



December 21, 2016

To the Common Council Steering & Rules Committee:

We write this letter of recommendation to renew Escuela Verde's five-year contract on Friday, January 6th at 1:30. The Midwest Renewable Energy Association's Milwaukee Office is located in the Southwest corner of Escuela Verde. We relocated to this space in October of 2015 from the Milwaukee Environmental Consortium. Having hosted professional development trainings for renewable energy practitioners at Escuela Verde dating back to its former location on Mineral, relocating our Milwaukee office there seemed a natural move. And, happily, it has allowed us to observe and participate in the school's operations.

As an educational institution, it provides an essential alternative model to students whose learning best materializes in a setting that differs from the traditional model. A member of our staff has facilitated workshops around energy efficiency and energy issues, and has chaperoned a field trip to the We Energies power plant in the Menomonee Valley. Each day, Victor, a student who joined us on that field trip, stops by my office to say hello. The other day I asked him if he was looking forward to Winter Break, and he said "Not really. I like school. I like it here." I thought back to my own high school experience and how excited I would get to have time off from school. But at Escuela Verde something is different: they nurture the student differently, and it works. Students are inquisitive and bright, taking the guidance of their advisors to flourish in a more self-guided way than the traditional model allows. I find it regrettable that such options were unavailable to me and my peers while in high school.

It goes without saying that Escuela Verde has a strong presence in the Silver City community. Students and staff from Escuela Verde contribute to the neighborhood, organizing the public Dia De Los Muertos celebration and painting a beautiful public mural near the school, to name two obvious recent examples.

As both a place of learning and a community institution, Escuela Verde is an invaluable asset to the Silver City neighborhood as well as the educational ecosystem of Milwaukee's learning community. We strongly urge the renewal of Escuela Verde's five-year contract so it can continue to build upon its already strong foundations as a pillar for students and community members alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Hylla', written in a cursive style.

Nick Hylla
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Murphy', written in a cursive style.

Peter Murphy
Solar Program Manager, Milwaukee Office