

C3 student
apprentices receive
on-the-job training
from their mentors
at We Energies.



Greater Together Milwaukee

Partner with school leaders of color to build a pipeline of highly skilled talent, while transforming individuals, families and neighborhoods through education and community partnerships.

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Vision

Central City Cyberschool's (C3) vision is to provide youth with a joyful, high-quality education that prepares them with the skills, confidence and real-world experience to pursue the career path they choose and secure family-sustaining employment. Together with our community partners, we will build a pipeline of highly skilled talent for Milwaukee that transforms individuals, families and communities.

History

C3 has always been a trailblazer. It is one of the first two charter schools to open in Milwaukee in 1999. Since the beginning, this women and minority-led school was specifically founded to serve the Parklawn public housing development, which is defined as an “extreme poverty area” by the U.S. Census Bureau. **For more than 20 years, the school has been quietly expanding and evolving, figuring out the best way to make sure every student – from kindergarten through postsecondary school – can improve their quality of life now and in the future.**

C3 originally opened to serve children in four-year-old kindergarten through eighth grade via a grade school and before- and after-school programming. However, our eighth grade graduates and their families could not find a high school option of the same caliber. The extreme opportunity gap in Milwaukee and scarcity of seats in high-quality high schools led parents to urge C3 to add a high school and a postsecondary school pathway. C3 began adding grades 9 to 12 in the fall of 2019, starting with a ninth grade class.

Our new high school and postsecondary program will ensure C3 families maintain connections that help them achieve their full potential.



Five urgent reasons to invest in Central City Cyberschool (C3):

1 Partner with school leaders of color who grew up in Milwaukee's central city.

2 Improve the quality of life for children and families who need it most.

3 Provide families with access to a trusted support system from K4 -14th grade.

4 Increase postsecondary school completion and the diversity of Milwaukee's talent pipeline for people of color and women.

5 Help more children attend a school with a proven track record of success.

1 Partner with school leaders of color who grew up in Milwaukee's central city.

We connect with Milwaukee's hard-to-reach students and those challenged by poverty and violence, racial and economic injustices, and sustained traumatic stress because we grew up here with similar backgrounds. We have experienced the bigotry of under-expectations, over-penalization and microaggressions. We understand our students, where they come from, what's happened to them, and what they need to make it. For anyone who hopes to be a meaningful ally in tackling racism and reducing Milwaukee's opportunity gap, the first step is supporting educators who look like us and our students. C3's principals and assistant principal are people of color, as are 61% of faculty.

2 Improve the quality of life for children and families who need it most.

C3 is located in the **Parklawn public housing development**.* Nearly 97% of school families are African American or Black, and 100% are eligible for the federal government's free breakfast and lunch program. C3 students often face invisible challenges. For learning to take place, students must have their fundamental needs met and to feel physically and emotionally safe. Here are four ways our families receive care:

- **Crisis stabilization services.** C3 and its partners provide assistance in the most acute areas of need: food, shelter, clothing, health, utility bills and hygiene products.
- **Mental health services.** SaintA and Jewish Family Services run onsite clinics to bring mental health care directly to students and families. Experience and research show a link between mental health needs and a child's ability to learn. School-based mental health can help remove health barriers and improve physical, emotional and behavioral well-being.
- **Trauma informed care.** All C3 teachers are trained in SaintA's trauma informed care, which applies what neuroscience has taught about how the brain develops, functions and recovers from trauma to help children overcome adverse experiences and thrive.
- **Social and emotional learning (SEL).** C3 partners with Second Step to provide SEL, which is the process by which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, solve problems and make responsible decisions.

*"Parklawn is an 'extreme poverty area' as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, where 40% or more of the residents live in a block numbering area with incomes under the poverty level. In Parklawn, single females head about 90% of the households. The median household income of Parklawn residents is \$11,204, well below the poverty level." Source: The Housing Authority, City of Milwaukee

3 Provide families with access to a trusted support system from K4-14th grade.

For children and parents to thrive, they need to experience stability in their lives. A serious challenge for C3 families is leaving behind their support network when students graduate from grade school. Our new high school and postsecondary program will ensure C3 families maintain connections that help them achieve their full potential. Students will have a safe place to learn along with access to everything they need to do their homework, including “warm demanders” i.e., adults who provide the social, emotional and instructional support necessary to stay on track. Adults will continue to have access to classes, coaching and other resources in five key areas to help build and maintain a stable household: health, education, finances, employment and caring connections.

4 Increase postsecondary school completion and the diversity of Milwaukee’s talent pipeline for people of color and women.

A contributing factor to the high dropout rates for youth in Milwaukee’s central city is the lack of a clear, transparent connection between academic programs of study and tangible opportunities in the labor market. The primary goal of C3’s model is to equip students with the guidance and resources they need to:

- Acquire early and engaging experiences with the work world to make their academic studies in school meaningful and to fully prepare them with the workplace skills required by employers.
- Graduate from high school.
- Earn a postsecondary degree, pursue a four-year degree or enter the military.
- Secure employment that empowers them to be self-sufficient.

5 Help more children attend a school with a proven track record of success.

C3 has always been a trailblazer. It was one of the first two charter schools to open in Milwaukee in 1999. For more than 20 years, the school has been quietly expanding and evolving, figuring out the best way to make sure every child – from kindergarten through postsecondary school – can improve their quality of life now and in the future.

Recognition

C3 received the “School of Recognition” award from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for “Beating the Odds.”

School Growth

C3 increases student growth faster than average for schools in the city of Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin, according to DPI. On the most recent state report card, DPI reported that C3’s “School Growth” score was 70.8 out of 100 compared to a score of 66.0 for the state, 64.1 for Milwaukee Public Schools and 58.0 for neighborhood schools.

Student Retention Rate

C3 closely tracks attrition to ensure the school is keeping students and meeting its mission. On average, more than 95% of C3 students remain in school.

C3’s proposal will add 250-300 new high-quality seats for Milwaukee families.



C3 LEADERSHIP TEAM



Jessica Whitaker
Executive Director
Central City Cyberschool



Denna Blue-Miller
Operations Manager
Central City Cyberschool



Leon Williams
Director (Principal)
Grade School



Patience Wade
Director (Principal)
High School



Lasae Simpson
Assistant Director (Asst. Principal)
High School



CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL

One of the most powerful ways to ensure academic, social and emotional success for Black and African American students is to have mentors in their daily lives who look like them.

