



Milwaukee Academy of Science

2000 W Kilbourn Ave - Milwaukee, WI 53233 - (414) 933-0302

December 21, 2023

Dear Members of the Charter School Review Committee:

On behalf of the Milwaukee Academy of Science Board of Directors, I respectfully request your approval of an amendment to change our charter to include an additional campus that will eventually serve approx. 590 K4-8th grade students beginning in the Fall of 2024. The new campus will be located at 1441 N. 24th Street. This expansion of enrollment will begin with K4-5th grade and increase to K4-8th grade in its third school year. Currently, our charter authorizes a K4-12th grade campus located at 2000 W. Kilbourn Ave serving approx. 1,400 students. This will bring our total number of students served to approx. 2,000 in the 2026-27 school year.

Growth plans for the Milwaukee Academy of Science have been steered by a collaboration between school leaders and the Board of Directors based on data and feedback from the parent demand in the community for the school over the last 5-7 years. As the school's retention grew stronger and applications increased, the team has continuously looked inward at the space we already have and outward at potential new spaces for the future. Last school year, the school received over 2,000 applications and had almost 1,700 students on a waiting list. In early 2023, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors participated in a strategic growth planning session related to the overall business plan, financial stability, and staffing infrastructure. This resulted in a readiness to take action when the property on 24th & Vliet became available. This additional K4-8th grade school will feed into our current high school, which is an overall benefit to the culture and academic outcomes of the school. Once the new site is at capacity MAS will be serving about 2,000 scholars annually. The Executive Committee's Strategic Growth Plan indicates serving up to 3,000 scholars in the next five years meaning the MAS umbrella of schools could include 1-2 additional sites. The Milwaukee Academy of Science Board of Directors voted to approve the purchase of a building to fulfill this expansion on Thursday, May 19, 2023 at a meeting held on Thursday, May 19, 2023.

The Milwaukee Academy of Science is achieving our mission, is a viable organization, and is faithful to the terms of its charter. In recent years, MAS has achieved many feats and strong outcomes. Prior to the pandemic, MAS was the lone high school in the city to have 90% or more economically disadvantaged, at least 10% special education students and receive a 4-star DPI rating. We achieved that feat three years in a row. Post pandemic, we are one of two schools serving that demographic to achieve a 3-Star rating. For the 9th consecutive year, 100% of our seniors graduated and were accepted into post-secondary education. More impressively, for the fourth consecutive year, our 4 year cohort graduation rate has been 90% or higher. MAS is also seeing success in our athletic program. We started a varsity football program that made the playoffs in our first year, and we became the first Milwaukee school in thirteen years to have our girls and boys basketball teams make it to the WIAA State Championship Tournament.

MAS has historically had high student retention (remaining at the school throughout the year) and return rates. Reducing student mobility has been critical to driving performance. Strongly impacting this result is our commitment to providing bussing to all of our scholars so that, despite any circumstances our students or families are facing, school can remain a source of stability through consistent transportation. Similarly, MAS routinely sees both teacher and administrator retention and return rates above 88% annually, contributing to stability and continuous improvement in our academic programming year-over-year. The school seeks to hire staff who are mission aligned and willing to go above and beyond to educate and support students and families. The approach and intentional culture is tremendously important toward reaching our goals. Similarly, a focus on continuous improvement, cycles of feedback, and always seeking to grow and improve are part of the expectation of staff at the school. Finally, MAS pursues a student services model in our approach to educating our scholars and prioritizes providing social and emotional support to all students as well as support from our student services team, social workers, counselors, and on-site partners.

In its time with the City of Milwaukee, MAS has received several 5 year renewals and consistently is recommended for regular annual monitoring. MAS is responsive to the recommendations of its evaluators and consistently strives to better the outcomes of its students. MAS has a strong financial standing, consistent positive ratings from our Bond holders and audits, and is a responsible steward of per pupil funding and donations. MAS also has strong and consistent leadership, both from its Board of Directors and school leadership team. For instance, our CEO, CCO, and CSO have all been at MAS for at least 8 years. Our CFO has been at MAS for five years. Many Directors and school leaders have a significant tenure and are deeply committed to the school and its success.

We are pleased to share with you this proposal for an expansion of our school to a new campus. We hope this information will be satisfactory and that you will find everything you need for consideration. Please contact Anthony McHenry, CEO, amchenry@mascience.org, 414-933-0302 x 1122, or Bill Reitman, Board Chair, billreitman@gmail.com, 414-759-5429, if you have any questions about this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony McHenry", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Anthony McHenry
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosures