimination in student admissions. The Act explicitly intends for charter schools to create expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, the poorest of the students, those with learning

disabilities, or for whom English is not the first language (“ELL”). MCSSTA in alignment with New York Charter School Act will enroll all students via a lottery system that reaches students at the high poverty level with special needs.

Mission Statement:

MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts will strengthen the academic and character skills of all youths by providing a college preparatory education for students, empowering them to master the skills necessary to think independently, as competent, creative, compassionate, confident citizens and leaders of the community and to use their educational tools to sustain life experiences in the competitive world.

MCSSTA Brief Summary:

At MCSSTA students will embark upon an academic journey with the understanding that they are college-bound. College will be our central focus, but the curriculum frame work developed here will not only provide our students with academic tools necessary to excel in higher education, it will also include entrepreneurship and invention. Students will be encouraged to take ownership of their education which will be rigorous and encompass a well rounded selection of progressive coursework and programming. At MCSSTA there will be four pillars upon which our academic program will be erected to assist our students to meet the future challenges of the global economy.

Pillar #1 (grades (5), 6-8) Fifth grade will be designed to prepare our students for Middle School. Middle school is a time for student to immerse themselves in the rigorous academic climate with high expectations and performance. MCSSTA will engage our students in a mixture of traditional science, technology and the arts. In addition, students will do focus coursework including Math, Reading/Writing, Foreign Language, studio art, drama, media/video production, and physical education. This pillar is to ensure effective preparation for proficiency in standards and beyond. It paves the path to college.

Pillar #2 (Science Literacy): Science literacy encompasses, written, numerical, and digital literacy as they pertain to understanding Science, its methodology, observation and curiosity about everyday experiences. Science literacy will be taught to strengthen opinions and decisions about Science-based issues. Students will also be taught the skills to seek knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes required for personal inquiry. In addition, they will be taught how to describe, explain and predict natural phenomena and develop skills in scientific investigation for career in Science, if it is desired.

According to Washington (Reuter) news report, American students scored poorly on a national test of Science Proficiency, suggesting a tough road ahead for President Barack Obama’s goal of educating a work force in Science to compete in the global economy. Only 21% of high school seniors were performing at or above the proficient level in Science. 71% of the Black students scored below. Many of our underserved children do not have the opportunity to explore Science as an option for their profession. Our role is to prepare our MCSSTA students to be scientists and inventors while simultaneously assisting America in maintaining its role as an international leader in the Sciences. Currently, America ranks 13th out of 34 developed countries. At MCSSTA we will strive to make a difference in Science using pillar #2 and the slogan “Science-me-Crazy.”

Pillar #3 (Technological Literacy): Technology is a medium through which we communicate, it drives our world. Students will focus on technological literacy to help bridge the technological divide that many of our underserved students experience. Technological literacy will be taught through hands-on use of technology and technology will be encountered in every class. Students will be encouraged to develop technological skills for entrepreneurial purposes. They will develop their own TV/Radio shows and conduct in class interviews. In addition, students will have access to computers, smart boards their own e-mail addresses to enhance communication with teachers and staff.

Pillar #4 (Civic leadership and community service): Students of MCSSTA will not only be educated by coursework, but also by the community around them. Students will do volunteer services as well as internships, and host town-hall meetings to get hands-on experiences in community service, politics and

leadership. Through interactive learning students will be exposed to a variety of professions that can better inform their career decision and real-life work experience. They will also understand the diverse challenges that face their communities. This pillar will promote the cultivation of home grown politicians/policies and leadership.

Standing on these 4 pillars we the visionaries of MCSSTA envision a society in which all children, regardless of their neighborhood, race, parents' income or educational level, are afforded equitable educational opportunities for their future success.

“To be a model for gifted education” is the mission of the NYSED (New York State Education Department). MCSSTA, being in alliance with this mission, will assist our students in their development of a positive attitude towards intellectual mastery and enhance their curiosity with the application of various teaching methods. In addition, strategies that focus on developing thinking, and social skills along with innovative activities in Science, Math, Technology and the Arts will be used to engage the developing minds and will result in a High Performance Charter School improving all students learning and achievements to help turn around their low performance achievements in public schools. Economic class differences in an educational setting can make teaching and learning very challenging. There are hidden rules about how people think and interact in society and the significance of those rules in a classroom. Teachers and administrators will be required to attend workshops and seminars to learn about understanding the impact of poverty and helping low income children learn.

A common misconception that some educators have concerning students who come from low income background is that they are not intelligent and they engage in behavior that makes no sense. At MCSSTA we will dispel such erroneous misconceptions by analyzing and understanding the survival tactics that poverty demands. “To survive in poverty you must be very non-verbal, reactive and sensory based. To survive in school and work you must be very verbal, very abstract and very proactive (you must plan)” says author and educator Dr. Ruby K. Payne. At MCSSTA we will use the teaching strategies that will help to make lessons more relevant and understandable for students of all social classes. We will: (1) build relationships of mutual respect with students, (2) use direct teaching processes by being very specific in the step and procedure that must be followed in learning, (3) use mental model to help translate between the sensory and the abstract worlds just like a blueprint translates a conversation about a house and the actual finish, (4) teach that there are two sets of rules – one for school and work and one for outside of school and work. Students will not just develop as intellectuals, but also as responsible and disciplined citizens. With these best practices NYSED’s mission to be a model for gifted education will be accomplished. The city’s poorest children and those with learning disabilities and English Language Learners will be welcomed at MCSSTA.

Assisting our nation’s lowest performing schools to emerge into the highest performing centers of excellence is the core of education reform and our goal. Establishing a charter school to help the lowest income students and students with special needs to increase their achievement levels and the performance level of the lowest performing schools simultaneously represents America’s best chance to dramatically improve student achievement in our worst performing urban public schools and represents the best chance to respond to our shared imperative to offer life changing opportunities to those students with the greatest and clearest need.

Despite the fact that New York Charter school legislation prohibits discrimination in students’ admissions it is clear to even casual observers that charter schools are failing to serve Hispanics and/or immigrant students and less than the average of the City’s poorest students. As recently reported by the New York City Department of Education, the City charter schools enroll fewer students with special needs. MCSSTA will quell this dispute by enrolling its required percentages of at-risk, learning disabled, English language learners and the poorest students eligible for free and reduced lunch. Our lottery system for admission will be opened to all children.

Opening (MCSSTA) with the founding group which consists of teachers, lawyers, judge, clergy, realtor, physicians, community leaders and parents we plan to create this Charter School in order to inspire/improve significant gains in student achievement regardless of their low achievement performance within the next two

and a half academic years. This section provides a description of why we proposes to take on this significant challenge and how we are both appropriately qualified and ideally positioned to succeed in the face of the several challenges to assist in the decrease of students' performance gap by opening another excellent charter school in Brooklyn, New York.

