

LETTER OF INTENT TO APPLY FOR A TENNESSEE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL - 2015

All applicants must file a Letter of Intent at least 60 days prior to the application deadline of April 1, 2015. This letter must be delivered to the local board of education and the Tennessee Department of Education no later than February 2, 2015.

Submit the letter of intent via email to charter.schools@tn.gov.

Contact the local board of education to determine where to submit the letter of intent.

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: Rocketship Nashville Conversion

CHARTERING AUTHORITY FOR PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL:

Metro Nashville Public School Board

SPONSOR/SPONSORING AGENCY: Rocketship Education

MODEL OR FOCUS OF PROPOSED SCHOOL: Blended Learning

Provide the name of the person who will serve as the **primary contact** for the Application. The **primary contact** should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding the Application.

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: Shaka Mitchell

MAILING ADDRESS: 2526 Dickerson Road, Nashville, TN 37207

PRIMARY TELEPHONE: (615) 715-8104 ALTERNATE TELEPHONE: (615) 913-3240

E-MAIL ADDRESS: smitchell@rsed.org

NAME OF PROPOSED SCHOOL LEADER (if any): Unknown

REPLICATION APPLICATION: YES NO

Projected Year of School Opening: 2016

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

	GRADE LEVELS	TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT
YEAR ONE	PreK or K-4	504
YEAR TWO	PreK or K-4	560
YEAR THREE	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR FOUR	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR FIVE	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR SIX	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR SEVEN	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR EIGHT	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR NINE	PreK or K-4	616
YEAR TEN	PreK or K-4	616

CURRENT LEADERSHIP

List all current and identified board members and their intended roles on the table below (attach additional names and information as needed).

FULL NAME	CURRENT JOB AND EMPLOYER	FOCUS/EXPERTISE*
Frederick J. Ferrer	CEO, HealthTrust	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Community Service
Alan Crites	Vendavo, Inc. (Retired)	Finance, Management/Organizational Experience
Alex Hernandez	Partner & VP, Charter School Growth Fund	Education, Fundraising/Grant Writing, Finance
Alex Terman	COO, Leadership Public Schools	Management/Organizational Experience, Finance, Education
Kim Smith	CEO, Bellweather Education	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Personnel/Human Capital
Deborah McGriff	Managing Director, NewSchools Venture Fund	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Personnel/Human Capital

**Community Service/Outreach, Legal Expertise/Attorney, Public Relations, Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Parent/Community Involvement, Finance, Marketing, Fundraising/Grant Writing, Personnel/Human Capital, Other (please elaborate)*

Please provide an abstract for your proposed school (two pages maximum). Please address the following elements:

- Mission and vision for the proposed school,
- Academic focus and plan,
- The need for the proposed school,
- The targeted population of students,
- Community outreach completed or planned, and
- Individual or organizational history of success/accomplishments in education

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Tennessee law limits who may sponsor a charter school and proscribes what type of entity may operate a charter school. T.C.A. § 49-13-104(7), 106(c). **Please read the following statements and confirm eligibility to submit an application and verify the status of or plans for the governing body.**

The sponsor of this charter school is not “a for-profit entity, a private elementary or secondary school, a post-secondary institution not accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools [now AdvancEd], a religious or church school” and does not “promote the agenda of any religious denomination or religiously affiliated entity.”

Charter schools must be operated by entities that have exemption from federal taxation under § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please check one of the following, as applicable:

The sponsor of this charter school is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status.

The sponsor of this charter school is a not-for-profit organization and has applied for 501(c)(3) status.

I will provide evidence of non-profit incorporation and 501(c)(3) status at the time of contracting with the chartering authority.


The complete Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act is contained in T. C.A. §§ 49-13-101 through 137, and in § 8-35-242. You can access Tennessee laws [here](#).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Please identify any potential conflicts of interest that you or any board member may have in the space below. This is in alignment with best practices for both non-profit and charter school governance and is also aligned with Tennessee Charter Law §49-13-111 (g), which reads “with regard to conflicts of interest, the governing body of a charter school shall be subject to TCA §§ 12-4-101 and 12-4-102. These portions of Tennessee law govern public contracts and personal interests of officers and boards of directors. If approved, board members will be subject to filing form SS-8805 with the district in which it resides.

We are not aware of any conflicts of interest as defined by the TCA.

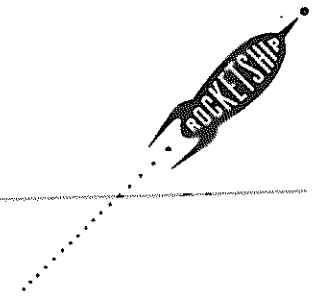
By my signature below, I affirm that all of the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.



Signature

February 1, 2015

Date



Letter of Intent Abstract – Rocketship Conversion

2/1/15

1. Mission and vision for the proposed school;

Rocketship Education Tennessee will eliminate the achievement gap by graduating our students at or above grade level in Literacy and Math. Rocketship Education Tennessee (RSTN) seeks to create a future in which thousands of children from Tennessee have graduated from four-year colleges and have come back to Tennessee to eradicate the last traces of the achievement gap.