61% of faculty are people of color



Gabrielle Humphrey, parent

“I am happy to say that I have two sons who are the first in our family with bachelor's degrees, and I strongly believe it was due to the exposure to the positive African American men on the C3 staff as role models for them.

Annual Parent Survey

100% agree

C3 has a good reputation in the community.

100% agree

If my child or I need to talk to a teacher, we are able to get in touch with them.

100% agree

C3 provides a safe school environment.

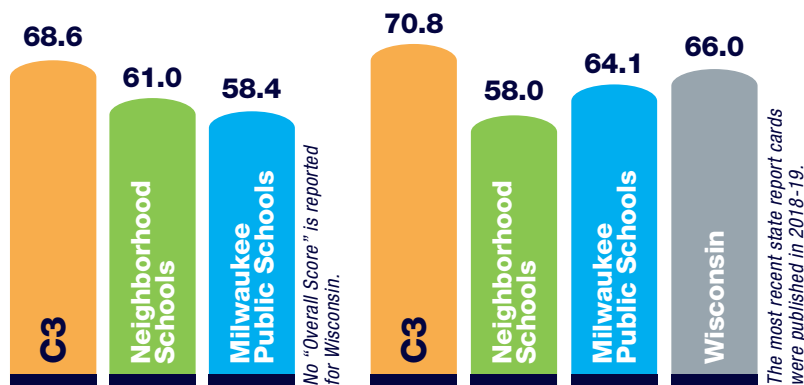
Wisconsin State Accountability Report Card

Overall Score

C3 students outperformed their peers on the state report card.

School Growth

Our school increased student achievement faster than average.



School Demographics

C3 was founded to educate students from under-resourced communities.

Economically Disadvantaged

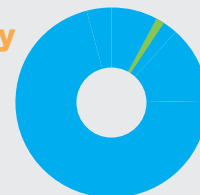
C3: **99.3%**
MPS: **82.0%**

Most recent data reported by Milwaukee Public Schools is 2018.

Student Race/Ethnicity

Black/African American: **96.5%**
Other Races: **3.6%**

Annual race/ethnicity percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.



Enrollment

419

Student/
Teacher Ratio

20:1

Parent/Teacher
Conference
Participation

97%

Student/
Technology Ratio

1:1

Student
Return Rate
(Amidst COVID)

92%

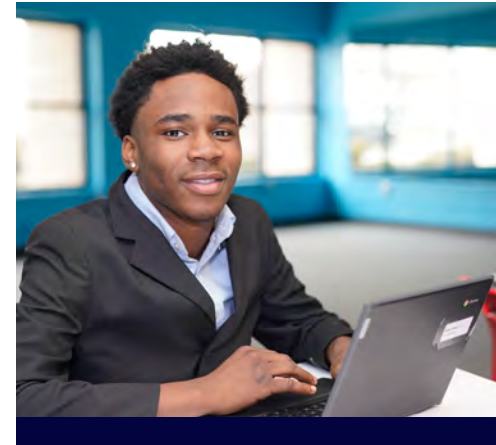
Instructional
Staff With A
Teaching License

100%

Who We Are

Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee (C3) is a nonprofit, nonselective public charter school that serves economically disadvantaged students from the Parklawn public housing development and surrounding neighborhoods. Nearly 97% of school families are African American or Black, and 100% are eligible for the federal government's free breakfast and lunch program.

This women- and minority-led school has been educating students since 1999. For the past two decades, C3 has served children in four-year-old kindergarten through eighth grade via a grade school and before- and after-school programming. In the fall of 2019, C3 began adding grades 9-12, starting with a ninth grade class.



February 2018: The City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee votes unanimously to support C3's expansion.

July 2018: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction awards a \$750,000 grant to C3 to kick-start the expansion into grades 9-12.

August 2019: C3 welcomes its first ninth grade class.

The Need

For Milwaukee's Black residents, the opportunity gap is significant.

Students

- Only 66.9% of Black students graduate from high school.
- One-third of Black graduates enroll in postsecondary school.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Tech Workers

- Milwaukee ranks 69th out of 93 U.S. metro areas for employing Black workers in tech jobs.
- Only 4.6% of computer and math jobs are filled by people who are Black, down from 5.1%.
- Milwaukee's Black population is underrepresented in tech jobs by 8.6%.

Source: Brookings Institution

Program Proposal

C3's innovative school model leverages public and private partnerships that enable youth from under-resourced neighborhoods to receive a C3 education from preschool straight through high school, while gaining relevant work experience. The primary goal of this program is to equip students with the guidance and resources they need to graduate from high school, earn a postsecondary degree, and secure employment that empowers them to be self-sufficient.

C3 proposes building a new wing onto the school's existing campus. This expansion will provide the space necessary to:

- Add 250-300 new high-quality high school seats for Milwaukee families, growing enrollment from 400 students to approximately 650-700 students.
- Offer a complete K4-12th grade experience.
- Provide comprehensive services to postsecondary students, including academic, social, emotional and cultural support.

Expected Outcomes

Students need early and engaging experiences with the work world to make clear, transparent connections between their academic studies and tangible employment opportunities. After nearly five years of strategic planning, C3 is well prepared to support students in becoming productive members of the community and role models for future generations.

C3 established the following six expected outcomes:

1. Serve youth at risk of dropping out.
2. Reduce the opportunity gap for students in under-resourced neighborhoods.
3. Increase Milwaukee's high school graduation rate.
4. Increase postsecondary school completion and career readiness with a focus on tech skills.
5. Support students in achieving gainful employment.
6. Increase the diversity of Milwaukee's talent pipeline for people of color and women.

Investment

For the first time since C3's launch in 1999, the school will need to look to members of the extended community to provide the means for facility funding. **To complete this project, we need to raise approximately \$3 million, which includes building a new school wing and furnishing it with furniture, fixtures and equipment. C3's financial model is self-sustaining, and we do not anticipate needing additional funding beyond this capacity-building campaign.**

Your support of Central City Cyberschool will bring a solid return on your investment. The school's faculty and staff are fully committed not only to their students' academic and career success but also to their well-being. The team is experienced, qualified and motivated to achieve this program's full potential.



Heaven's Table BBQ provides hands-on training in their food truck



C3 student apprentices work at We Energies.