The urgency of doing something about the nation's and New York's lowest performing schools, is evident to educators and decision makers across the board. Despite this effort to improve our failing schools we have been unsuccessful on the vital mission. Marginal changes in schools predictably yield at best marginal improvements in teaching and learning. Incremental adjustments too often do not account for why schools fail. The lowest performing urban public schools face substantial challenges and maybe at times diagnosed as dysfunctional organizations that are not responsive to the educational needs of the high poverty-stricken student populations, whose hopes for an excellent education is shattered by promises that are clothed in a meaningful mission statement, but betrayed in practice. Our urban highly impoverished and highly diverse student populations require a school model significantly different from the ones low performing schools typically operate.

The innovative/research teaching model is one that urban students deserve and MCSSTA proposes. The implementation of this approach to teaching offers the low performing student an opportunity to reduce the gap in poor performance and increase higher standards of academic achievements. This teaching model is appropriate and necessary in our determination to decrease low performing charter schools and developing a community of creative thinkers. Having the opportunity to teach students with learning disabilities in an inclusion classroom is being proposed. Often described as passive learners, these students with special needs can excel in an interactive setting that provides collaboration with peers. For example, in Language Arts the use of fable writing would be used as a vehicle for teaching the recursive and overlapping stages of the writing process to students with learning disabilities.

The finding from an instructional study support the use of fable for students with or without disabilities because fables are a resource that contain the element of story structure and can be used to "illustrate the meaning of key concepts" in developing critical literacy (Jarolimek, 1991, p.5). Research with middle school students revealed an increase in quantity and quality of attempts to use dialogue in compositions revealed that less confident students especially benefited from working in pairs during the initial, retelling and composing stages of the writing process. Fables are defined as "a brief fictitious story that ends with a moral" (Palmer, Hafner & Sharp, 1994, p. 264). MCSSTA Students will develop positive character and morals that will increase their commitment to honorable value.

High standards of teachings, proper assessments/evaluations and clear accountability taken together enable authorizers such as NYSED to identify chronically underperforming charters. Identifying failing public school has opened the way for new charters to be introduced. A new charter school introduces a challenging new dynamic to public education by identifying a new strategy to improve students' low performances and achievements. The increase of new charters embody the sector's commitment to accountability and indicate externally that it is the very autonomy that charters provide that will allow low performing schools to have the opportunity to transition their low income students and students with learning disabilities through the lottery system into MCSSTA a new charter whose high educational standards and innovation method will reduce low student performance while simultaneously increasing the NYSED charter schools performance ratings.

The choice of establishing MCSSTA charter school in a district of failing and low performing public schools would be extremely necessary for parents, students, teachers and communities to minimize disruptive harm that would affect them if they had no option because of school closure. If (MCSSTA) is successful it will demonstrate like many other successful charter schools that it is not the students' nor the governance model that causes low performance and we will highlight the fact that with the innovative teaching model, more time and increased academic rigor, stronger cultural awareness, community involvement, clearer assessment data, and talented teachers and leaders MCSSTA can become an excellent charter and in a public school facility in the same community, but decreasing the low performance ratings of our students. MCSSTA seeks to be housed in a public school in district 17 in Brooklyn New York.

A Highly Qualified Applicant: (*MAC Charter School of Science Technology and the Arts*)

Perhaps the most daunting challenge facing our nation is ensuring that every student is prepared for middle school, high school, college and citizenship. The health and well being of our American democracy depends on accomplishing this goal in our increasingly diverse nation for all students regardless of their academic background, prior behavior, success in English proficiency or special education needs. Public charter school operators are at their best on the vanguard of this effort and before this decade is out we will successfully scale our school models in order to prove that it is indeed possible to eliminate and reverse achievement gaps for all underserved students in underperforming public schools across the nation.

Remembering the words of John Dewey: “Education is a social process.....education is growth. Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” Many Charter schools demonstrate initiative and commitment to the education of all students and are directly in alignment with the authorizers for their existence many of which have provided “life” for our students. One outstanding model is the Democracy Prep Public School.

Having researched the success of several charter schools in New York State and I am extremely impressed with Democracy Prep Public Schools. (DPPS) is a network of open enrollment high performing public charter schools currently operating in New York and Rhode Island. It is a pioneer in the practice of integrating authentic civic education for all students while achieving remarkable academic growth for all students. Democracy Prep’s mission is to prepare responsible citizen scholars for success in the college of their choice and a life of active citizenship. The motto of Democracy Prep encapsulates the vision for all schools, staff, students, and alumni alike: “*Work Hard. Go to College. Change the World!*”

This fine institution has demonstrated its competence to turnaround failing schools in Harlem, New York and has been an inspiration to our founding group. Schools in the Democracy Prep network provide an exceptional alternative for students and families otherwise zoned for traditional public schools that do not meet their needs. Building on the proven best practices of its flagship schools, Democracy Prep Charter School (DPCS, Harlem, NY) embodies and refines a no excuses approach that drives life changing academic gains for students from kindergarten through college graduation. All of its campuses employ an evidence based design that incorporates extended learning time, rigorous college prep academics and ongoing use of assessment data to inform meaningful instruction, consistent cultural and academic expectations, and selective faculty recruitment with excellent professional development.

Democracy Prep has also established a reputation for instructional effectiveness and produced break through academic results. These results are striking given Democracy Prep’s unique commitment to serving *every* student regardless of how far behind they start academically and how low their achievement levels of negative student attrition is. The former New York City Chancellor’s Progress Report ranks Democracy Prep as the single highest performing public middle school (in Harlem) and the single highest performing charter school (out of Harlem) in the entire City of New York. Indeed, DPCS has had the highest CPR score in Central Harlem every year since it opened and is one of the few schools citywide to maintain consistent [A] grades measuring: academic progress, absolute Performance, attendance, and student/family/staff satisfaction.

Similarly, Democracy Prep scholars entering below grade level after one year they averaged more than two grade levels of growth and grades of students are now on or above grade level. At Democracy Prep High School eighth grade students passed their New York State Regents Exams in Math and Science on their first attempt. This school is a model from which MCSSTA founding group and I will learn how to develop our school adapting the best of its accomplishment to be integrated into MCSSTA proposed key design elements. At MCSSTA we will develop programs which exceed New York State standards because we are on a mission to move our students forward to high school and their college of choice.

Student Population:

MCSSTA’s student population will consist of all academic achievement levels, socio-economics, specials needs “ELL” as well as those who are intellectually gifted. We the founding committee believe that the purpose of education is to prepare our students to become literate, independent, thoughtful, engaged and politically active citizens. One of our primary goals is to provide an intimate setting where students are taught to be self

confident, knowledgeable and critical thinkers regardless of their academic level of achievements. This population will be selected from district 17 and surrounding areas via the lottery system required by New York State. Our student population will include grades 5-8 with a total projected enrollment of 250 to be achieved over a five year period. Our initial student population in the first year will be 50 students in the 5th grade. Although the 5th grade is not considered middle school our strategy is to start at this grade. It will be an early start for students with special needs.

Student Enrollment Structure:

MCSSTA will enroll a total of 250 students over the five year period allowed for growth. We will begin with 50 students in the 5th grade which will give us a year to work with them before transferring these students to 6th grade in middle school. This year will give teachers the opportunity to give interim assessments that measure how much our students have learned. Teachers will then analyze these results to create a plan for full class, small group or one-on-one instruction to ensure that every student masters the preparatory core curriculum, pass the New York State Standard Exam and increase their academic achievement levels. Students that are not mastering grade-level material will be retained. Following success building elementary schools in New York MCSSTA sees this as an appropriate opportunity to develop a 5th grade that can feed our middle school. This will provide us with more time to work with students to achieve and exceed proficiency goals. Our teachers, like teachers at other “no excuse” charters are willing to work long hours to provide intensive remediation to our students. Beginning in middle school will not be as effective as starting at the elementary level. We will do all that is required for our students to graduate from high school ready to succeed in college.

In the first year we will accept applications for 50 in the 5th grade to a maximum of 16 students per class. This is viable because our school will be prepared to set goals to create a new charter school dynamic under our THINK values and establish and maintain a strong student-teacher relationship to be responsive to our students’ needs.

Insert Applicant Instruction

Grades	Projected Enrollment Table				
	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2017-2018
K					
1st					
2nd					
3rd					
4th					
5th	50	50	60	60	65
6th		50	50	65	65
7th			50	50	60
8th				50	60
9th					
10th					
11th					
12th					
Ungraded					
Totals	50	100	160	225	250

MCSSTA Target Populations:

MCSSTA plans to provide for all children with special needs an environment that will enhance their necessary services in order to ensure that their academic progress will not be disrupted because of such needs. Statics shows that 10% of our students perform with no special academic problems, but then there is a 15% of our student population that we need to design classrooms for and make sure there are inclusion, activities and specific curriculums that pin point their specific needs, their one-on-one, and most importantly developing a special needs session to meet their specific required needs. There will be sessions where students will have the opportunity to speak one-on-one with our point person who will make sure MCSSTA is meeting their needs by listening to and hearing them. This will truly give us a better evaluation of each student's academic level in order to creating their IEP's. Less than 10% of charter pupils are categorized as special education students versus a city wide average of more than 16% in the district public schools. MCSSTA population will be inclusive of all children.

The statics also states that 75% of our student population in the city has proven that there is a need for students to have a more inclusive educational experience. The students need to have a platform to lift up their educational concerns in reading, creative writing, math, science, and the arts, etc. There is a need for the community to be a part of the charter school and help the students develop their skills to go to high school then on to college and become active members in the community. Letting the community know that there is a charter school that will meet the needs of students of low income, English Language Learner, and learning disabilities will result in us successfully targeting this population. Once this communication is established the community members will want to participate by sharing their creativity, and most importantly their time to volunteer and to develop a new community of creative thinkers and developers. Our hope is to make sure that our community remains a part of our recruiting team. In using these ideas and thoughts we will help to mold a future that will help all of our children to be successful high school and college bound learners.

Admissions Policy:

MCSSTA will be opened to all students who are eligible under the laws of the State of New York for admission to a public school and our school will ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools. Annually, our students will be admitted through a lottery system without regard to prior measure of achievement, disability, ethnicity, race, gender, national origin or religion. Families will submit their application between January and March 31st of each school year. This will be followed by a formal public lottery to be observed by members of the community as a third party.

MCSSTA will attract students by:

The use of broacher, pamphlets, flyers, and newsletters, website/networking as well as advertisement boards, open houses, information sessions, visitor's day, community board meetings, church meetings, town hall meetings and Q and A sessions. The community as well as parents will be able to come and be more informed about educational options. MCSSTA will then share pertinent information about its program and all the possibilities that can and will be created in and at our school. There will also be monthly calendar of events, a board that has updates and an information section located in the front of the school that will always have the latest information of what's happening. We will meet with District 17 school board to receive name of students who are threatened by public school closing. We will also visit neighborhoods with failing schools and the immigrant communities to recruit students who are "ELL".

MCSSTA will develop plans for all students' education by using books to encourage, enhance, and provide a platform for a creative curriculum that will enhance and promote a new world of learning for our students. All of the different nationalities that will be enhancing our charter school community will allow us to design a bridge for creative writing, experiments, book designs, laws, governances, etc. This bridge will allow us to travel to the different countries so our students will have the opportunity to learn about each other. In this curriculum students will find similarities as well as differences and be able to recognize how many things we have in common. Using this method in our curriculum we will be educating all students including the entire family who will join us on this beautiful journey in learning that will increase the academic achievement in all students. Our seminars, workshops, as well

as different types of educational trainings and our open door policies will allow our families and the community to join us.

We will take the innovative/research model of learning and individualize it to meet all our students' needs and answer their questions that promote critical thinking. Base on the afore-mentioned and a strong community campaign, web-site recruitment, and media advertisement we will attract families who are in need of much better options for their children.

Students with disabilities:

MCSSTA's students with disabilities will be based on 10% to 15% of our total population and will be a part of our inclusion. These students who may need some extra assistance with their academics will receive the support they need to increase their achievement levels. Our teachers with adequate training will evaluate each student and create their Individual Education Program. MCSSTA will meet the student's needs and design the student's assessment based on the curriculum to measure how much the student have learned using the tools that have been proven in other successful charter schools. In addition, we will use a significant proportion of our instruction in a systematic cumulative review. Their skills learned in earlier grades will be constantly revisited to develop the fluency of students' performance skills to meet proficiency standards and will be outlined in the curricula.

Students who are English language learners:

Charter schools do not enroll enough English Language Learners. Across the City, 14.2 percent of students are English Language Learners. Yet only 3.8 percent of these students are being accepted by the City's charters. New York City remains a place of arrival for many immigrants, a large number of whom may not be fluent in English. Educating their children is part and parcel of the school system responsibilities. Despite recent efforts to require "good faith efforts" by charter operators to attract and retain English Language Learners, the data suggest that charters are not doing their fair share. MCSSTA will develop a place for students who are English learners to be comfortable to use their native language while simultaneously teaching them English as a second language. If we are able to secure their first language we will be able to help these students learn other languages. Our "ELL" time will be set up to make our students know and understand that their languages are being enhanced with the English language in an effort to improve their linguistics abilities. Our students will be taught the value and importance of speaking two languages in this global community in preparation for their world experience.

