

Springfield Preparatory Charter School

Members of the Applicant Group

This is prepared by the applicant group of the proposed Springfield Prep Charter School.

Proposed Board of Trustees:

John Brown, an Investment Strategy Analyst in the Chief Investment Officer's group at MassMutual, brings financial and real estate development experience. Mr. Brown will utilize real estate experiences that range from the acquisition and asset management of existing properties to ground-up development to spearhead Springfield Prep's facilities search and build-out initiatives. Mr. Brown has been active in several community initiatives, including as a board member of St. Jude School in Harlem, NYC. Mr. Brown earned a BS from the University of Virginia and MBA from Columbia Business School.

Sonia Dinnall, a Springfield native, is currently Director of College and Career Readiness for Hartford Public Schools. A 24-year veteran of urban, public education, Ms. Dinnall has served on several boards and committees, including the SPS Superintendent Advisory Board, the SPS Superintendent Search Committee, and the College Board's National Office of School Counselor Advocacy Advisory Board. Ms. Dinnall will provide a practitioner's perspective on urban education, insight into Springfield Public Schools, and direction to building and sustaining a college going culture.

James Duda, partner at Bulkley, Richardson and Gelinas, is the head of its intellectual property practice group. He grew up in Springfield, attended its schools, and currently works in downtown Springfield. Mr. Duda will bring legal and school committee experience to the Board. He is a former member of the school boards for the Amherst Regional Public Schools and the Town of Pelham, has served on a number of nonprofit boards, and is currently a member of the Board for the New England Public Radio Foundation. Mr. Duda earned a BA from Bennington College, MS in engineering from UCLA, and a JD from Boston College.

Peter Ellis, Vice President and Creative Director at DIF Design, a Springfield-based web and graphic design agency, will assist with our community outreach and public relations work. Mr. Ellis serves on the Board of Directors for the Young Professionals of Greater Springfield and is a recent graduate of a regional leadership program, Leadership Pioneer Valley. Mr. Ellis earned a BA from Maryland Bible College and Seminary.

Jennifer Gabriel is the Vice President, Community Relations Manager for TD Bank where she coordinates philanthropic giving with area non-profits. Ms. Gabriel is a member of the Springfield Business Leaders for Education Committee and Reading Success by Grade 4 Funding Collaborative and is the parent of a SPS student. Ms. Gabriel holds a BA from Bridgewater State College.

Kelvin Molina is Community Engagement Coordinator for HAP Housing, a South End-based non-profit organization. In his previous work as a Community Development Planner and Transportation Planner at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, he focused on grant writing, procurement, project management, and neighborhood revitalization. A lifelong Springfield resident and product of SPS, Mr. Molina is a Captain in the Massachusetts Army National Guard and holds an MPA and a BA from Westfield State University.

Kathleen Murphy is a contract manager, clinical supervisor, bilingualism consultant, and certified speech-language pathologist for the Futures Education, Futures Healthcare in Springfield.¹ She has managed many area district and charter school contracts, particularly in Springfield and Holyoke, and has overseen clinical service delivery, bilingual service delivery, special education program audits (program quality, efficiency, and legal compliance), and early intervention, evaluation, and staffing. She holds her MS in Speech Language Pathology from the University of Washington and a Doctorate of Education from American International College.

Robin Olejarz is Chief Financial Officer of the Greater Springfield YMCA, where she oversees a \$12 million budget. A CPA, she has worked in public and private accounting, including at Price Waterhouse Coopers and Moriarty & Primack, P.C. She has served on numerous boards in Springfield and devoted a great deal of her time to volunteer work, much of it in Springfield's schools. A native of Springfield, Ms. Olejarz attended the Springfield Public Schools and holds a BA and a BS in accounting from Western New England College.

Gareth Ross is Vice President of Advanced Business Analytics at MassMutual, where he leads efforts to build Data Analytics capabilities, refine and innovate the business model and provide the company with access to thought leadership. Mr. Ross is eager to use his experience in finance and budget analysis on behalf of Springfield Prep. Mr. Ross has a BA from Washington University in St. Louis, MBA from Wharton, and MA from the University of Pennsylvania.

Alison Turro is Managing Director of The Achievement Network's Western Massachusetts office, where she coaches school leadership teams in Springfield on how to use Common Core-aligned interim assessment data to improve instruction.² A Teach For America alum, she has taught fifth grade, served as Director of Instruction for grades K-4 of the Jacksonville Lighthouse Academy Charter School, and been a Project Developer at Little Rock Preparatory Academy Charter School. She has a BA from Skidmore College and MPS from the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service.