“ People say that kids are the future, but these kids are living in the right now. They need your help right now.



Danielle “DJ” Johnson, Community Organizer, Safe & Sound
Diamond Thompson, District Team Manager, Safe & Sound

When you live and work in Milwaukee's central city, there are some organizations that everyone knows about like Gee's Clippers, JJ Fish & Chicken and Central City Cyberschool (C3). We want to raise our voices for C3 because they have earned it.

C3 has been quietly and effectively serving the Parklawn public housing development for more than 20 years. In the Parklawn neighborhood, the YMCA went out of business. There wasn't a library, after-school programming or other typical resources. C3 came in to bridge those gaps.

Since C3 is a major community anchor in Parklawn and the people in our two organizations share the same objectives and really know each other, it just made sense for us to partner together to make a collective impact.

C3 has a great culture. The administrators and teachers are very passionate about the school's mission. They know every student by name, and they know each student's story too. That is not typical. C3 students believe that their teachers

care about them. The students are eager to learn and do the work it takes to be successful inside and outside of the classroom, and that's what school should be, right?

Safe & Sound's mission is to create safer neighborhoods by uniting law enforcement with residents and kids through community organizing and youth development. One of the things we appreciate about working with the C3 administrators and teachers is that they don't view their organization as just a school. For them, it's a community center that every student and adult in the neighborhood can access.

If you are thinking about a donation to C3, we strongly encourage you to invest in this school. Parklawn is a public housing development. That means the kids in this neighborhood really need your support.

People say that kids are the future, but these kids are living in the right now. They need your help right now.



CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL

“ One of the qualities that makes C3 a standout school is that the faculty and staff are embedded in the community.



Aaron Heffernan, MA, LCSW
Psychotherapist, Jewish Family Services

There are nights, when at the end of the day, I don't want to leave this school. Central City Cyberschool (C3) is an exemplary school with a dynamite staff that has done an incredible job serving students and families, and it's a fantastic place to do therapy. I can say this with authority, because, for 10 years, Jewish Family Services has been working onsite and offering mental health services to C3 students. And, it is because of this school's orientation as a trauma-informed community – committed to educating the whole child and sensitive to their social and emotional needs – that we are still here.

Cyberschool has been on the cutting edge of mental health care for students right where they spend the bulk of their day. The school's faculty and staff share our view that strong social and emotional health often precedes academic success. That's why Jewish Family Services is not the only professional organization partnering with the school. C3 is protective and caring about their students, so they have carefully screened key professional organizations to

provide other essential wraparound services to students. This collaborative therapeutic alliance, built on trust and mutual respect, helps create space for a student's own innate healing and growth.

One of the qualities that makes C3 a standout school is that the faculty and staff are embedded in the community. By bringing together community stakeholders – people who know each other's stories – to live and work and collaborate together, the school has become a stable anchor in the neighborhood. Starting with a foundation of mutual respect among students, families and teachers makes C3 an ideal place to have a mental health clinic and helps make therapy more efficient and effective than it would be otherwise.

With C3's openness and collaborative spirit, I am able to do good work inside and outside of this school. When the therapist feels energized and connected, the therapist does good work. Like I said, there are some nights that I don't want to go home.



CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL

” The family commitment to what C3 is doing is incredible and a testament to the school’s strength in the neighborhood.



**Ashlie Jones, Upward Bound Counselor
Marquette University Educational Opportunity Programs**

I am writing in my capacity as an Upward Bound Counselor at Marquette University to fully endorse Central City Cyberschool’s (C3) capital campaign, which will allow students to receive a C3 education from K4 straight through high school.

Through my roles at Marquette, I’ve been in many schools and C3 truly stands out. I have seen firsthand the joyful, supportive environment that C3 has worked to cultivate. C3 is very much a community school, where families go even after school hours. C3’s positive and supportive family-type environment has become synonymous with the school’s name.

When I first started working with families at C3, I was there two to three times a week working with middle school students and exposing them to the possibilities of college. In fact, when I joined Marquette University, my very first group of eighth graders were from C3 and that experience still stands out as one of my fondest memories. I led the students on a three-day college tour. The moment those eighth graders stepped onto college campuses, they bought

into the idea that college might be for them. You could see the sparks. The excitement was contagious and traveled to their younger siblings who were inspired by their enthusiasm.

It was pretty awesome to watch their optimism grow as they discovered their interests and aspirations. I could see students figure out their next steps and how they were going to get to them.

That was only possible because of the phenomenal staff at C3, where they invest time during the school day to begin building students’ expectations about their future and include discussions and field trips that expose middle school students to the possibilities after high school.

The family commitment to what C3 is doing is incredible and a testament to the school’s strength in the neighborhood. This commitment is one of the reasons Marquette University continues to partner with C3 year after year through both our Upward Bound and Talent Search programs.

Education is the best gift

Your investment helps ensure Milwaukee youth receive a joyful, high-quality education that prepares them with the skills, confidence and real-world experience to pursue the career path they choose.

Appendix



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MILWAUKEE
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WISCONSIN'S LARGEST AFRICAN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

Central City Cyberschool students leap into the real world with We Energies



Viewing Lake Michigan on top of the We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant are from left to right: Nancy Benifield and Nyja Taylor, students at Central City Cyberschool and apprentices at We Energies; LaQuita Evans, senior power plant supervisor, We Energies; and Elizabeth Ehrke, principal engineer, We Energies.

MILWAUKEE — When Nancy Benifield stood 180 feet above the ground on the roof of the We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant, she could see steam rising from part of the plant below and was amazed by the sheer scope and size of the organism that helps deliver energy to her home every day.

“When you first get there, it looks like an Army base. It’s so big!” exclaims Nancy. She follows with the list of gear she needs to wear every time she is at the site: work boots, gloves, earplugs, helmet, goggles, face mask. “They told me I was going to get dirty. There’s a lot of hard-working people there. And it is s-o-o-o-o big!” she says again. “Sometimes, I cannot remember what floor I am on.”

The Central City Cyberschool (C3) freshman says the magnitude of the plant is not the only characteristic that has sharpened her insight into the working world. Nancy is quick to add that her mentor, Principle Engineer Elizabeth Ehrke, is among those pioneer women in a field traditionally dominated by men. Ehrke has eagerly shared her success in the field.

Those are the kinds of impressions that LaQuita Evans, senior power plant supervisor, hopes will stick with students.

