

LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR A CHARTER

I. Applicant Information

a. Applicant(s) information:

Name	Mailing Address	Phone Number	Email Address	Applicant Information
Josh Beauregard	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	jobeauregard@gmail.com	Educator/ community resident
Casey Burns	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Educator
Eric Gonzalez	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Educator/ policy advocate
Hemanth Venkataraman	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Educator/ community resident

b. Media contact: Josh Beauregard, unityprepcharterschool@gmail.com

c. Applicant founding group:

Josh Beauregard is a doctoral candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). He works as a consultant for SchoolWorks LLC conducting school quality reviews for charter schools across the country. He also serves as an Evaluation Fellow for the Harlem Children’s Zone. Josh has extensive experience in developing new teachers as a coach for university- and school-based teacher development programs. He began his educational career as a high school teacher and Director of the Academy of Finance at Louis D. Brandeis High School in Manhattan. He holds a BA from Vassar College in 2000, an MA in Secondary Mathematics Education from City College of New York (CCNY) in 2005, and has completed HGSE’s School Leadership Program as a part of his doctoral studies. Josh will serve as Unity Prep’s Head of School.

Casey Burns is an English language arts teacher at MS 223: The Laboratory School of Finance and Technology in the Bronx. He has taught for the last nine years in the Bronx, developing and co-developing reading and writing curricula for elementary and middle schools for general education, special education, and bilingual student populations. Casey received his BA from Boston College in 2001 and his MA, as a Petrie fellow, from Teachers College in 2007. Casey will serve as Unity Prep’s Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment.

Eric Gonzalez is the Education Policy Advocate for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.¹ In this capacity Eric helps shape federal education policy and legislation through advocacy on behalf of children living in poverty and children of color. Previously, for five years, Eric taught and directed standards-based learning units for English language arts in middle schools and high schools for Directions for Our Youth, Inc. (DFOY), a New York City-based nonprofit organization, reaching over 2400 students annually. Eric earned a BA from the State University of New York at Purchase College in 2001, an MA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2009, and an M.Ed., as an Urban Scholar Fellowship recipient, from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2010. Eric will serve on Unity Prep’s Board of Trustees.

Hemanth Venkataraman taught and developed curricula for mathematics and technology courses for five years at Louis D. Brandeis High School in Manhattan. He also served as the school’s Coordinator of Student Activities. Hemanth has since prepared students for the GMAT exam with Manhattan GMAT and has been an instructor in the Youth Empowerment Seminar,

¹ Institutional affiliation listed for identification purposes only.

teaching high school students to positively manage their emotions and commit to their educations. Hemanth received a BS from Columbia University in 2002 and an MA in Secondary Mathematics Education from CCNY in 2006. Hemanth will serve as Unity Prep’s Director of Culture and Civic Engagement.

d. Proposed members the school’s initial board of trustees:

Kabir Ahuja is an Engagement Management Associate at McKinsey & Company, specialized in media and technology sectors, with functional specialty in marketing and sales. Mr. Ahuja received his BS from Columbia’s School of Engineering and Applied Science in 2003 and an MBA from Columbia Business School in 2008.

Eric Rafael Gonzalez (See brief description of relevant experience and skills above.)

Caleb Hurst-Hiller is the Head of School at the Community Charter School of Cambridge, serving 330 students from the greater Boston area and helping them to pursue college degrees. He taught middle and high school humanities and has served as the Humanities Department Chair, Instructional Leader, and Principal. Caleb received his BA from Brown University in 2003 and his M.Ed., as an Urban Scholars fellow, from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2008.

Carlyle G. Leach was the founding principal of The School for Legal Studies, a New York City public high school, inaugural director of the Schomburg Center Junior Scholars Program, and a lifelong participant in sports programs for youth. Currently involved in the private equity market, Carlyle is a Brooklyn native with extensive executive experience in all levels of government. Carlyle received a BA from City University in New York and an MA in Urban Studies from City University of New York – Queens College.

Marion C. Leydier is a partner at the law firm Sullivan & Cromwell LLP. Marion received an MBA from ESSEC in Paris in 1997, a Maitrise from the Sorbonne in 2000, a DEA from the Sorbonne in 2001 and a JD from Columbia University School of Law in 2001.

