



CHIEF OF STAFF

545 West Dayton St. ● Madison, Wisconsin 53703-1967 ■ 608.663.1632 ▼ www.mmsd.org

Kelly Ruppel, Chief of Staff

Jennifer Cheatham, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

To: Board of Education
From: MMSD Charter School Review Team
Date: September 14, 2016
Re: Isthmus Montessori Initial Charter School Application Form

Background:

On July 29th, 2016 the MMSD Charter School Review Team received Isthmus Montessori's first submission of their Initial Charter School Application Form in line with Board Policy 10000. The MMSD Charter School Review Team reviewed the July 29th submission and found that the application did not meet expectations according to the District's [Charter School Initial Application Form Rubric](#). According to the District's process, a submitting organization "that receive a score of 'Fails to Meet Expectations' will be granted an opportunity to revise the application before the official Board of Education vote in September." Therefore, Isthmus Montessori resubmitted their final Application Form on August 25, 2016. The final Application Form is attached to this memo.

In line with Policy 10000, the Charter School Committee then met to review the Isthmus Montessori final Initial Proposal to be a Charter School in MMSD. As required in the policy, the Committee reviewed this Proposal against our published Initial Proposal Rubric.

Analysis:

While the final Initial Proposal meets the majority of the requirements in the Rubric, the Committee decided that the proposal did not meet expectations for Section X: Financial Operations. The Rubric clearly states that the School budget must adequately balance based on the District's per pupil rate; however, the proposal provided does not provide a balanced budget in year three and forward. It appears that the increased costs in year three are largely due to their high school costs and the capital expansion of their current facility. Additionally, the proposal's very large attendance area proposes a challenge to calculating the transportation budget. We anticipate the transportation costs estimated in the proposal far exceed the current estimated transportation budget included.

Additionally, while the Proposal technically meets expectations of the Rubric for Section V: Curriculum and Instruction, the Committee felt that more information should have been provided around the curricular needs for English Language Learners and students with special needs.

The final Committee review analysis is attached to this memo.

Recommendation:

Ultimately, the Committee does not recommend that this Isthmus Montessori proposal move forward for a full proposal. According to Policy 10000, when the Committee does not recommend moving a Proposal forward, the proposal itself does not need to be voted on.