

City of Milwaukee  
Steering and Rules Committee  
City Hall  
200 East Wells Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Steering and Rules Committee:

Please accept this letter in support of Escuela Verde receiving their 5-year contract renewal. While Escuela Verde may be classified as a high school, it is so much more than that. Escuela Verde is a community of learners dedicated to cultivating a more just, sustainable, and peaceful Milwaukee. Their unique model prepares students to become our state's next leaders by focusing on student-led project-based learning, environmental stewardship, restorative justice, and civic engagement.

I have worked with Escuela Verde in a variety of capacities since they opened their doors. I have had the pleasure of working alongside the staff during our annual summer professional development institutes. During these workshops, it was always evident that each and every advisor at Escuela Verde held their students at the center of their work and always approached education with a lens for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Staff members quickly picked up ideas and transformed them to be culturally relevant and meaningful for their student population.

In my role at the Department of Public Instruction, I support environmental education, service-learning, and project-based learning. Escuela Verde encompasses all of these areas and I recently brought members of my team to the school so they could get a first hand account of what innovative education looks like. Staff are always willing and ready to support our work at the department to transform systems for more equitable education.

Escuela Verde staff and students have made a mark statewide in the environmental education community as well. Students and staff alike have appeared at professional development conferences, breaking down power structures and allowing us to learn side-by-side.

I enthusiastically support the continuation of Escuela Verde's mission. I look forward to speaking with you should you have additional questions about this recommendation. If you have any questions or would like more information, please don't hesitate to contact me at [victoria.rydberg@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:victoria.rydberg@dpi.wi.gov) or 608-266-0419.

Sincerely,



Victoria Rydberg  
Environmental Education and Service-learning Consultant