

Letter of Intent: Applicant and Media Contact Form

Created Sunday, January 20, 2013

Updated Thursday, January 31, 2013

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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 applicant and media contact form, and an upload of your 5 page Letter of Intent to Apply as outlined on pages 14 of the 2013 RFP and Application Kit. Please submit these tasks by 5:00 PM on February 1, 2013. Applicants who do not submit a complete Letter of Intent to Apply by this 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).

The Charter School for Science and Literacy

Whether submitting an application in Round 1 or Round 2, all new charter school applicants seeking public space in New York City must fill out a "Request for DOE Space" by January 31, 2013. The Request Form can be found at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dHNTYVFueWd4RWhmLW5CNHBqV>

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.

NYC CSD-Manhattan: CSD 4

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

NYC CSD-Manhattan: CSD 5

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

NYC CSD-Bronx: CSD 7

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	Sabrina R Ford	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Co-Applicant	Amy Alfortish	646-241-9330	amyalfortish@hotmail.com	[REDACTED]

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

(Multiple responses permitted)

- Current or former Teacher

d. Media Contact: 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	Amy Alfortish	646-241-9330	amyalfortish@hotmail.com	none

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

	Ages (or age ranges)	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
K	0	0	0	0	0	0
1st	0	0	0	0	0	0
2nd	0	0	0	0	0	0
3rd	0	0	0	0	0	0
4th	0	0	0	0	0	0
5th	0	0	0	0	0	0
6th	11-12+	125	125	125	0	0
7th	12-13+	0	125	125	0	0
8th	13-14+	0	0	125	0	0
9th	0	0	0	0	0	0
10th	0	0	0	0	0	0
11th	0	0	0	0	0	0
12th	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ungraded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		125	250	375	0	0

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 36-39 of the application kit for definitions and guidance as only "significant" partnerships should be listed here).

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. Proposed Management Company	(No response)
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. Partner Organization 1	AMNH
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. Partner Organization 2	NYC Grows

Thank you for completing the Applicant and Media 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.

January 31, 2013
Director Cliff Chuang
NYSED Charter School Office
89 Washington Avenue, Room 471 EBA
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Mr. Chuang:

The purpose of this letter is to officially convey our intention to apply to NYSED for a charter for the Charter School for Science and Literacy. In accordance with NYSED guidelines, what follows is information about the proposed school:

I. Applicant Information

- a. **Lead applicant(s):** Sabrina Robin Ford and Amy Alfortish
- b. **Media contact:** Amy Alfortish, amyalfortish@gmail.com
- c. **Applicant founding group:**

Amy Alfortish holds a MA from Columbia Teachers College in Educational Psychology: Reading Specialist and a BA in Secondary Social Studies Education. With her eight years experience as a middle school Language Arts teacher, five years Literacy Coaching experience, two years experience as a Comprehensive School Reform Facilitator, she possesses the skills necessary to effectively direct CSSL's cross-curricular literacy instruction, to lead in building a collaborative professional community by directing common planning sessions and guiding meaningful professional development.

Sabrina Ford holds a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction, an MS in Education Administration, and a Permanent NYS School District Administrator License. She has 14 years experience teaching secondary science and literacy and has worked with the AMNH for over four years utilizing science secondary education. She was a lead teacher for Urban Advantage and has directed an SES program, led Teacher Professional development for the NYCDOE, AMNH and the Bronx Zoo, and co-authored NYC Science Middle School Scope and Sequence. Sabrina Ford is exceptionally qualified to be CSSL's Principal, as well as a highly effective instructional leader directing the CSSL's Instructional Team.

- *Myra Goldberg*, proposed board member – A faculty member and instructor of writing for over 30 years at Sarah Lawrence College. Goldberg has been a board member of Bank Street. She received a BA from the University of California-Berkeley and a MA from City University of New York. Myra Goldberg is a published author of novels and short stories. She is the director of the Bank Street Leadership for Arts in writing.

- *Vivienne Ellis- Stelzer*, proposed board member – Is a retired administrator with over 25 years experience in NYC public schools including The School of the Future and Wagner Middle School. She has 12 years experience as an adjunct professor at Touro College Graduate School with a focus in introductory general education and special education classes. She will lend her expertise to the professional development of teachers and school management.

- *Dr. Harold Delaleu* proposed board member, graduated from **New York University - Mount Sinai**. • He is a resident of Harlem and was educated in New York City public schools and New York State Universities. He is a chapter leader for his fraternity Kappa Alpha Psi. Dr. Delaleu

will offer expertise and guide the direction of the science curriculum at CSSL to ensure students are prepared for higher endeavors in science careers.

- *Yu Yamada*, proposed board member, graduated from **University of California San Diego** with a B.A. in Applied Mathematics, and **Columbia University** with a M.A. in Mathematics of Finance. Yu Yamada is a Senior Business Consultant with SunGard. He has expertise in business management and finance.