C3 and We Energies have partnered through the African American Business Resource Group of Wisconsin to create hands-on, long-term learning experiences for students in a new apprenticeship program. Evans is a mentor and coordinates the program on the We Energies side of that collaboration.

“I want to show them — someone who looks like them — that all things are possible,” says Evans, an African-American female plant supervisor. “Because I never thought that I would be doing something like this. And here I am, a success story.”

The 2020-21 academic year served as a pilot for the apprenticeship program with two students. Four more are planned to begin their apprenticeship next year, with expectations to engage new students every year that may stay in the program through high school graduation. They begin with simple job shadowing and exposure to workplace culture and expectations.

Eventually, the school and company hope to increase the benefits and impact of the program in the students’ junior and senior years that could possibly lead to permanent jobs for those who wish to apply.

“We hope the skills these young people pick up will prepare them for job opportunities at We Energies,” Evans explains. “This is an investment for us as well. We’re learning that we have a new population of



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Central City Cyberschool students leap into the real world with We Energies

continued

students with new ideas and new technology that we are learning about as well.”

Ehrke adds that the collaboration is as much a recruiting tool for the company as it is a bridge to possible work for students. Ehrke mentors Nancy and her classmate Nyja Taylor on site.

“We talk about the vast number of opportunities at We Energies. We have mechanics, electricians, operators and engineers, but we also have doctors, realtors, environmental specialists and other jobs that students may not expect,” Ehrke lists. “There is lots of upward mobility.”

She adds: “We thought really hard about what we could get them involved with so that it will have added value for both them and the company. We want them doing things that are going to contribute to their development.”

Ehrke and Evans both work in the power generation part of the business, but as they envision the apprenticeship program expanding, and they can see students working in other departments.

So far, Nancy and Nyja have gotten initial exposure to the company and much practical advice about what it is to work in the world.

“Most definitely, my mentor has taught me about how important it is to communicate. In the plant, they have to talk with each other to stay safe,” Nyja says of the workers she has visited.

Learning how to interview, talking about workplace problems of today and the importance of professional demeanor have been among the most valuable lessons so far, says Nyja.

Evans says that frankly talking about issues and expectations in the workplace, helps provide those transferable skills students will need on any job. “We’re preparing them for what’s to come – the real world.”

Ehrke, too, says she feels that imparting advice that others may not think to share is critical for young women who may seek to go into a field that is focused on science, technology, engineering or math.

“As a female in STEM, I always felt I had to prove myself, that I must have extraordinary skills in math and science,” Ehrke admits. “But now I tell everyone I mentor, especially young girls, that STEM and engineering are open to anyone willing to work hard.

Most of my work is really practical, and most of it I learned on the job.

“You are not going to know everything when you walk into the job. They will teach you,” she adds. “Young girls, on average, are not socialized like boys. Typically, they are socialized not to take those risks. So I want to make those risks safer.”

Evans is quick to jump in. The future stands ready for young men as well, adding she wants all of the students to be successful.

“I want them to know that this is not easy. But I also want them to know that there are good jobs here waiting,” she notes. “College is not for everyone. Lots of these jobs do not require a college degree and are wonderful.”

Having experiences like this apprenticeship make career options more visible and realistic for students.

Evans offers her own story: “I started at We Energies as a seasonal consultant almost 16 years ago. I was unemployed at the time and needed a job, so going into customer service was my foot in the door. I did that for about two-and-a-half years, and then I jumped into power generation. So, I have been with the power plant for quite some time. It was the best move I ever could have made. I didn’t know anyone who worked for the organization, and I didn’t even know that this part of the industry ever existed. It took that leap.”

It’s a leap into success she says she hopes to coach others to make as well.

This shared commitment to introducing students to employment opportunities is just one of the program benefits that excites school leaders.

“Through apprenticeships at We Energies, our students have the opportunity to learn and work side-by-side with women and people of color who have walked in their shoes and found success,” said Patience Wade, director of Central City Cyberschool’s high school and a Latina woman. “We believe our partnership with We Energies is a critical strategy for empowering our graduates to achieve family-sustaining employment, while increasing the diversity of Milwaukee’s talent pipeline.”

Link to story: <https://content.communityjournal.net/content/uploads/20210715084130/All-MCJ071421-Pages.pdf>

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MILWAUKEE
COMMUNITY JOURNAL
WISCONSIN'S LARGEST AFRICAN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

Cooking up real-life experiences at Central City Cyberschool



Jason Alston (left) instructs a student on the proper way to slice brisket.

MILWAUKEE — To high school students, the future as an adult seems so distant, and at times, unreachable. But Central City Cyberschool is bridging the divide between now and the future by bringing partners together with students to identify interests, explore career pathways, and provide a foretaste of what life can hold.

This spring, six students are getting a taste of the restaurant business through an experience brought to them by Jason Alston, owner of Heaven's Table BBQ, a Milwaukee restaurant and catering business on Milwaukee's East Side.

Twice a month, Alston meets with the students on a Monday to discuss and plan a potential menu. Then, he returns on Friday to coach them in the preparation and serving from a food truck parked at the school, 4340 N. 46th St.

Shaniya Sherrod, a sophomore, says she was surprised at the way the whole operation works.

"You can get a lot done in that one truck!" she exclaims. "It's not a big truck. So, at first, I thought the food was cooked somewhere else and brought there. But, no, we do it all right there in that truck."

For Desmond James, a sophomore, the experience has carried him beyond his comfort zone and into new possibilities.

"I heard about the culinary class and thought that it would be a good opportunity," he says.

Under Alston's tutelage, Desmond is learning new things in the kitchen. Since some of his family members are vegetarians, Desmond says he knows how to prepare vegetables. But when it comes to meats like ribs and briskets, those open a whole new arena of food preparation.

"He showed us how to cut the brisket and draw a knife through the meat to make it a thin or thick slice. Then, he showed us how to plate certain dishes and make it look nice," explains Desmond.

At 15, Desmond is just coming into an age when getting a job becomes a possibility. Working with Chef Alston might make the search a little easier.

"I think since we have learned some of the basics from him, I have a little experience now and that will help me get a job," Desmond says, adding that taking the course gets him away from sitting at a desk and into something where he can apply what he is learning in school, like handling money or measuring ingredients.

