

Application Summary Sheet

Name of Applicant: Quest-Milwaukee, Inc.

Address of Applicant: 750 North 18th Street

Phone Number of Applicant: (414) 288-3055 [office] or (414) 719-0316 [mobile]

Name of Contact Person: Edgar Russell

Type of school: Application is for first school of an umbrella charter contract; remaining two schools contingent on results of first school and follow up applications/approval to CSRC and Common Council.

Proposed grade levels to serve: Grades 6 through 12

Proposed Number of Students to Serve: 475 students

Name and title person authorized to bind the corporation: Edgar Russell, Executive Director

Mission and vision of the school:

The Quest Vision

The vision is "To be the most effective network of schools in the United States at closing the achievement gap".

Mission

The mission is "To ensure that all of our students are college ready at graduation".

Brief Description of the School:

Quest will be unique to the city of Milwaukee and will operate a system of learning environments incorporating blended learning and project based learning as the primary instructional strategies. These environments will be designed to more effectively serve students, especially low-income students.

By the year 2022, Quest schools will graduate over 140 students per year, who will be highly self-directed learners, possessing 21st Century skills that colleges and employers alike will value. Quest graduates will have a variety of post-secondary opportunities and be valued in the community, not only for their academic accomplishments, but also for their contributions to our community.

To meet our objectives for our students, Quest must:

- (1) recruit and develop the human capital needed to support a new educational model, where students are expected to provide much more input and direction;
- (2) partner with recruiters to assist us in locating teachers who value teaching at the higher order thinking skills and aren't afraid to give up most of their drill and practice activities;
- (3) keep abreast of the latest thinking on what high productivity learning environments look like and be ready to evaluate those new models for inclusion in the evolving Quest model;
- (4) monitor and evaluate developments in project-based learning and be ready to implement the best and promising practices;
- (5) show leadership and resiliency in implementing these high productivity models with fidelity and be uncompromising in obtaining the best that these

models have to offer our students;

(6) execute our plans within our designed framework and create a mindset for flawless school launches;

(7) be vigilant in securing facilities that support the vision and mission of Quest schools.

The 'K12 factory' has its roots in the industrial age and the goals for the current design have not changed very much in the last 100 years. Meanwhile the structural costs associated with school have changed dramatically. The K12 system of schools is no longer financially viable. Structural costs increases of 4 – 8 percent per year force schools to raise more capital or increase class sizes.

We've spent billions on computers and yet little has changed in the way teaching and learning occurs. Technology, and its ability to individualize educational experiences, will deliver the type of personalization our students need. Blended learning is a promising technology-based delivery method.

With this method students split their time being supervised by a classroom teacher and receiving instruction through e-learning. Data is showing that blended learning is more effective than traditional instruction.

The flex model of blended learning allows Quest to rethink how learning occurs and to develop a school that maximizes the use of resources. Our e-learning platform will be aligned to the Common Core standards, providing an overarching guide for instructional content, regardless of the delivery method used. Teachers will have a high degree of flexibility in determining how to ensure that the instruction fulfills the Common Core standards.

Another recent area of innovation is in high productivity education models. These models seek to overcome many of the 'K12 factory' limitations by harnessing untapped student productivity and enhancing teacher productivity. Teacher labor is typically fully utilized, while students have untapped potential to work. This source of labor remains largely underutilized, because harnessing it requires a paradigm shift. Quest will ensure that student labor is fully utilized, by more fully engaging each student and giving them more responsibility through self-direction.

Quest schools will place students at the core of their learning, both as planners and as participants. Doing so recognizes that all students welcome the opportunity to work at educational tasks that they see as relevant to real world needs. However, full personalization cannot take place at scale, without technology. Technology becomes an enabler for the level of differentiation needed in our schools. Quest schools will harness the power of technology to ensure that each student receives all the support needed for them to realize their educational aspirations.

Quest will use Project base learning to assist students in tying together discreet knowledge. Projects will be designed to elicit student work that covers

appropriate standards and presents opportunities for students to demonstrate their mastery of current and previous years' standards. This will enable students to build a sense of relevancy to previously learned material.

We will consider using project focuses to establish specialty areas for our school, such as: Sustainability, Organizational Quality, Social Responsibility, Social Justice, Business Management, Non-Profit Management, or Music Arts. A central tenet of our approach to projects is that they have a high degree of relevancy and produce an outcome intended to improve the community.

Quest will incorporate an asset building approach for students, allowing them to explore their strengths and build on them. Projects assessments will incorporate assessments of specific developmental competencies, which are holistic lenses for viewing academic and non-academic development.

This approach will include a reflective planning process for each student. The level of rigor in this process will be grade appropriate, and documented electronically via Project Foundry. Students will use information from their e-portfolio to build on their strengths through multiple iterations of reflection and work.

Student Advisory will also help develop school culture. To leverage staff resources in this area, the platform Edmodo will be used. This platform will link together students, teachers and parents in on-line communities, only accessible to school-related parties. These communities will enhance communications in and out of the school and will be arranged to mirror our student advisories.

Getting and keeping parents involved in middle and high school levels is a challenge. We will implement Student-Led Conferencing to keep parents engaged in their students' work and to help students produce their best work. Quest will also use student demonstrations or presentations of projects as an opportunity to invite the community into the school to see and encourage student performance.

The robust Quest model will produce results in the academic and non-academic realm and will, itself, be an asset to the city of Milwaukee.