2. Academic focus and plan;

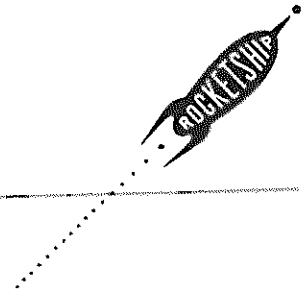
The Rocketship Public School Model combines traditional classroom instruction with blended learning, which enables highly personalized instruction through online adaptive technology and tutors; a parent engagement strategy that allows for advocacy on behalf of all children and their education; and a leadership development program that creates sustainable careers for highly effective educators.

3. The need for the proposed school;

One of the Metro Nashville Public School Board’s articulated priorities is addressing “Performance Gaps & Management Conversions” by authorizing high-quality charter school operators who will transform existing schools that have struggled academically for a number of years. Rocketship is very excited to partner with Metro Nashville Public Schools in a management conversion of an existing public elementary school. We anticipate working closely with MNPS to determine the school and community that will be best matched with Rocketship.

4. The targeted population of students;

Rocketship Education Tennessee (RSTN) expects to serve a student population that is reflective of the communities we serve as a whole. As a result, we anticipate serving a student population where nearly all students are performing below grade level. Additionally, as part of its mission and charter, RSTN explicitly seeks to educate the most underserved students in communities in Nashville, and will conduct recruitment and marketing activities accordingly. In the year prior to opening, we will work with the Metro Nashville Public Schools and Office of Innovation to identify highest need areas and conduct extensive community engagement in these areas. As a zoned-enrollment school, we will accept any eligible student. We do not shy away from enrolling low income or special education students – we consider “at-risk” students to be our target student population and at the core of the design of our educational program.



Based on the MNPS articulate priorities and the data surround “Priority Schools” we have already identified several schools and communities as conversion candidates. We will continue to work with the Office of Innovation and the MNPS School Board to identify and serve students currently zoned for one of our city’s schools in greatest need.

5. Community outreach completed or planned;

Rocketship Tennessee (RSTN) partners with several community-based organizations in support of our first two Nashville schools, and in support of our growing network of schools in Tennessee. Our aim is to work with these groups to provide parents and students opportunities to enrich student well-being and simultaneously benefit the communities in which our schools are located. The Tennessee Regional Director, Manager of Community Development, Education Organizer, and school-level faculty members, all take an active role in forging relationships with these groups. To date, our schools have partnered with groups such as Girl Scouts, Fifty Forward, iStep Kidz, the YMCA of Middle Tennessee, and numerous neighborhood associations and churches.

Rocketship’s Nashville regional team is also developing relationships with and finding points of collaboration with existing traditional and charter public schools in the communities surrounding our current and proposed school locations. To date our school has hosted groups of teachers and administrators from traditional and public charter schools from across the city to share best practices and learn from one another.

6. Individual or organizational history of success/accomplishments in education

Rocketship's first school was founded in 2007 in San Jose, CA. Since then, the network has grown to 11 schools serving approximately 6,000 students in California, Wisconsin, and Tennessee. 85% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch and 65% are classified as English Language Learners. Rocketship has continued to achieve extraordinary results, and for the third year in a row, Rocketship is in the top 5% of California school districts serving low-income students. Further, Rocketeers average 1.3 years average growth in reading and 1.5 years average growth in math as measured on the NWEA MAP assessment.

[Attachment 1 – Rocketship Board of Directors]

Name	Current Professional Title and Organization	Board Role	Focus/Expertise
Frederick J. Ferrer	CEO, HealthTrust	President	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Community Service
Alan Crites	Vendavo, Inc. (Retired)	Treasurer	Finance, Management/Organizational Experience
Alex Hernandez	Partner & VP, Charter School Growth Fund	Secretary	Education, Fundraising/Grant Writing, Finance
Alex Terman	COO, Leadership Public Schools	Member	Management/Organizational Experience, Finance, Education
Kim Smith	CEO, Bellwether Education Partners	Member	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Personnel/Human Capital
Deborah McGriff	Managing Director, NewSchools Venture Fund	Member	Education, Management/Organizational Experience, Personnel/Human Capital
Timothy Sheehy	President, Metropolitan Milwaukee Ass'n of Commerce	Member	Public Relations, Marketing, Community Service/Outreach
Jennifer Niles	Founder, E.L. Haynes Public Charter School	Member	Education, Personnel/Human Capital, Fundraising/Grant Writing, Parent/Community Involvement
Eric Scroggins	Executive Director, Bay Area Teach for America	Member	Personnel/Human Capital, Education
Louis Jordan	Starbucks Coffee Company (Retired)	Member	Finance
Greg Stanger	CFO, Duetto	Member	Finance, Fundraising/Grant Writing
Arra Yerganian	Chief Marketing Officer, One Medical Group	Member	Marketing, Public Relations, Management/Organizational Experience
June Nwabara	VP, Starbucks Coffee Company	Member	Management/Organizational Experience, Community Service/Outreach, Marketing