"With the direction I am going now with the culinary classes, I might like being a chef or a cook," he adds.



Semaj Moore, also a sophomore, had not thought of working in a restaurant, but after his experience with Heaven's Table, he may try it out.

"It's fun to do, and I am making stuff that I never made before," says Semaj.

Ribs, brisket, roasted chicken are among the fare the students serve up from the food truck. The planning and preparation for it all took him by surprise.

"It wasn't like cooking ground beef," he explains. "I mean, you have to marinate the meat for a day or a couple of hours, and you have to season it so it goes into the meat enough to taste it. It's a long process."

As Alston suspected, most students he is encountering have not thought about the future. Semaj is just beginning to think about life after high school. He has a Plan A – go to college and hopefully play for the NBA. Then, there is a Plan B – become a businessman or architect.

Initially, Semaj didn't think about the business acumen someone needs to run their own restaurant, but in considering what Alston needs to carry off a successful venture, Semaj begins to think aloud.

"He needs employees, and he has to think about all of that. Who is going to do what and how many. Then he has to come up with a design for the restaurant and the menu. As Semaj talks, he begins to make connections with the business side of Heaven's Table.

Alston says he is committed to creating opportunities that students might not otherwise get. Perhaps the Heaven's Table experience will help students to at least learn how to cook a little on their own or build beginning skills so that they might secure a job in the food industry, if that appeals to them, he says.

Alston speaks from his own journey as an African American man who grew up in Milwaukee and who developed a passion for cooking from watching his grandfather and uncle.

"My granddad – he's passed now – he was from Tennessee. My uncle was from Mississippi. I played as a kid, but when they were cooking, I watched what they were doing. I learned from them and my mother," he says of his beginnings as a chef.

His interests took him to Milwaukee Area Technical College's culinary arts program after he graduated from high school. He later continued his studies to earn a bachelor's degree from Cardinal Stritch University in business management.

"When you are younger, you typically attach yourself to your parents' hip and you see what they're doing for a living," Alston explains. "But I think there are a lot of single-family homes, where kids miss out on learning how to do things because there are not enough people around to influence them."

That adult example for Alston led him to success. Heaven's Table is about to expand to include a second location. It also fueled Alston's decision to pay the opportunity forward to young people who may not have examples that appeal to them.

"My goal is to instill in these students some kind of knowledge of cooking so that they will have a life skill, and perhaps get a job. I want to help get their brains thinking about what they want to do in the future," he says.

"I am a person who has been through what they have been through, and maybe because of that, I am a little more respected and they may be a little more interested in what they can learn," he adds.

That is precisely why Central City Cyberschool's Lasae Simpson, assistant director of the high school, is thrilled about the growing partnerships between the school and the business community.

"Students need early and engaging experiences with the world of work so that they can make a clear connection between their academic studies and employment opportunities," he says. "Our goal is to have 100 percent of the student population complete an internship or apprenticeship before they graduate from high school."

The school has Alston's endorsement. He has made a commitment to offer the program again during the 2021-22 school year, and he encourages others to consider this kind of partnership.



EXTERIOR - NEW ENTRY FROM 46TH ST

CYBER HIGH ADDITION

C³
CENTRAL CITY
CYBERSCHOOL

R/S



INTERIOR - LEARNING STAIR FROM NEW ENTRY

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



INTERIOR - COMMONS FROM CORRIDOR

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



INTERIOR - STUDIO

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



Key

1. Learning Stair
2. Commons
3. Breakout Space
4. Rendering - Learning Stair From Entry
5. Rendering - Commons From Corridor
6. Rendering - Studio

Legend

- Classroom
- Lab
- Meeting
- Office
- Circulation
- Service / Other

FIRST FLOOR PLAN CONCEPT

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



Key

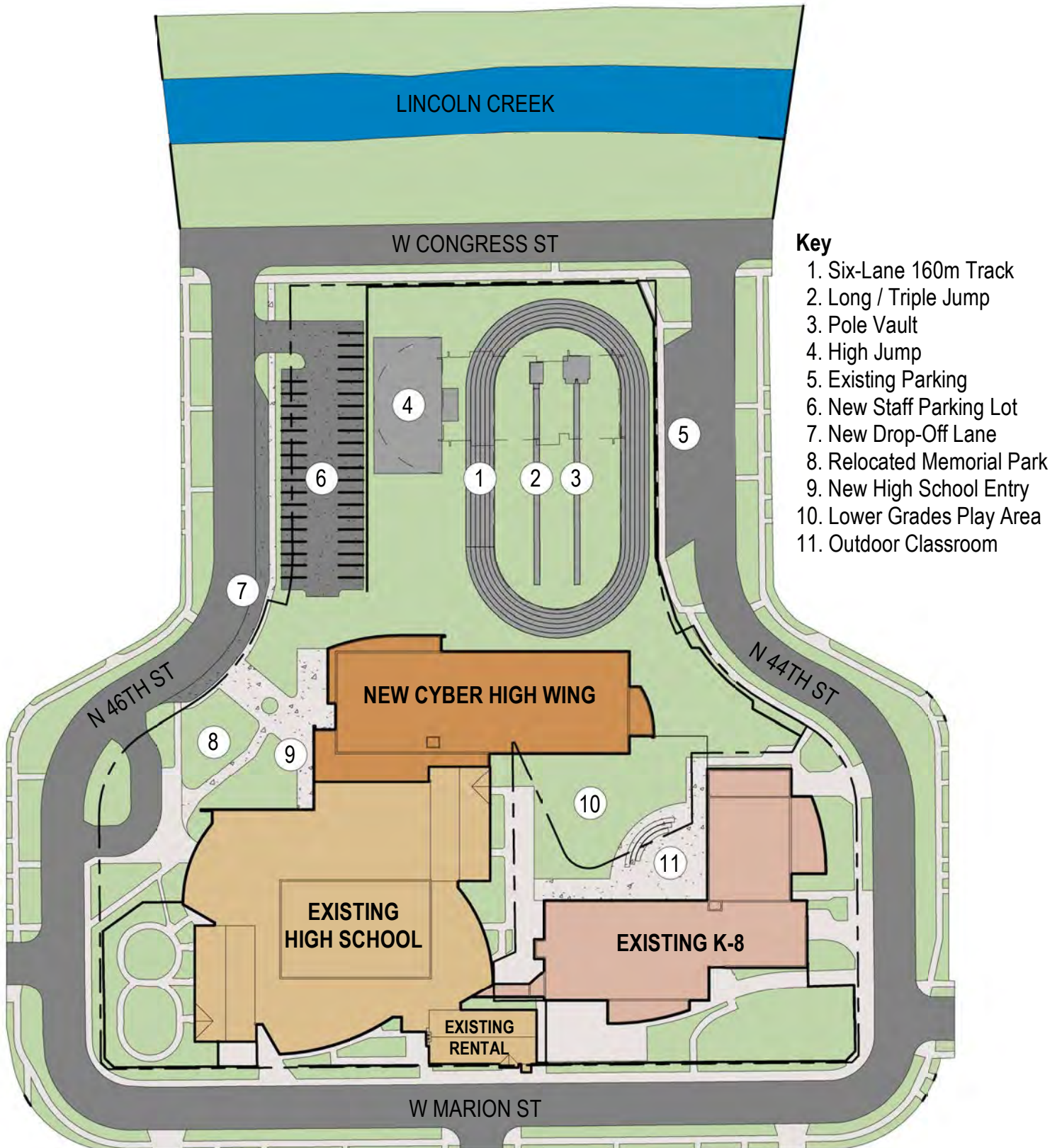
1. Learning Stair
2. Upper Commons
3. Breakout Space
4. Rendering - Studio