Students from household that are eligible for the federal free and reduce price lunch program:

New York Charter schools do not enroll enough students with special needs. As recently reported by the New York City Department of Education, the City's charters enroll fewer students with special needs. Anecdotal evidence suggests that charter school students mandated for special education services have far milder disabilities than compared to students in district public schools. Students from low income households will make up our total population based on requirement. Our students whether from low, middle or high income households will be part of the "good eating" and "let's get to know what we are eating" program to reduce obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure in children. Our community nutritionist will teach our students how to prepare a balance meal and make correct choices. Quick, healthy, and economic meals will also be a part of everyone's agenda. This will hopefully cause our students to eat healthy meals and live a healthy life style. We will also encourage a healthy and well seasoned no salt seasoned food to reduce heart diseases in children. MCSSTA will be encouraging healthy eating through nutrition fairs and workshops for students, families, staff and community.

Attraction will be accomplished:

Parents will be attracted to MCSSTA through our recruitment efforts, opening lottery enrollment, publicity/marketing strategies that promotes academic excellence and methods for achievement level increase, safe environment, parent involvement, community partnership, the arts and music. We will visit the neighborhoods of the underserved population looking for and listening to parents who want a school that makes learning fun through our effective word by mouth networking system. MCSSTA will be built on the best practices of high performing “no excuse” charter school networks nationwide, including Democracy Prep, KIPP, Achievement First and YES Prep. These networks have for twenty years proven that demographics and low income, learning disabilities do not determine destiny, students can be successful in the college of their choice. Our aligned approach to; more time to learn, rigorous college preparatory academics, data-driven decision-making, structure and supportive school culture, and exemplary talent will be a great attraction based on the success of these charter schools. These factors combine ensure that all children especially those with special needs will find our school attractive. MCSSTA will also have a safe, structured, secure environment where students’ path to college graduation will begin. In addition, we will attract parent because of our colorful space that will be an attractive roomy atmosphere that invites learning through creativity, curiosity, interrogatives questions, critical thinking, discipline, and adventure to explore and find the answers that will benefit high expectations and excelled performance in learning.

Service:

MCSSTA will use different curricula for each subject and focus on our effective implementation of strategies that will inspire all students to raise their expectations and performance levels, and strengthen their academic skills. This will help our students to develop a positive attitude towards intellectual mastery through our innovative activities in Reading/Math, Science, Technology and the Arts which will result in the high increase of the achievement level in our school district. In addition, our service to the community will provide an option for parents who are facing school closure. Students will have an opportunity to attend a charter school in a rigorous college prep academic environment in which all students achieve excellence through hard work, extended hours and community involvement. In contrast to failing public schools, MCSSTA will represent a distinct path which will provide adequate service using these elements: The authority to act, recognition of challenge, urgency, relentless focus on talent, highly competent school leadership, time and task, performance- based expectations and high capacity operators.

Retain students

All students are important to us and we will work hard to retain all students by increasing their skills in Reading/Writing Math, Science, Technology and the Arts. Students who need extra help will be given opportunity after school for extra tutoring and enrichment activities. Reading levels will be increased through our literacy program and use of Junior Great Books and Core Knowledge. Excellent teachers with great teaching skills will inspire students with their clear purpose and expectations for improvement and academic advancement for their students. Respecting all students regardless of their income or achievement level and providing an environment for love of learning will help MCSSTA retain students. Parents will embrace our more time to learn, no excuse, rigorous, college preparatory academics, data-driven-decision-making policy, structured and supportive school culture and exemplary talent and keep their children in our school because of their success. Students who do not meet standards will be retained in their grades.

Applicant Overview

As an applicant for MCSSTA in Brooklyn, New York, I, Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales founder and current Executive Director of MACADEMY School of Science and Technology (MACADEMY) understand that schools are the most important of our social institutions because they are the cross generation carrier of knowledge, skills, and the democratic value of our nation. Educators who inspire a love for learning are essential to the success and effectiveness of our schools. Successful schools respect, nurture and foster each child’s natural ability and inclination to learn, explore and create. In addition, I firmly believe that collaboration

across different disciplines, perspectives, and areas of expertise is essential to the complex of improving education. These core principles are the crucibles out of which MCSSTA was born. It is a charter school that will conduct research, develop educational resources, provide professional development for its teachers, advocate to improve teaching and learning, and help inform policy-making.

Existing School Model:

MACADEMY is an extended time, high expectations and performance, no excuse, rigorous college preparatory academics, data driven decision making, treat all students equally, high quality innovative/research teaching and the highest expectation of teachers, staff and parents independent school in Brooklyn, New York. At MACADEMY students attend school eight hours Mondays, ten hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays for Writing Lab, Instrumental Music, Swimming or other extra - curricular activities. The scholars use technology daily to do research (including the smart board) on all subjects and are required to do monthly projects and a yearly Science Fair with community members being judges. During the recent earthquake disaster our future scientists used technology to track the movements of the titanic plates and their movement in relations to the series of earthquakes around the world and made clear predictions where the earthquake would strike. They were able to share this knowledge on their weekly radio show. The students also attend Saturday school from four to six weeks for academic enrichment during the spring season. My scholars work at least one to two levels above their expected grades and passed their New York State standardized Math, Language Arts, Science and Social studies with a high percentage in proficiency. MACADEMY scholars became ABC scholars with 90% going on to high school at the very tender age of 12yrs becoming teenagers in high school.

Our scholars are being taught the importance of civic responsibilities and have traveled to Capitol Hill in Washington DC to promote Environmental Justice by presenting a proposal to Congress for Green School Education for grades K-12. They have also lobbied for the HR5902 bill, on the environment, to be reintroduced in the 111th Congress. These academically advance scholars do internships, volunteer at the Congregational Nursing Center weekly, host a weekly show called Planet Green Radio Show, participate in the election process by campaigning with candidate who promote change, do a yearly toy, blanket, toiletry, and clothing drive for children, the battered women shelter, and the homeless. They also did a food drive for Haiti for the hurricane and the devastating earthquake.

During Women's History month MACADEMY's students at the Women of Great Esteem Gala become ambassadors celebrating women from America and around the world for their accomplishments. Alumni and current students all participate in the capacity as master of ceremony, guest speakers, in dance and other musical performances as well as presenting awards and making speeches. They also meet and greet their honorees and engage in academic and political conversations about their home country and America. In June each year our scholars engage in a competitive sports day at Mount Prospect Park in Brooklyn, where they run races, and play games representing as leaders of the various club house of their membership. In addition, they celebrate the cultural diversity of Brooklyn and MACADEMY in the "carnival spirit" with various dance, costume and music. Students select costumes from various theme of education such as "under the deep blue sea" and wear costumes that represented the many creatures of the sea. In dance and merriment they celebrate the freedom of slaves in America and the many nations of the Caribbean. Joined by its dynamic diversity of African American, Africa, Caribbean and Poland students they decorate the park with their talents, skills, laughter, fun, food and play. At this sports and carnival event MACADEMY is also promoted for its academic excellence because it happens the weekend before graduation at the Brooklyn Museum.

