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Submission ID 58505 Received for Appendix A: Initial Application Form

2 messages

noreply@madisonk12wius.myenotice.com <noreply@madisonk12wius.myenotice.com>Fri, Aug 14, 2026 at
2:35 PM

To: tjmccray@madison.k12.wi.us



You've got a new form submission!

Appendix A: Initial Application Form**Submission Date:** 8/14/2026 2:35 PM**Name of Organization:** One City Schools, Inc.**Year Founded:** 2014**Name of Primary
Applicant - First Name:** Kaleem**Name of Primary
Applicant - Last Name:** Caire**Telephone:** 6085312128**Email Address:** kaleem@onecityschools.org**Do you currently
operate a school?:** Yes**Is your school::** Conversion**If you selected
conversion, what type of
conversion school
would you propose?:** Converting from one authorizer to another

Is your charter school a virtual school?: No

Where exactly would the school be located?: 1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713 (technically in Monona but on the border of Madison/Monona.

What academic school year would the school first open?: 2028-2029

Are you applying for a charter with any other authorizers this year?: Yes

List the authorizer(s) you are applying with.:

The University of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) first authorized One City Elementary School in 2018 and reauthorized it in 2023 for another five years, through the end of the 2027-28 school year. We recently submitted an application to the OEO to reauthorize our middle school, One City Preparatory Academy. This school was first authorized in 2022-23, and its charter contract ends on June 30, 2027. We applied to extend the contract for another five years: from 2027-28 through 2031-32. However, the Director of the OEO knows we are applying with MMSD to have our schools authorized by you and supports this. The OEO's deadline to approve our reauthorization application is April 30, 2027, while MMSD's deadline is March 30, 2027. So MMSD's decision would come first. If MMSD approves authorizing both of our charter schools, then OEO would not proceed with making a decision on approving our contract with them.

Have you applied for authorization of this concept to any authorizer before?: Yes

Describe the current charter School Proposal Committee (Proposal Development Team and/or Planning Group) and any supporting partners.: One City Schools, Inc. has convened a Charter School Proposal Committee to lead the conversion of One City Elementary School from authorization by the Universities of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity to authorization by the Madison Metropolitan School District Board of Education. The Committee is chaired by Kaleem Caire, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of One City Schools, Inc. COMMITTEE MEMBERS Kaleem Caire: Founder and Chief Executive Officer, One City Schools, Inc., Committee Chair. Founded One City in 2014 and has

led the organization through the authorization and opening of One City Preschool, One City Elementary School, and One City Preparatory Academy. Gail Wiseman: Chief of Staff, External Relations, and Interim Chief People Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Lead coordinator for the application and primary staff liaison to the District. Scott Haumerson: Chief Financial Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Maria Dyslin: Chief Academic Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Carl Hampton: VP of Government Relations and Policy, One City Schools, Inc. Natalia Navarro: Chief Operating Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Hilary Brandt: Director/Principal, One City Elementary School. James Howard: Chair, One City Schools, Inc. Board of Directors. Monica George: Parent of a currently enrolled One City Elementary School scholar who is a resident of the Madison Metropolitan School District. Ciera Carey: Classroom teacher, One City Elementary School. Current resumes for each Committee member are being compiled and will be submitted with the Original Proposal.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS AND DISCLOSED AFFILIATIONS One City discloses the following affiliated entities to ensure the District has a complete picture of the organization from the outset: One City Schools Foundation, a 501(c)(3) that raises funds in support of the schools; One City Advocates, Inc., a 501(c)(4) that engages in public policy advocacy and is legally and operationally separate from school operations; and the One City Broadway property entities, which own and manage the Pleasant T. Rowland Campus facility and 13.5 acres of grounds. If MMSD's Board authorizes One City Elementary School as an instrumentality charter school, One City will structure the relationships among these entities as District counsel deems appropriate, including a clear separation of advocacy activity from the operation of a District school. Educational and community partners supporting the school include: EL Education (for K-8 only) and Anji Play Inc. (for 4K only), whose curricula One City Elementary School has implemented as an affiliate school of each entity; the Wisconsin Center for Education Research and the UW Evaluation Collaborative at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, which have conducted an independent longitudinal evaluation of One City since 2019 and issued its most recent report in July 2025; the University of Wisconsin–

Madison, Edgewood College, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Madison College, with whom One City partners to prepare teachers, early childhood educators, paraprofessionals, and nursing students; the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) and Project Read for teacher and tutor training, and scholar literacy development; Root To Rise and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County for in-school mentoring; Families and Schools Together (FAST) for family engagement; Own It, Inc., a resource for homeownership and wealth-building education for our One City families and staff; and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County, whose Taft Street club adjoins One City's Fisher Street site. One City intends for the Madison Metropolitan School District to become the Committee's most important partner in this process. We are requesting the full allocation of consultative hours available under Policy 10000, and we will participate in every consultation session the District offers.