Richard A. Pollack is a partner at the law firm Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, where he co-heads the Firm’s General Practice Group with responsibility for over 400 lawyers in 12 offices around the world. Richard received his AB from Columbia College in 1984 and his JD from New York University School of Law in 1988.

e. Replication or network information: Not applicable

f. Application history: The founding group applied to open Unity Prep in February 2012 with the New York State Education Department. The group withdrew the application in April 2012.

II. Proposed Charter School Information

a. Proposed school name: Unity Preparatory Charter School of Brooklyn (Unity Prep)

b. Proposed school location: Community School District #13

c. Planned grades and enrollment in each of the years of the proposed charter term: At full size, Unity Prep will serve students in grades 6-12. The table below depicts the school’s projected enrollment in each year of the proposed five-year charter term. The school will reach full planned enrollment of 799 students in its seventh year (2019-2020).

Grades	Year 1 2013-2014	Year 2 2014-2015	Year 3 2015-2016	Year 4 2016-2017	Year 5 2017-2018
6	125	125	125	125	125

7	-	116	116	116	116
8	-	-	108	108	108
9	-	-	-	125	125
10	-	-	-	-	116
Total	125	241	349	474	590

d. Proposed management and/or partner organization(s): NA

e. Proposed school mission: The mission of Unity Prep is to empower students as scholars and citizens so they may lead fulfilling academic, personal, and professional lives.

f. School overview: Unity Prep’s design incorporates a number of key elements that have proven successful in high-performing schools. It also includes an array of unique elements that the founding group believes will profoundly benefit our students, including:

- A college-preparatory liberal arts & sciences curriculum, which focuses on mathematics, English language arts (ELA), science, and social studies, while fostering in students the desire and capacity to learn independently, think critically, and communicate proficiently;
- An extended day, week, and academic year with approximately 40% more time on academic, extra-curricular, and enrichment activities annually than the local district average, translating to more than three additional years of learning time over seven years at Unity Prep;
- School-wide systems and practices in utilizing formative and summative assessments to inform daily instruction, enrichment, and remediation and thus better support all students, including those who have struggled as well as those who thrived in school;
- Project-based enrichment courses in world languages, design, and technology that promote interdisciplinary learning and reinforce essential professional skills and core-content knowledge;
- Elective and extra-curricular opportunities emphasizing the development of team-oriented skills including athletic teams and clubs for music, visual, and performing arts;
- A school-wide character development program built into the daily schedule that will equip students with effective techniques to decrease stress and manage their emotions;
- An inventive teacher career advancement system that incentivizes ongoing teacher development while generously recognizing teachers for their academic and nonacademic contributions to our school;
- A multi-faceted professional development system that incorporates development along three dimensions: individual, team, and school-wide. Examples include intensive teacher coaching at the individual level, video study groups and instructional rounds at the team level, and summer and winter staff developmental institutes at school-wide level.

g. Target population and the community that the school intends to serve: Unity Prep will be located in Brooklyn’s CSD 13, which offers a wide range of cultural, educational, and professional resources that will supplement the school’s curricular and co-curricular programs. The district’s student population of approximately 22,000 is diverse: 59% Black, 17% Asian, 15% Hispanic, and 8% White. The founding team will implement a comprehensive outreach plan to attract a student population that mirrors these demographics. CSD 13’s 2010-11 state report card indicates that 73% of students in the district are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Therefore, the founding group intends to establish a lottery preference to reserve 73% of the sixth grade seats for students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. The Board of Regents has established enrollment and retention targets for CSD 13 at 10% for students with disabilities and

5% for English language learners (ELLs). Unity Prep will meet or exceed these targets by utilizing the recruitment and retention strategies described in Section III.

Academically, the founding team anticipates that roughly one half of incoming sixth graders will be performing at grade level depending on the subject. The most recent data available from New York State and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) show that, of fifth graders assessed in CSD 13 during the 2010-11 school year, 46% met or exceeded proficiency (level 3 or 4) on the state ELA exam and 58% met or exceeded proficiency on the state Mathematics exam. Moreover, in sixth grade, the ELA and Mathematics passing rates were relatively lower with 37% and 43% meeting or exceeding proficiency, respectively. Unity Prep will accept sixth graders regardless of background or proficiency level and ensure that they develop the skills and knowledge to meet or exceed proficiency on all state exams by eighth grade. This level of performance, combined with Unity Prep's well-rounded and challenging curriculum, will validate their preparedness for high school. In 2010-11, only 28% of CSD 13 eighth graders demonstrated proficiency on the state ELA exam and only 37% demonstrated proficiency on the state Mathematics exam. Since the school will backfill open seats in ninth grade, the founding group anticipates welcoming approximately 30 new ninth graders each year beyond our third year. We understand that these students may initially perform significantly below grade level and have developed several interdependent structures that will comprehensively support such students.