Traveling outside of the USA our students visited St. Maarten/Martin and was instrumental in the development and implementation of Green School Education in St. Maarten. Through our Student Exchange Program our scholars have hosted St. Martin students in New York and Washington taking them to tour Congress, Library of Congress and the Supreme Court. The purpose of this trip was to teach the international students the process of how a bill becomes a law in Congress and the value of our Supreme Court in the life of our Constitution. Motivated and ready academically and socially these scholars continue to excel in some of the most prestigious independent and public high schools in New York and other states. My track record of accomplishments and the successful academic advancement of my scholars make me a qualified applicant to

seek permission to establish a new charter in Brooklyn and if selected will simultaneously increase students' achievement level and increase the performance level of New York State public school. MACADEMY is a five star school on greatschools.org.

MACADEMY is not requesting to be a charter school it is simply one of my many accomplishments that highlights my ability to develop MCSSTA a new charter school in Brooklyn, New York in support of our Community's need for more options in education. In addition, MACADEMY along with Democracy Prep High School in Harlem, New York have been very successful with their model to increase the Achievement levels of students and therefore the most effective design of these models will be incorporated into the key elements of the educational programs at MCSSTA.

MCSSTA School Design:

The key design elements of the educational program of MCSSTA will include adapting practices from other outstanding urban successful educational institutions such as Democracy Prep High School and MACADEMY, but will not be limited to just one standardize format. Our individual plan for all students will be to meet them at their present grade level of achievement and take them to their highest level of academic achievement in high school, college and the competitive world beyond.(school design will be described in more details later in the section). Why are we opening a charter school?

MCSSTA an Option for Parents

The demand for MCSSTA is due to the devastating economic down turn in America which prompted our outstanding parent leadership organization to present an unprecedented demand for us to request for a charter school to provide options and opportunities for their child(ren) upon leaving MACADEMY to transition into a public school that will maintain their highest academic standards. Many parents being affected by the economic down turn are unable to finance their child(ren) education. Parents because of their financial hardship can no longer fund the quality of education they require for their child(ren). Being proactive parents are working to provide more opportunities for their child(ren). It is my response to our parents demand for more options and the need to assist our New York State in its effort to elevate students' achievement level and reducing the gap that I gladly accepted this challenge to begin a new charter school. Seeing the success of other charter schools coupled with such parental support was certainly a motivating factor and more importantly the outstanding contributions of parents at MACADEMY called for a rise to action.

Parents demand for MACADEMY's model of education began a discussion which exculpated the development of a founding group for MCSSTA and most recently initiate a strategic planning process with our focus on Brooklyn where low academic achievement persists and other public school parents are also in search of more options. Our school MCSSTA will provide a genuine choice for families and demonstrate superior achievement while working to leverage its success to improve outcomes for all students in New York State. In so doing, we will also strive to elevate low performing schools in our state.

MACADEMY'S Public/Private School Affiliations

The background history of Macademy School of Science and Technology ongoing relationship with other educational institution is highlighted with the great Achievements of public school and private school students who have transitioned to our school with low performance achievements and have returned to public/private school within a year with higher academic achievement many at a very young age. Many of our elementary school students transitioned successfully to middle and then on to high schools and college. Most are elevated to higher grade levels in their public school of choice. Over the past three years 90% of our Middle school alumni have been prepared to go on to outstanding Public High schools and 10% gone to private/independent schools and finally to college. Our New York State Standardize Test scores in Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies range from: 48% meeting standards high level 3s, 51% proficiency level 4 and 1% below standard. MCSSTA will help to raise the academic standards of our state and our nation.

US Ranks Average in International education

With the United States ranking in Math 28 on lower scale and 25 on the upper scale it falls behind Hong Kong (China), which is number one. In Science we rank 27 on the lower and 20 on the upper we fall behind Finland which is number one. **Ed. Clarification:** *HuffPost Education originally reported that the United States was ranked 14th by the OECD. That figure is the nation's ranking in reading skills, not the overall ranking of the country.* The United States has fallen to "average" in international education rankings released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, according to the Association Foreign Press. America has received scores around 500 on a scale that goes up to 1,000: 487 in math, 500 in reading and 502 in science.

The *AFP* reports, The three-yearly OECD Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, which compares the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds in 70 countries around the world, ranked the United States 14th out of 34 OECD countries for reading skills, 17th for Science and a below-average 25th for Mathematics. Citing concerns over the country's education performance compared to other nations, and the long-term impact of the shortcomings on the future economic viability of the country, the Obama Administration has pushed for comprehensive reforms during the president's time in office.

According to the [AP](#), "This is an absolute wake-up call for America," U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said in an interview with The Associated Press. "The results are extraordinarily challenging to us and we have to deal with the brutal truth. We have to get much more serious about investing in education." Results for English: The average scale scores on the English Language Arts test this year were about the same as last year in all grades. While 53% of Grade 3-8 students across the state met or exceeded the new ELA Proficiency standard, 14% of English Language Learners met or exceeded the new ELA Proficiency standard. Fifteen percent of Students with Disabilities met or exceeded the new ELA Proficiency standard.

MCSSTA will build on the seasoning of educational excellence and creativity lifting America to an above average status. As we marinate in this wonderful and creative way; we want to build on the college educational focus of our students to keep them determined to achieve and get to the best colleges. Our hopes and desires are to create scholars that accept the highest academic achievement in education. Their outstanding achievement will come with the determination and success that an excellent education opens windows of all possibilities. These windows will open to other windows that will open to their hearts desire to do and become whatever they strive to accomplish in this world. Such magnificent MCSSTA scholars will be carved out of the unique characteristics of both Democracy Prep and MACADEMY and the before mentioned charters by utilizing the best elements of their educational programs. In so doing, MCSSTA scholars inclusive of all students from all socio-economic and achievement levels will become contributors rising to the highest academic achievements in our state, country and the world therefore, moving our great nation into a much needed elevated climb on the academic ladder of the world.

The Charter School Model adapted

To accomplish such colossal goals calls for great leadership, skills and commitment. Under my executive director leadership MACADEMY is a high performing Independent School that accepts students at any level from high poverty public schools and increase their achievement levels and demonstrates that different approaches are capable of ensuring that challenged student populations can achieve at the highest levels. Many charter schools are built on the best practices of high performing "no excuses" charter networks nationwide including Democracy Prep, Achievement First and YES Prep. These charter schools including (this independent school) MACADEMY have proven for many years that demographics do not determine destiny and that low income students can be successful in reaching their goals in elementary and middle schools and then move on to attend the high school or the college of their choice.

The most successful charter schools modeled these five common elements in their no excuses schools: (i) More time to learn (ii) rigorous college preparatory academics (iii) data driven decision making (iv) structured and supportive school culture, and (v) exemplary talents. The elements of this model are being used at Democracy Prep, and is also currently being used at MACADEMY, will be adapted successfully in our new propose MCSSTA educational institution design. These factors combine to ensure that all children especially those with special needs would be put on a path to middle, high school and college graduation within a safe

structured and supportive environment. In addition, Democracy Prep added to the model three unique adaptable elements: (1) A focus on authentic civic education (2) a commitment to serving all students in all grades in all subjects and (3) to operate their school on public funding successfully. MCSSTA, our high expectations and performance new proposed charter school will add to the model (1) leadership (2) competition (3) transforming choices (4) volunteering/community engagement. The collaborative use of all these key design elements will certainly increase the performance achievement levels of all students regardless of their socio-economic status and ensure their ability to excel in high school and graduate college.