Legend

- Classroom
- Lab
- Meeting
- Office
- Circulation
- Service / Other

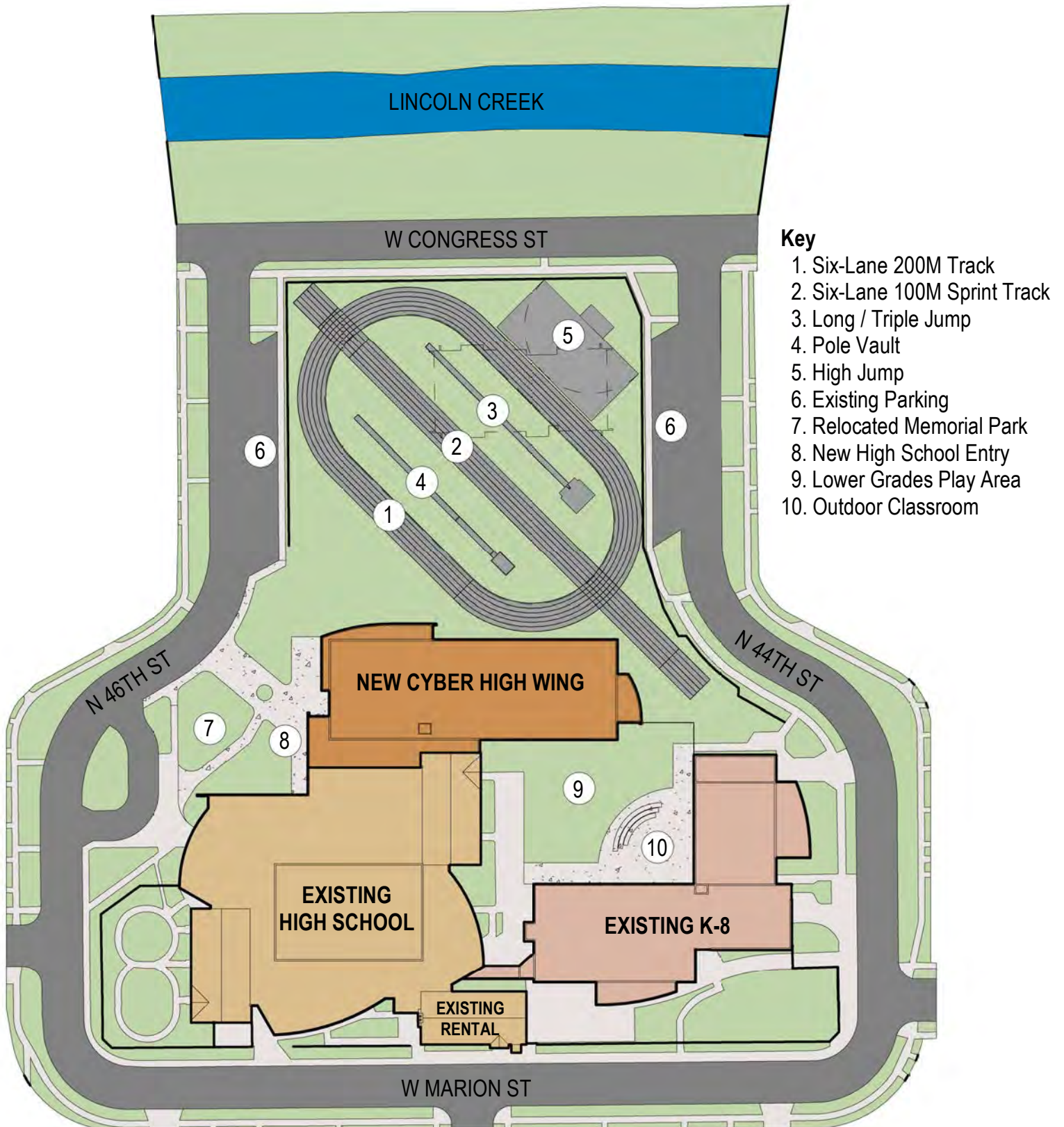
SECOND FLOOR PLAN CONCEPT

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



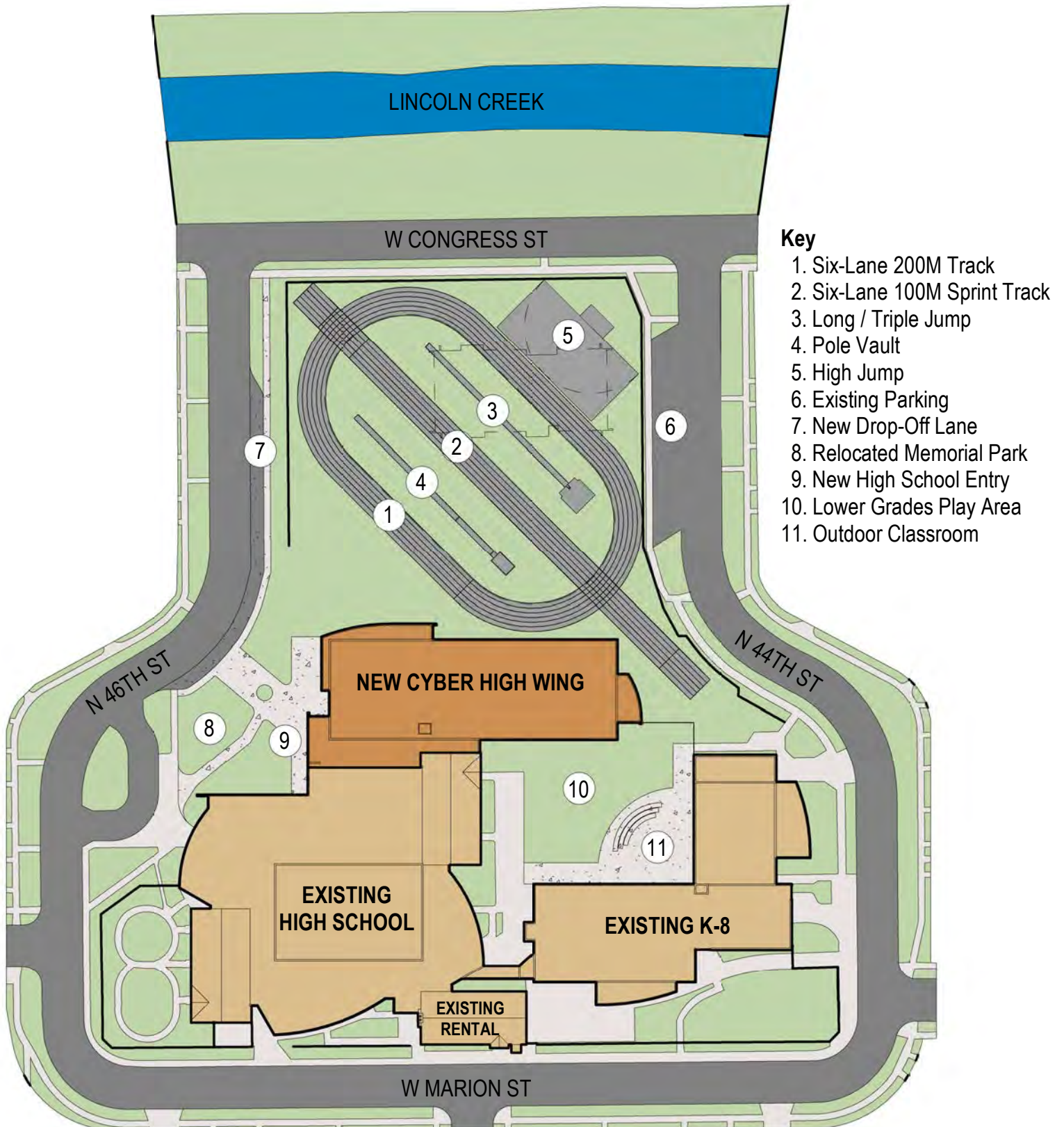
SITE PLAN A - 160M TRACK

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



SITE PLAN B - 200M TRACK

CYBER HIGH ADDITION



SITE PLAN C - 200M TRACK

CYBER HIGH ADDITION

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

AUG 09 1999

CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL OF
MILWAUKEE INC
C/O DR CHRISTINE J FALTZ
2517 N 47TH ST
MILWAUKEE, WI 53210

Employer Identification Number:

39-1923658

DLN:

17053084026009

Contact Person:

JOANNA YAWNEY

ID# 95078

Contact Telephone Number:

(877) 829-5500

Accounting Period Ending:

July 31

Form 990 Required:

Yes

Addendum Applies:

Yes

Dear Applicant:

Based on information supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501(c)(3).

We have further determined that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code, because you are an organization described in sections 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(ii).

If your sources of support, or your purposes, character, or method of operation change, please let us know so we can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status and foundation status. In the case of an amendment to your organizational document or bylaws, please send us a copy of the amended document or bylaws. Also, you should inform us of all changes in your name or address.

Since you are not a private foundation, you are not subject to the excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. However, if you are involved in an excess benefit transaction, that transaction might be subject to the excise taxes of section 4958. Additionally, you are not automatically exempt from other federal excise taxes. If you have any questions about excise, employment, or other federal taxes, please contact your key district office.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of Code sections 2055, 2106, and 2522.

Contribution deductions are allowable to donors only to the extent that their contributions are gifts, with no consideration received. Ticket purchases and similar payments in conjunction with fundraising events may not necessarily qualify as deductible contributions, depending on the circumstances. See Revenue Ruling 67-246, published in Cumulative Bulletin 1967-2, on page 104, which sets forth guidelines regarding the deductibility, as charitable contributions, of payments made by taxpayers for admission to or other