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

Through an extensive outreach and recruitment campaign, Unity Prep plans to enroll special student populations in proportions that reflect their representation in the district at large. The campaign will begin with founders and volunteers disseminating information about Unity Prep's programs and supports for students with special needs and soliciting feedback from these families about how the school may best serve them. These efforts will include door-to-door distribution and direct mailing of the Unity Prep brochure translated into languages represented in the community, visiting CSD 13 elementary schools to provide information to guidance counselors and parents, and collaborating with community-based organizations that serve immigrant populations, advocate for students with disabilities, and/or offer support to low-income families. The founding team will also host a series of town hall-style informational sessions, attended by representatives from the school's partnering organizations. Unity Prep's website, which contains detailed information about the school's programs and services, will also prove valuable in outreach and recruitment efforts and will include an online application. Social media sites and search engine advertising targeted to families of students with special needs will drive traffic to the school's website.

To support and retain these student populations, Unity Prep will create classroom settings that are inclusive and differentiated for students of all backgrounds and ability levels through Integrated Co-Teaching for students with disabilities and structured English immersion based on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for ELLs. For students in need of academic remediation, Unity Prep will provide an array of support systems including an extended school day and school year, highly qualified and demonstrably effective instructors and teaching assistants providing additional classroom support, robust formative assessments that allow for real-time modification of instruction and supports, and extensive tutoring and academic intervention services. Unity Prep will use the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

framework to help establish a positive school culture and consistently enforce behavioral expectations. Furthermore, the school will foster students' non-academic and socio-emotional development through its Advisory program, a host of engaging elective and extra-curricular activities, a unique character development program that promotes stress reduction and emotional management, and a school-wide mentoring program.

IV. Public Outreach and Community Support

For the past year, the founding group has engaged parents, community stakeholders, local politicians, and community board members to gain a deeper understanding of the interest in and need for a new school, to establish partnerships with local organizations, and to learn how Unity Prep may best address the community's needs. To date, the founding team has initiated formal partnerships with a local museum, a school for the performing arts, multiple youth centers/programs, and two local colleges. Members have also visited and/or consulted with a number of area school leaders from traditional public schools, charter schools, and private schools to learn from their experiences. These conversations have laid the groundwork for collaboration with neighboring school leaders, thereby enhancing the educational opportunities afforded to all students in the district. Likewise, the knowledge and feedback offered by local elected officials has been invaluable to the founding group's planning.

The founding group has also met with families in a host of settings, including focus group sessions and one-on-one discussions in an effort to gain a deeper understanding of their hopes, interests, and concerns with public schooling in CSD 13, particularly at the middle and high school levels. In these discussions, families and parents have emphasized the importance of having educational options and the ability to choose a school that best meets their children's interests. These conversations with parents from the community, representatives of local institutions, and elected officials have provided the founding group with an abundance of powerful evidence suggesting a strong interest in the establishment of Unity Prep.

Statistical evidence corroborates this strong interest. A spring 2012 study by the New York City (NYC) Charter School Center on the existing demand for charter schools among families and parents in NYC, for example, highlighted Central Brooklyn (including CSD 13) as one of the three areas in NYC where a majority of students apply to charter schools. According to this study, the charter school waiting list in Central Brooklyn as of spring 2012 stood at 15,126. Similarly, NYCDOE data indicate that the charter school enrollment in CSD 13 stood at 3-5% as of the 2009-2010 school year, much lower than the charter school enrollment in neighboring CSDs 14 and 16 (11% and 13.5%, respectively). Given the similar populations and demographics of these districts to CSD 13, additional capacity for charter school growth likely exists. Finally, this past fall, the city's Chancellor announced plans to open 50 new middle schools over the next two years. This initiative is driven by a need and interest to improve the city's schooling options at the middle school level.

Josh Beauregard
Signature of Lead Applicant

6/24/2012
Date