Danielle L. Williams is an Associate at Fierst, Kane & Bloomberg, LLP. An attorney for ten years, she was previously a Hampden County Assistant District Attorney in district and juvenile court. She recently served as Program Director for the Lead to Succeed program at Baypath College, a year-long program for inner city middle school girls. A native of Western Massachusetts, she earned a BA from The College of William and Mary and a JD from Western New England University.

Proposed Head of School:

The founding group anticipates hiring **Bill Spierer**, the Lead Founder and a Fellow with Building Excellent Schools (BES), to serve as Springfield Prep's founding Head of School (HoS). The group is confident that Mr. Spierer brings the skill set, experience, vision, and capacity necessary to lead the school successfully through start-up and implementation. His continued leadership with multiple stakeholders throughout the proposal process demonstrates the strength of this

¹ Given the likelihood that Springfield Prep will contract for services with Futures Education, our team has submitted a letter to the State Ethics Commission requesting an informal written opinion so that the Group can ensure full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in the event of a potential or actual conflict of interest involving Ms. Murphy in her capacity as a Trustee.

² The letter to the State Ethics Commission, referenced above, includes Ms. Turro and likewise asks for counsel regarding her involvement on the board.

choice. He will serve on the board in an *ex officio*, non-voting capacity. As a Teach For America (TFA) corps member in Brooklyn, NY, he taught Global History, leading students to a pass rate on the state exam that far surpassed city schools, as well as the state average. He also chaired the History Department, worked as a Grade Team Leader, and coached novice teachers as a TFA Content Specialist. In law school, Mr. Spirer was Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Law and Policy*, overseeing a staff of sixty members. Mr. Spirer then worked as a court-appointed attorney for indigent clients in Lowell, MA, where he represented parents and children in care and protection cases, IEP Team meetings, and school disciplinary hearings. In 2012-2013, Mr. Spirer completed the BES Fellowship, which provided to him a yearlong, comprehensive training program on school design and leadership. During the 2013-2014 school year, Mr. Spirer is serving as the Dean of Students at Troy Prep Elementary, a member of the Uncommon Schools network. In this role, he is working with the principal to establish a positive, structured, achievement-oriented, and creative school culture by overseeing school-wide behavior systems and plans; developing and implementing systems to ensure strong attendance and homework completion; supervising breakfast, lunch, in-between class transitions, and dismissal; teaching reading intervention classes; and conducting class observations and providing feedback. Mr. Spirer earned a BA at Bates College, an MST in Education at Pace University, and a JD at Brooklyn Law School.

Advisory Council:

Since the 2012-2013 application cycle, we have developed a four-member Advisory Council to provide counsel on the strategic, operational, curricular, and financial issues we will face as a start-up school. This group serves in an advisory capacity and does not vote, but is subject to school policies governing conflict of interest and ethics. The Council has provided guidance to our team as we have assembled the 2013-2014 application and will continue to advise the Board and management upon authorization. Members of the Advisory Council are identified below, and their resumes are included in Attachments H.

Chris Collins is the Chief Financial Officer at the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School, where he has worked since 1999. He brings a wealth of experience in the requirements and demands of managing public resources for a charter school. He currently serves as the leader of the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association's CFO/COO/Business Manager Community of Practice.

Michael Larsson is the Chief Operating Officer of the Match Charter Public School, a 6-12 school in Boston spanning two campuses, and Match Community Day, a K1-12 school that currently serves grades K1 through 4. He was part of Match Corps 1 at Match High School, then worked as Director of Development at City on A Hill Charter School, and later as Director of the Annual Fund for Boston College High School. He returned to Match in 2007 as Deputy Executive Director.

Katie Megrian is the Founding Principal of Brooke Mattapan Charter School and will advise on school management, curriculum, and instruction. She led Brooke Mattapan fifth graders to earn the highest student growth percentile in Massachusetts on the 2012 MCAS in English and Mathematics (92% and 95%, respectively). She has taught all elementary grades and has led her students to the top MCAS scores in Massachusetts on multiple occasions.

Amanda Hillman Seider is the Managing Director of Alumni Affairs for TFA–Massachusetts and serves on the Board of Trustees of KIPP–Massachusetts. She developed, and now manages, a network of 1,400 TFA alumni who work in education and other sectors in Massachusetts. She will advise on talent recruitment and provide access to her large regional and national network of educators.