Letter 947 (DO/CG)

CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL OF

participation in fundraising activities for charity.

In the heading of this letter we have indicated whether you must file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax. If Yes is indicated, you are required to file Form 990 only if your gross receipts each year are normally more than \$25,000. However, if you receive a Form 990 package in the mail, please file the return even if you do not exceed the gross receipts test. If you are not required to file, simply attach the label provided, check the box in the heading to indicate that your annual gross receipts are normally \$25,000 or less, and sign the return.

If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. A penalty of \$20 a day is charged when a return is filed late, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. However, the maximum penalty charged cannot exceed \$10,000 or 5 percent of your gross receipts for the year, whichever is less. For organizations with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 in any year, the penalty is \$100 per day per return, unless there is reasonable cause for the delay. The maximum penalty for an organization with gross receipts exceeding \$1,000,000 shall not exceed \$50,000. This penalty may also be charged if a return is not complete, so be sure your return is complete before you file it.

The law requires you to make your annual return available for public inspection without charge for three years after the due date of the return. You are also required to make available for public inspection a copy of your exemption application, any supporting documents and this exemption letter to any individual who requests such documents in person or in writing. You can charge only a reasonable fee for reproduction and actual postage costs for the copied materials. The law does not require you to provide copies of public inspection documents that are made widely available, such as by posting them on the Internet (World Wide Web). You may be liable for a penalty of \$20 a day for each day you do not make these documents available for public inspection (up to a maximum of \$10,000 in the case of an annual return).