Charter schools around the country (most notable Marva Collins Prep in Milwaukee, KIPP Academy in the Bronx and Democracy Prep in Harlem) with effective leadership has demonstrated that high performing no excuses schools practice has strong congruency with effective schools research. An analysis of practice and research reveal a consistent set of strategies when taken together and implemented with discipline can turn the daily turbulence of high poverty settings into school settings that demonstrate safety structure and support for students and faculty alike. Generally these schools promote learning and achievement by promoting student readiness to learn, enhancing staff readiness to teach, and expanding school leader readiness to act. The primary focus of MCSSTA is not to make the traditional model of education work better, but like other high performing no excuses charters MCSSTA will under my leadership use the innovative/research methods successfully utilized in charters as well as MACADEMY to approach schooling from a centralized student focus based on outcomes first and administrative decisions based on what students need to raise their achievement levels and promote and demonstrate success.

MCSSTA School Design Model:

- Rigorous college preparatory academics: Students study one and a half hours of Math, three hours of literacy, one and a half hours of Science, one hour of technology, one hour history, one hour foreign language, as well as require art, debate, drama, music, health and physical education.
- Exemplary talent: MCSSTA is committed to attracting the most talented teachers and performing extensive reviews and professional development during the school year and one week during the summer providing opportunities for growth.
- More time to learn: MCSSTA students will attend classes for at least eight hours each day for at least 190-197 days each year and offer additional Saturday and summer for academic support.
- Data-driven decision-making: At MCSSTA there will be an ongoing use of frequent data collection and analysis, interim assessments and comparative academic measures to drive effective instruction for the students and teachers.
- Structure and supportive school culture: All staff and students live by the THINK values of Time, Honor, Intelligence Negotiation and Knowledge. Think values will guide classroom behavior and professional culture and will be reinforced through earned opportunities.

These practices when well done at MCSSTA with “no excuse” will ensure delivery of what each individual student needs through effective differentiated instruction, targeted tutoring for student needs and parental leadership and communication. MCSSTA will also ensure that all students will be academically prepared to enter and excel in high school, college and beyond. Through the implementation of our THINK values (Time, Honor, Intelligence, Negotiation, and Knowledge) our students will be motivated to embrace responsibilities and become leaders that give back to their families and the communities. Having exemplary talent and effective teachers who are backed by a system of skilled professionals, extensive professional developmental training, highest academic practices and processes will demonstrate that all students regardless of low income or grades can set and obtain their goals to excel and be successful in middle school, high school, college and the world.

Providing the proper environment, staff and tools will cultivate an atmosphere that produces miracle between

the teacher and student and constitutes outstanding gains in critical skill and knowledge which will result in the delivery of academic excellence. This environment and the quality of instruction shaped on the readiness of all the students, staff, leadership and the readiness of the community to embrace change will be a great contribution of MCSSTA and will make a difference in students' achievement level in Brooklyn and New York State. We will increase students' achievement and decrease student achievement gap in Language/Reading/Math and help students to excel in high school and college. Our focus will be to develop curricula that stimulate the learning of our students. In our selection of curricula we will develop programs which exceed New York State required standards, and add an intense internal assessment to increase the achievement of our middle school students in preparation for their successful transition to high school and college. Use of the Interim Assessment will measure how much our students at their grade level have learned and will also measure in Reading their fluency, critical application of concepts, and their comprehension skills. Using Core Knowledge, Junior Great Books and literature classes to explore the classical books we will deepen our students love for classical writing and enrich their vocabulary.

The success of MCSSTA is contingent upon its relationship with public, charter and other schools in the district. One of our objective is to help New York State turn around its failing schools by partnering with PS91, a low-performing public school that the education committee at Community Board 9 has meet with to initiate a plan to have other schools partner with and share their best practices. In addition, the founding group of MCSSTA has reached out to the District 17 Superintendent Ms. Rhonda Hurdle Taylor (awaiting her response) with the intension to establish an ongoing relationship that will provide access to viable education alternatives to students in the community by sharing information for academic enrichment, modeling teaching styles, sharing skills and talents and working collaboratively on professional development that fosters love for learning and increase students' achievements.

MCSSTA Academic Program draws from the experiences of Democracy Prep and MACADEMY. Effective learning requires great leadership which comes with great challenges. As founder and Executive Director of MACADEMY School of Science and Technology I have encountered the experience of working with low income students, at-risk students and students with learning disabilities and the most challenging needs. In an effort to find new solutions to old challenges the founding group and I have adapted some of the best practices from many outstanding urban schools. Use of such practices will assisted us to maintain extraordinary focus on how to empower our students, increase their expectations, treat all students equally, provide high quality teaching, and have highest expectation of teachers, staff and parents resulting in our students high achievement level and success.

Our teachers will be trained agents who make students think, challenge them to strive to succeed and encourage them to chart a clear path for college and their tomorrows using the method of inclusion. There have been struggles with inclusions, but having MCSSTA students from various socio-economic back ground working together in pairs and groups to develop sophisticated social skills, share honorable values and learn the deepen value of social responsibilities will foster their social and emotional well being and resolve conflict. Our students will become effective team players, critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers.

Our students will not only be intellectuals, but also responsible citizen. The goal is for our students to do volunteer services within the community as a requirement for their civic duty. Working also with a very strong parent association along with our administration and teachers MCSSTA will be one of the most successful schools in Brooklyn for lower and middle income families with students below grade level. Outstanding instruction, high expectation and performance, hard work, expanded learning hours and community service will prepare MCSSTA students for success in high school, college and life.

It is at the request and support of the families and community that we serve that we are submitting this application for consideration to establish MCSSTA a new charter school in Brooklyn. Our collective experiences along with that of our dynamic founding group demonstrate our ability to overcome start-up challenges to successful open MCSSTA.

If accepted, our new charter school MCSSTA will also include in the fore mentioned model our motto (1)

Excellence (2) Integrity (3) Courage and (4) Responsibility lead to success in life. These are components that change individual lives and having extraordinary things happen. They help to define self, character and expectations. These words are also tools that assist in the response to the question “who are you?” Our school will not be merely about education, but also about “who you are”, about Dewey’s “Education is Life” philosophy. Teaching students to know who they are builds a sense of self and personal potential. Being a leader and knowing that you have the opportunity to have positive impact on the lives of others is an important faucet for the development of determination, purpose and a clear sense of social responsibility. Leadership, confidence and commitment foster success. Success is driven by excellence, nurtured by integrity, fueled by courage and anchored in responsibility. At MCSSTA students will learn to ask questions within the high expectations and performance, no excuse design program rather than to simply answer them.

