



Citizens of the World Charter Schools – Kansas City

Regional Office
4324 McGee St.
Kansas City, MO 64111

September 21, 2018

Dear Ms. Wahby and Members of the Commission,

On behalf of the Citizens of the World Charter School - Kansas City (CWC Kansas City) Board of Directors, I am submitting this request to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission (MCPSC) to approve a material revision to CWC Kansas City's charter. The requested revision will facilitate the launch of a mission-aligned sixth grade middle school program in the 2019-2020 school year. In accordance with Section 1.1.7 of our Charter Contract with the MCPSC, the CWC Kansas City Board approved the submission of this material revision at the September 21, 2018 Board meeting.

The development and proposed launch of this program represents a multi-year innovation, design and planning process supported by national and local philanthropic organizations and educational expertise. The proposed revision will accomplish the following; (1) further CWC Kansas City's mission and commitment to the Midtown and city-wide communities, (2) provide current and prospective CWC Kansas City families and children with a path towards a high-quality, unique middle school learning environment, and (3) ensure CWC Kansas City's long-term facility and financial capacity. The launch incorporates learnings from the national Citizens of the World network and CWC Kansas City's leadership regarding the need to ensure both quality, and clarity, within the growth of our K-12 charter framework.

CWC Kansas City's charter, as approved in 2015, provides for up to 1,784 students in grades K-12. The proposed revision will result in the annual enrollment as follows, and is supported by the rationale's below (K-5 enrollment previously approved by the MCPSC, additional 6th-7th grades proposed enrollment *in italics*):

2016-2017	K-1	125			
2017-2018	K-2	225			
2018-2019	K-3	336			
2019-2020	K-4	456	6	84	(with 3 classes in 6 th)
2020-2021	K-5	576	6-7	168	(with 3 classes in both 6 th and 7 th)

Rationale for Material Revision:

Furthering CWC Kansas City's Mission: The mission of Citizens of the World Kansas City is to provide an excellent public education focused on developing and demonstrating understanding while building connections within a diverse community. To maintain the diversity central to the mission of CWC Kansas City, we must demonstrate to all families a pathway through 8th grade and eventually high school. It's critical that we act with purpose in launching the middle school in 2019, in advance of the time our 4th graders enter 6th grade, both for our current families, but to help ensure we're adding high quality seats to meet the needs of midtown families.

CWC Kansas City has the benefit of drawing on the learned experience of our national network partners to support the rationale for our own growth. CWC Los Angeles serves approximately 2,400 students (TK-8th) in the 2018-19 school year, and has grown grade-by-grade from K-1 (Hollywood), K-2 (Mar Vista) and K-3 (Silver Lake). CWC Los Angeles has experienced families choosing to leave the elementary schools, despite high parent satisfaction with the program, to seek middle school programs because a) families in the upper grade classes were uncomfortable with being the "pioneer" class throughout the K-8

experience, b) parents are already considering middle school options as early as third grade, and c) authorizer approval (in Mar Vista's case) was not guaranteed for a middle school expansion until the year prior to launch.

Ensuring Quality Through Innovation, Design and Planning: For over a year CWC Kansas City and CWC Schools have been developing a network-wide middle school program to support students and families in Kansas City and Los Angeles. This innovation and design work has been supported by national and local philanthropic organizations and educational expertise, and will provide our students and families in Kansas City a unique middle school experience. To ensure high-quality implementation, we have recruited and are onboarding our middle school principal, Alisha Gripp, more than 12 months prior to the proposed school opening. Alisha has hit the ground running, combining her extensive leadership experience in the Kansas City area with training at our elementary campus. This has only been made possible through support from the Diverse Charter School Coalition, who selected and funded Alisha in their founding cohort of groundbreaking school leaders. Alisha will be working closely with CWC Kansas City's board and leadership, along with our partners at CWC Schools towards the school launch in August 2019.

Operational Planning: CWC Kansas City, led by our Board and Board Facilities Committee, is very close to being able to secure a facility space to support our proposed middle school program beginning in the 2019-20 school year. Our leadership has been working diligently over the past twelve months to ensure that, should this revision be approved, CWC Kansas City will serve students in a mission-aligned accessible location. Approval of this revision will allow the our Board to secure the facility for our proposed middle school. The launch of a middle school program will also continue to solidify our financial position. CWC Kansas City ranks 19th out of 21 charter schools in Kansas City in per-pupil state funding received, due to our commitment to a socioeconomically diverse student population. The addition of high-quality middle school seats will provide for an earlier path towards reaching facility capacity, and allow for additional region-wide support for both the elementary and middle school programs as we scale up.

Readiness for Growth: CWC Kansas City worked with local experts to select a nationally recognized educational evaluation firm, with the goal of assessing our organization's readiness for the proposed middle school launch, in addition to other elements of our program. The independent assessment concluded that CWC Kansas City is ready for growth to middle school because of our instructional expertise (specifically Dr. Kristin Droege's experience and overall strength in growing through middle school), and the strength of our nine-member Board. In addition, feedback noted that parents don't always want to be the "pioneers" of something new, and families start looking for middle school options as early as third grade. As previously referenced, launching a high-quality middle school in 2019 will provide CWC Kansas City with a powerful lever to retain current families and invest more of our community in our model.

Thank you for consideration of this plan, and please do not hesitate to contact Luke or myself should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kristin L. Droege
Executive Director



Luke Norris
Chair, Board of Directors