You are not required to file federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T, Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If an employer identification number was not entered on your application, a number will be assigned to you and you will be advised of it. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

This determination is based on evidence that your funds are dedicated to the purposes listed in section 501(c)(3) of the Code. To assure your continued exemption, you should keep records to show that funds are expended

CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL OF

only for those purposes. If you distribute funds to other organizations, your records should show whether they are exempt under section 501(c)(3). In cases where the recipient organization is not exempt under section 501(c)(3), there should be evidence that the funds will remain dedicated to the required purposes and that they will be used for those purposes by the recipient.

If distributions are made to individuals, case histories regarding the recipients should be kept showing names, addresses, purposes of awards, manner of selection, relationship (if any) to members, officers, trustees or donors of funds to you, so that any and all distributions made to individuals can be substantiated upon request by the Internal Revenue Service. (Revenue Ruling 56-304, C.B. 1956-2, page 306.)

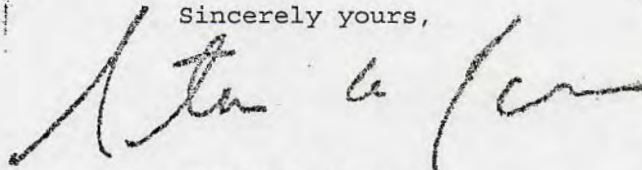
If we have indicated in the heading of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your exempt status and foundation status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

If you have any questions, please contact the person whose name and telephone number are shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. L. A. for", written over the typed name "District Director".

District Director

Case Study



Photo copyright: Edward Purcell Architectural Photography/EAP

Innovative Solution Helps Technology-Based Elementary School Empower Students

Central City Cyberschool, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Central City Cyberschool (C³) is hailed as a high-tech opportunity for student achievement. The \$7 million, 47,000-square-foot public charter elementary school is capable of serving over 400 students, in grades one through eight. Cyberschool is among the first elementary schools in North America to feature a wireless data network system where students can operate laptop computers and access the Internet from anywhere within the building.

Challenges:

- Generate funding to help build Cyberschool and provide ongoing systems operations.
- Provide the technical communications systems required by the school's design and purpose.
- Meet a tight construction timeline.

Solutions:

- Enter a partnership with Johnson Controls involving construction planning and a 15-year, \$3.9 million leasing agreement to finance and install mechanical, electrical, plumbing, Cardkey security, and control systems.
- Initiate a 15-year Planned Service Agreement to operate and maintain all building systems.
- Research, specify and install a wireless data network system.
- Work with the construction team and customer to redesign, select, and install plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and control systems.

Results:

- Allowed customer to build the Cyberschool without diverting funds from technical systems inherent to the school's design and purpose.
- Provided an advanced learning environment using state-of-the-art technology to increase student achievement.
- Achieved construction and occupancy goals in September 2000, 10 months from groundbreaking.
- Created a sense of community within the Parklawn public housing development.



Photo courtesy UWM Today

Dr. Christine Faltz, executive director and visionary for Cyberschool, believes it is what people do with technology that empowers them, not technology alone.



"The relationship with Johnson Controls allowed us to build Cyberschool the way we envisioned it, without making compromises associated with budgetary constraints," says Dr. Faltz.



Photo courtesy UWM Today

Students in grades six through eight takes turns staffing the troubleshooting lab. A full-time technical support director guides these students in the maintenance of equipment.

Transforming the Way Children Learn

"The mission of the Central City Cyberschool (C³) of Milwaukee is to motivate in each student: the love of learning; the academic, social and leadership skills necessary to engage in critical thinking, and; the ability to demonstrate complete mastery of the academic skills necessary for a successful future."

Cyberschool is operated by a nonprofit company under a five-year charter granted by the City of Milwaukee. Located in one of the city's oldest public housing developments, C³ is open to all Milwaukee students regardless of family income. It is a school of choice - selected by the families whose children attend it.

"The instructional design of C³ is based on the belief that technology alone is not empowering; rather, it is what people do with technology that empowers them," says Dr. Christine Faltz, executive director. Accordingly, the school uses computer technology to help students learn to read, write, and solve math and science problems. Each student has a laptop computer for daily use, allowing them to take advantage of resources available electronically. As its visionary, Dr. Faltz expresses, "C³ is a place where teachers work together using technology to enhance the way they teach and where students are provided access to technology they may not otherwise have had."

From Vision to Reality

The Cyberschool had received an initial \$3.1 million in federal funds through the efforts of the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority, which fell short of the \$7 million necessary to complete the project as originally conceived. Faced with these budget shortfalls, Dr. Faltz took an active role in pursuing the necessary funds and the redesign of building systems in order to complete the project without compromising her vision.

When Dr. Faltz approached Johnson Controls, Inc. about its Cardkey security system, Johnson Controls responded with a bundled solution that provided \$3.9 million worth of additional funding to help build the school and install a Cardkey security system, heating, air conditioning, and fire and lighting controls. The partnership involves a 15-year lease-to-own contract, after which the building systems are the property of C³. During this same period, Johnson Controls is responsible for the service and maintenance of the building's systems under a Planned Service Agreement.

Under the plan, Johnson Controls also installed a wireless data network system. The system, which allows wireless communication from the students' laptop computers within any of the school's classrooms, is the heart of what makes C³ a leading edge educational facility. As students use their laptops to participate in classroom exercises, teachers obtain immediate feedback through their own computer and are able to provide students additional assistance and refine lesson plans to enhance student comprehension.

"Johnson Controls took an interest in the overall project and provided a more economical solution that allowed us to complete the project without using alternative systems, which we felt were not viable," says Dr. Faltz.

Partnership Provides Fast Track Start Up

The tight timeline and unique needs of C³ required Johnson Controls to partner with the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority, consulting engineers, and key sub-contractors to validate the design and specify the necessary systems. Johnson Controls' expertise and existing relationships in the construction community provided a design/build environment in which educated decisions and design changes could be made without delaying construction.

Dr. Faltz indicates that, since the school's opening, many people with a similar idea and vision have remarked about the project's short time line. Faltz originally wrote the charter application in 1998, which was approved in March of 1999. The lease with Johnson Controls was signed in November of 1999 and the Cyberschool opened in September 2000.

Although C³ may be the first of its kind, Dr. Faltz feels the level of interest in the school indicates that there will be more to come. "We have accomplished many firsts here and, although there are challenges to be addressed, the relationship with Johnson Controls has provided us the starting point we originally envisioned."