MCSSTA will use the experiences of Democracy Prep and MACADEMY and other previously mentioned successful charter schools to expand our idea for our school design and evaluation. Our school is based on extended time, high expectations and performance, no excuse, data driven decision making, hard work and excellent instruction. We will adapt the powerful use of Interim Assessments system being inspired by Wendy Kopp, the founder of Teach for America to provide instruction that is designed to assist our students obtain clear and high educational standards. Every six weeks teachers will give this assessment to determine how much students have learned. Teachers and the academic advisor will analyze these results and using the data-driven plan will prepare for a performance conference with the principal to create a plan of action for individual student needs (one-on-one, whole or small group and tutoring if needed).

Teachers will have a clear view of our curriculum and scope and sequence of the interim assessment that will clearly define our set year-end goals as well as how to help our students to attain them. Each grade level will have its version of the interim assessment aligned to the MCSSTA curriculum for Math, Science, Grammar, Reading/Writing, and History. High expectations and performance well define targets for students’ and clear measurable goals will give a firm understanding of which students have mastered which standards. Teachers will then plan a clear path to address areas of student need. MCSSTA will be an excellent charter school serving all students.

Section B:

Founding Group’s capacity:

This section describes my qualifications and that of the founding group including the service structure for finance, academics, operations, people, knowledge management, and civic engagement. Under my leadership school leaders will focus on students and teachers. We will provide a six key service model adopted from Democracy Prep. MCSSTA management team represents a mix of outstanding education experience, business expertise, organizational savvy and passion concerning education of our youths and the community. This group of committed hard-working citizens is crucial to MCSSTA’s success.

Our founding group members are: Bishop Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales-Founder, Dr. Errol Byer-Co-Founder, Dr. Brenda Boyd-Bell, Dr. Mishna Brooks, Dr. Una S.T Clarke-Co-Founder, Judge Sylvia Ash, Mr. Michael Flanigan, Mr. David Fletcher, Ms. Avis Ellison, Ms. Corlace Campbell, Mr. Laurence Gonzales, Ms. Jean Joseph, Mrs. Gayle Adams, Mr. Richard Howe, Ms. Angeli Rasbury and Mr. Wayne Ragguette

The Board of Trustees consists of nine members from the founding group:

Mrs. Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales-*Founder/CEO*

Dr. Mishna Brooks-*Physician*

Judge Sylvia Ash- *Civil Court Judge*

Mr. Laurence Gonzales-*Entrepreneur*

Mr. Wayne Ragguette-*Regional Manager Strauss Auto*

Dr. Errol Byer- *CO-Founder, Physician*

Dr. Una S.T. Clarke-*Legislator/ Educator*

Mr. Michael Flanigan-*Former VP Citibank*

Mrs. Gayle Adams-*Attorney Realtor*

Configured for Success:

MCSSTA would be designed to maintain and maximize an appropriate balance between school leader autonomy and central control. Its structure will encompass aspects of decentralization (school leader autonomy and personalization) and centralization (uniformity of accountability). The management team and governing board will focus singularly on and hold responsibility for the academic and fiscal performance of the school (including hiring and termination of school leaders).

Under the leadership of the founding team MCSSTA will be designed to maintain and maximize an appropriate balance between school leader autonomy and central control. Its structure encompasses aspects of decentralization (school leader autonomy and personalization) and centralization (uniformity of accountability). This management team and governing board will focus singularly on and hold responsibility for the academic and fiscal performance of the school (including hiring and termination of school leaders).

MCSSTA Central Management Services

We have adopted the Democracy Prep central services model to help our founding leaders successfully manage with accountability our new charter school. To allow school leaders to focus on students and teachers, our leadership will provide the following six key services to our charter school: finance, academics, operations, people, knowledge management and civic engagement as illustrated in figure below.

Core Services Teams



Finance Team: Headed by Ms. Jean Joseph

This Finance Team will manage all finances and performs financial analysis, stress tests analysis, and long term planning for the schools. Additionally, the finance Team will prepare the school’s annual budgets in collaboration with the school leader and present them for approval to boards of trustees along with quarterly financial reporting to school level boards. The finance Team will create the systems for accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll and for overseeing the accounting process. Day to day book keeping entries will be completed by school level business managers.

Ms. Jean Joseph holds a Bachelors of Arts degree in Accounting from Pace University. She is the owner and founder of Joseph Tax and Consulting Service LLC. She is a Certified Public Accountant whom provides accounting auditing and consulting services, prepares financial statements compilation, reviews and audit a wide range of business and non-profit, including grantees of federal, state and city funds. She also does payroll and sales tax preparation, business planning and start-ups.

Academic Team: Headed by Dr. Brenda Boyd-Bell

This academic team will establish a curriculum and assessment systems based on the best practices throughout the best charter schools and beyond. These systems will include curriculum scope and sequence evaluation measures and comprehensive exams on a six week cycle that are administered to all students at the 5-8 grade levels. The Academic Team will provide extensive planning assistance and help to provide feedback and analysis of diagnostic assessments to teachers and school leaders. They will support school leaders with professional development inspections related to academic rigor and provide overall instructional oversight to advance comprehensive school quality.

Operations Team: Headed by Avis Ellison

The Operations Team will provide support and consultation on all matters related to facilities and capital improvements both public and private. The Team will also provide support in benefits administration procurement systems food service and student transportation issues. The Operations Team will oversee all technology systems, management of information technology and cross network platforms and work closely with school based technology staff. School based office managers and student registrars will be supported by the Operations Team to create efficient student records systems, filing methods, school safety plans, and help to liaise with the fire department, police department, transportation companies, food service providers and other vendors. Compliance issues will be handled primarily by the Operations Team as well as focusing on our charter renewals facilities hearings and construction management agreements with service providers.

Ms. Avis Ellison holds a Bachelors of Science and Masters of Science from Medgar Evers College and Long Island University respectively in Early Childhood Education. She has been an administrative director for the past thirty years. Currently, Ms. Ellison operates her own educational consulting firm while teaching at Touro College and an educational instructor for Sylvan Learning Center

People Team: Headed by Dr. Una S.T Clarke, Former City Council Member 40th District

The People Team will recruit from a pool of educational talent to fill positions at MCSSTA. People Team members will attend recruitment fairs hold middle school information sessions and network through social media. After gathering initial resumes and applications the People Team will take prospective candidates and present them to school leaders for final review by the direct supervisor after they schedule a sample lesson or similar authentic task. Once staff members are selected the People Team supports school leaders in implementing the human resources functions of the school. This will include tracking and encouraging staff satisfaction and long, term staff retention. BS Long Island College, Masters in Education, N. Y. University

Knowledge Management Team: Headed by Ms. Corlace Campbell

MCSSTA Knowledge Management Team will be responsible for researching, documenting and disseminating best practices at MCSSTA. Data captured at the classroom and school level will be analyzed by the Knowledge Management Team through sophisticated student information management systems and compared. Grant writing will be the responsibility of this team.