- *Maura C. Harford*, proposed board member, holds a MS from Johns Hopkins University in Leadership and Management for Independent Schools, MBA in Finance in Management from Columbia University. Harford’s extensive education as well as her business and independent school management experience will make her an excellent board member for CSSL.

d. **Replication or network information:** Not applicable.

e. **Application history:** In 2011 an application for The Manhattan Charter School for Science and Literacy was submitted for a charter to SUNY. While SUNY found the idea, mission of the school and the proposed district for the school to be well developed and a strength, the application was rejected stating more development was needed. In this regard, the founding members sought to prepare a more extensive application and enrolled and completed The Apply Right Program at The New York City Charter School Center.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. **Proposed school name:** The Charter School for Science and Literacy

b. **Proposed school location:** Community School District 7

c. **Planned grades and enrollment:**

Grades	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
6	125	127	128	130	132
7		122	125	126	128
8			120	122	124

d. **Proposed management/partner organizations:** Not applicable.

e. **Proposed school mission:** The mission of the Charter School for Science and Literacy is to provide a high quality charter school that delivers strong, authentic learning opportunities utilizing New York City’s best educational resources. CSSL inspires learners’ engagement with a hands-on applied science curriculum and develops each student’s skills with a cross-curricular literacy education producing exemplary levels of achievement and students equipped with the necessary foundation to complete high school and pursue careers in science.

f. **School overview:** We seek to offer all student learners a choice education built on success. Educational research demonstrates that all students learn more effectively when provided with a hands-on approach and the chance to apply knowledge in the real world. A synthesis of 15 years of research by Bredderman (1982) reported that students in activity-based programs performed 20 percentile units higher than the comparison groups, with **students who were disadvantaged economically or academically demonstrating the most gains**. CSSL will provide students with hands-on learning opportunities unique to New York City.

Science and Literacy will be scheduled together in three hour blocks. This allows for extensive science and literacy instruction to take place out of the classroom in the city’s museums, parks, universities, science labs and libraries.

□ Full Inclusion – Collaborative Team Teaching: Two Teachers will be present in core subjects. (One Subject teacher and one SPED teacher.) Three teachers will be present in the Science/Literacy Blocked classes at all times. (Two General Ed subject teachers and one SPED/ELL teacher.)

□ Cross-Curricular Core Subject Common Planning and Professional Development provided for teachers during students’ daily first period (Physical Education/Electives Classes)

□ Continual Ongoing Assessment using a variety of formal and informal assessment tools to collect data to drive instruction and construction of individualized instructional and remediation plans. These measures will also guide Individualized Extended Day and Saturday School instruction including AIS,

□ Intensive Parent Outreach

CSSL’s curriculum will be cross-curricular in design and naturally differentiated, as students will have the opportunity to learn in many capacities by using all their senses, allowing instruction to access a wide range of diverse learning styles. **All types of learners are valued and desired at CSSL.** Direct instruction, as well as independent and group learning will be utilized throughout the curriculum. Additionally, CSSL’s blocked schedule design and fully inclusive learning environment allow for flexible student grouping based on need and interest, as well as provides the time students require to complete quality projects that demonstrate an understanding of core curriculum NYS standards using New York City’s extensive resources. While our design elements are not traditional, CSSL embraces New York State’s Common Core standards, expects to be held accountable, and will measure student progress using New York State Standardized tests as well as National Science Assessment Exams.

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

a. **School’s target population and community:** CSSL will serve the demographics of the current population living in the South Bronx: predominantly low-income (as defined by qualification for the federal meals program). Our target population will include over 80% free and reduced lunch, 20.1 % students with special needs and 18.1% ELL population.

b. **Students with Disabilities Recruitment:** The Charter School for Science and Literacy welcomes students with disabilities. It is our core belief that all students, including special education students, if given a chance, the right instruction and educational support, can achieve as well as, if not exceed, their general education counterparts. **CSSL’s fully inclusive, hands-on cross-curricular instructional model is designed to reach all students, and is especially effective for students who have approaches to learning that differ from the more traditional methods found in many schools. CSSL will seek to attract and retain students with disabilities.** All students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment possible; CSSL will consist of all inclusive classes where Special Education teachers work with content area teachers in the same classroom or non-classroom environment. Special Education teachers will monitor the effectiveness of lessons to support and collaborate with content area teachers in refining lessons to differentiate instruction. CSSL will contract or hire any other personnel needed to serve the CSSL’s special education population. These include, but are not limited to: speech language, occupational therapy, recreation, counseling, mobility service etc. **This model will allow parents and students to feel valued and desired.**

c. **English Language Learners Recruitment:** CSSL’s core belief is that all students can learn and can achieve. CSSL’s community outreach and recruitment, as well as community programs offered will be used to recruit ELL and LEP students. Second Language Learner students who

have not been evaluated will be identified by using the LAB-R. CSSL's continued goal with ELL and LEP students will be to ensure students master the English Language Arts skills necessary to become a former ESL student, no longer in need of services. CSSL will further support its ELL population by reaching out to organizations such as LACA (Latin American Community Alliance) to organize weekend and evening programs such as LEAF (Learning English among Friends) that promote English language learning for both students and parents. The ELL teacher will work alongside the content teacher in inclusive classroom or non-classroom settings. Additional instruction will be provided to ELL students on Saturdays, after-school etc. **ELL students will not be excluded from extracurricular activities or electives.**

d. Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch Recruitment: The Charter School for Science and Literacy will use several means of recruitment for potential students and their families. CSSL's founding members will meet with local community and political leaders, as well as local parents and students outside neighborhood grocery stores, subway entrances, post offices and other less formal community areas like neighborhood parks and recreational places to share information about CSSL's mission and unique design and provide demonstrations, as well as, hands-on science activities for children. Printed material will be translated into different languages. CSSL will place advertisements in local community newspapers in all Spanish and other languages to attract ELL students and parents. CSSL members will contact guidance counselors of elementary schools and other CSD 7 elementary schools to set up science demo lessons for potential students and their parents. CSSL will establish a website and will use this as a mechanism to communicate with interested, prospective families. Enrollment applications for CSSL will be available online as well as at the school facility.

b. Students with Disabilities Retention: CSSL will follow all state and federal guidelines for students with disabilities and consult the Committee on Special Education (CSE) to provide students with support services. CSSL will also follow rules that govern identifying students with disabilities by creating a Student Support Team. CSSL will adopt a referral method as outlined in the regulations of NYS Commissioner of Education in accordance with Part 200.4. All educational services provided to students will conform to all applicable federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). All special educational programs and services at CSSL shall be provided in accordance with Educational Law § 2853(4) (a). Initial evaluations, re-evaluations and revisions of IEPs, are the responsibility of local educational agency- the school district of a student's residence (34 CFR§ 300.2, 300.312 and 300.340et al). Research in support of collaborative inclusion instructional practices similar to CSSL's design is strong. Research by Elliott (1992) suggests that successful inclusion practices depend on restructured schools that allow for flexible learning environments. Educational research has shown highly favorable results for special education students receiving a hands-on science curriculum in a fully inclusive academic setting similar to CSSL's design. Data collected in numerous studies including Cawley et al. (2002), Cooney et al. (2006) and Idol (2006) suggests that students with disabilities in science inclusion classes perform significantly better than those students in remedial or resource room settings and reported significantly higher standardized statewide test scores, for students with disabilities compared to their segregated counterparts

c. English Language Learners Retention: In accordance with CSSL's mission and core belief that students should be educated in an inclusive setting, English Immersion models will be implemented for instructional purposes. All notices sent home as well as student progress reports will be translated, and an interpreter will be provided for parent-teacher conferences if needed.

All ELL students will be assessed for progress using the NYS ELA assessment. The NYSESLAT will provide indicators of proficiency and determine when a student will exit from ELL services and supports. ELL students will engage in continual ongoing formal and informal assessments including the NYSESLAT to inform instructional decisions and to make adjustments to support the individualized instruction that each ELL/LEP student receives.

Amaral, et. al. (2002) found that for English learners who experienced hands-on science instruction demonstrated improvement in reading, writing, and mathematics, while Bredderman (1982) concluded from his study that a hands-on science curriculum can make a positive contribution to the development and acquisition of language skills for English language learners.

d. Students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch Retention: A Report on Achievement: Effects of Hands-On Science in Dade County, Florida (1996) demonstrated that students in schools using hands-on science instruction outperformed other students not only in science, but also in Reading Comprehension, Mathematics Computation, and Mathematics. Additionally, J.D. Valdez (2001) found that reading scores for students of minority ethnic groups' who received hands-on science instruction increased at higher rates than their non-minority counterparts. Valdez suggests that hands-on science content may provide an effective means of reducing the achievement gap that exists between ethnic groups. Success for students is imperative.

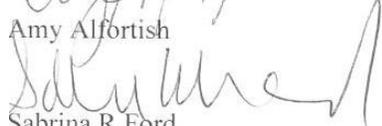
IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

Public Outreach and Community Support: The founding members reached out to several non-profit, church, community, and business leaders in the South Bronx to solicit feedback on our proposal, including Archdiocese and parish leaders and the YMCA. Surveys were conducted over a series of weekends targeting parents of elementary school and current middle school students regarding their interest in a middle school that will provide hands on science instruction with a focus on literacy that will foster and prepare their children for careers in science. Of the 46 surveys completed by community participants, over 90% expressed strong interest. This is also evident in the community by the number of applicants to CSD 7's two current middle schools that focus on science. Hostos – Lincoln Academy of Science had over 713 applicants for 78 available seats in 2011. Given that H-LAS is a screened school many of the district's special needs population was at a disadvantage for acceptance. The Science School for Exploration and Discovery had 392 applicants for 141 seats in 2011, while providing more of an opportunity for disadvantage student acceptance, the school is currently under performing with a progress report grade of D. Therefore, this community demonstrates both a need and an interest in a quality middle school with a focus on science education intended to foster careers in the sciences. CSSL intends to foster connections/partnerships with NYC grows, iGEM, Bronx Zoo and AMNH thereby allowing many hands on science opportunities for students in this community.

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If you have any questions or require further information, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,


Amy Alfortish

Sabrina R Ford

Date: 2/1/13

Date: 2/7/13