Ms. Corlace Campbell holds a Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Handicap/Speech Science, from Long Island University and a Masters of Arts in Educational Leadership and Technology from Adelphi University. She has over ten years of teaching young adults and children with disabilities, nine years experience rendering support as a medical emergency technician, more than six years of supervisory and managerial performance, and over five years experience designing and implementing individual action plans.

Civic Engagement Team: Headed by Ms. Angeli Rasbury

MCSSTA Civic Engagement Team will be responsible for press, marketing, branding and web presence. The Civic Engagement Team to ensure that families, scholars and staff are excellent advocates who can be mobilized for the purposes of social action on a wide variety of issues. This includes networking with MACADEMY and other charters to build relationships and institutional partnerships address issues that share our common purposes concerning education, environmental justice, campaigns and voter registration drives. The Team's responsibility is to tell the story of MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts to the world; including funders, philanthropic partners, dignitaries, elected officials, and other members of the community.

Ms Angeli Rasbury holds a Bachelors of Science from Syracuse University and a Law Degree from Temple University School of Law. Ms. Rasbury has over ten years of experience in criminal law, award winning articles published in Essence and Black Enterprise magazines, program development, grant writing, and youth and curriculum development.

MAC Charter School of Science, Technology and the Arts will directly transform the lives of thousands of students and increase their achievement levels with such a distinctive group of founding leaders and the

outstanding model adopted for management and accountability purposes. Our founding organizers will seek to find a wealth of experience useful for classroom instruction and school development including curricular materials and classroom management best practices. There are six areas that will be our primary focus:

The authority to act: Charter law clearly designates the authority to act based on what's best for children and learning. This includes flexibility and ability to make decisions over budget, staffing, scheduling, curriculum and program and the support to align these operations with the mission and strategy to increase student achievement and decrease student achievement gaps in Reading/Language Arts and Math.

Recognition of the challenge: The founding group of MCSSTA recognizes that opening a new charter school maybe far more difficult than moderate school improvement. Succeeding entails a distinct professional discipline with specialized experience, training and support. The NYSED's RfP reflects an understanding of these challenges and a successful effort to establish a new charter in Brooklyn will require a design and a team fully aware of the challenge and capable of meeting all requirements for success in alliance with the mission. MCSSTA is committed to take embrace this task with confidence and willingness to our children and our state to excel in educational excellence.

Urgency: We the founding leaders believe the time is now to answer to the demands of our students and parents to open this new charter school which will produce significant achievement gains within two years while preparing the school to develop into a high performing organization ready to succeed. Without urgency the option for the severely underserved students in District 17 will be doomed.

Relentless focus on talent: We will be recruiting hiring and developing talented master teachers who will be trained in the best practices instructions. They will be given continued professional training and support for their exceptional skills and talents. In hiring outstanding teachers MCSSTA will hold the successful applicant to high standards of expectations and performance. All teachers will be required to teach the concept of love for learning.

Highly competent school leadership: NYSED's focus on the competencies and attributes of a stable school leadership team appropriately reflects the importance of an effective school leader and an effective leadership team. Our team of leaders will be highly qualified, committed members and change agents for our community.

Performance-based expectations: Teachers, leaders, and even parents need to be committed to academic excellence and the intellectual ability of all students. They must also be committed to succeed and be accountable for their performance. Improvements will remain an aspiration.

High-capacity operators: Establishing a new charter school demands skillful management and successful managers who will have a track record of integrating multiple services in support of academic excellence and achievement.

Nonprofit Structure: The founding group of the charter school will obtain federal tax-exempt status to align with the requirements of the board of regents in article 2853. This makes our incentives, priorities student achievement and not profit we will also avoid criticisms leveled at for-profit charter schools management.

The MCSSTA Aligned Approach

The approach includes:

More time to learn: All MCSSTA students will attend academic classes for at least eight hours each day for at least 190-197 days each year. We will offer additional summer and Saturday academies for extra support for students with special needs in grades 5-8. This means more educational time than in their traditional zoned schools.

Rigorous academics: Students will study one and a half hours of Math, three hours of Literacy, one hour of Science, one hour Technology (used in every subject) each day as well as required foreign language, debate, art, theater, music, health and physical education.

Data-driven decision-making: MCSSTA utilize a sophisticated feedback loop of frequent data collection and analysis including a network, curriculum mapping, smart board tool, interim assessments, and comparative academic measures to drive effective instruction at the student, class, teacher, grade, school, and network levels.

Structured and supportive school culture: All MCSSTA staff and students will live by the (THINK) values of Time, Honor, Intelligence, Negotiation, and Knowledge. The THINK values will guide classroom behavior, motivates students and staff, reinforces civic responsibilities, respect diversity and promotes a variety of earned enrichment opportunities and positive incentives.

Exemplary talent: MCSSTA will be committed to attracting, developing, and retaining exceptional human capital. Staff members will undergo extensive performance review, receive weekly professional development during the school year and two weeks of intensive Professional Development in the summer and will be given explicit career ladders and opportunities for growth.

The mission of MCSSTA is measureable indicating the purpose and goal of what we will do for the underserved children in our community. Our mission will strengthen the academic and character skills of all youths by providing a college preparatory education for students empowering them to master the skills necessary to think independently, as competent, creative, compassionate and confident citizens and leaders of the community using their educational tools to sustain life experiences in the competitive world.

MCSSTA will provide a rigorous college preparatory academic program for students from 5-8 grades providing the knowledge, skills and character that are necessary for the intellectual mastery of core academic subjects that clearly defines the path for success in college prep middle school. Students will receive highly structured civic education for leadership to be active citizens in our community and our nation while applying our THINK values of: (time, honor, intelligence, negotiation, and knowledge) and our motto.

At MCSSTA a very strong parent involvement component will be included in our design. Parents will elect/select their leaders who will work with the Academics, People, Knowledge and Civic Engagement teams and our board of trustees to identify problems and plan solutions. Their purpose includes, but is not limited to sharing in the decision makings that promote the effective operation of our school by volunteering, fundraising, lobbying, conducting planning meetings to support students with special needs and to network with the community leaders and elected official to affect positive changes in education legislation. Our parent will be a key asset to our success.

Bishop Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales, Founder and Executive Director, responsible for:

Setting the vision for MCSSTA and maintaining quality leadership and accountability for the organization across networks, both operationally and academically thus maximizing the impact of our present and future growth. I am a scholar in the field Psychology/Education and Religion/Society. Former adjunct professor at College of New Rochelle, and served as a 2008 delegate for Pres. Barack Obama at the Democratic National Convention. I earned my BA degree from the College of New Rochelle, my Masters degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, and ABD from Drew University, Founder and Bishop QKingdom Ministries. Inc.