Statement of proposed school Propose: One City Elementary School already exists. It has served Madison children since 2018 as a tuition-free public charter school authorized by the Universities of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity. We are not proposing a new school, but a change in who authorizes, oversees, and stands behind the school our families already chose. We propose this conversion because One City and the Madison Metropolitan School District serve the same children and share a mission, and because partnering, rather than competing or being seen to compete, better serves our scholars, families, and community. In 2025-26, 94% of One City's scholars were children of color, 70% lived in economically disadvantaged households, and 81% lived within MMSD boundaries (Source: 2025 Third Friday of September Pupil Count and PowerSchool). The Office of Educational Opportunity opened a door when no other was open and gave our founding families a school that would not otherwise exist. That partnership did exactly what it was created to do. What has changed is the opportunity before us: a proven school, a shared mission, and a District ready to build together. Authorization by MMSD would place our scholars fully inside the system their neighbors attend, give them the District's capacity a few miles

away, and advance our founders' dream of working with MMSD to improve outcomes for all Madison students. We have always wanted to partner with MMSD rather than sit adjacent to it. Instrumentality status would make One City Elementary unambiguously a Madison public school: operated in partnership with One City Schools, Inc., accountable to the Madison Board of Education, staffed by District employees, and collaboratively integrated into District special education, student services, transportation, nutrition, data, and professional learning infrastructure. It would also give MMSD the practices and partnerships that have made One City Elementary and Preparatory Academy leaders in academic growth in Wisconsin and Dane County, with student populations that have not traditionally achieved such outcomes. This is a win for MMSD, One City, and the City of Madison.

HOW THE SCHOOL DIFFERS FROM EXISTING DISTRICT SCHOOLS

One City Elementary brings the District four things it does not operate at scale. First, a two-generation model. One City works closely with parents and extends wraparound support to our scholars' families. Family programming, adult learning, and household support are built into the school, not bolted onto it. Second, substantially more instructional time. One City Elementary operates a longer instructional day and school year than the traditional calendar, the single most underutilized best practice in American public education, used for years with the students for whom it matters most. We have had to suspend it beginning in 2026-27 due to resource constraints; MMSD could bring it back if the desire and resources are there. Third, a Community Ecosystem Network. One City coordinates academic, health, enrichment, mentoring, business, and civic partners around each scholar as a designed system, not a set of referrals. MMSD would gain our world-class tutoring and tutor training model, which aligns fully with the literacy model our teachers use daily, our Anji Play model in 4K, and our integrated partnerships and advocacy support. Fourth, an early-literacy practice reaching far beyond our own building. Through Project Read AI and the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, One City supports thousands of classrooms and educators across Wisconsin, the Midwest, and beyond. That is District-scale capacity within a small charter

school. HISTORY WITH AUTHORIZERS The Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) first authorized One City in 2018 and reauthorized it for five years in 2023. One City Preparatory Academy was authorized in 2022 and is undergoing reauthorization, with a decision expected in April 2027. Before that, One City's leadership met with MMSD Superintendent Jennifer Cheatham, but we didn't have sufficient support to advance our proposal for an MMSD-authorized charter. We are returning because circumstances, leadership, evidence, and relationships have changed, and because Superintendent Gothard and Mr. Caire have concluded that partnership serves Madison's children better than parallel operation. The OEO is aware of and supportive of One City pursuing charter school status with MMSD. WHAT ONE CITY AND MADISON GAIN, STATED PLAINLY It would be less than candid to call this a one-way benefit. One City would gain special education and student services capacity we cannot build alone; back-office, transportation, and nutrition infrastructure; and a funding structure that lets our leadership focus on instruction rather than raising millions a year to keep the doors open. Madison would also gain some measure of property tax relief, with MMSD recapturing state and federal per-pupil aid for more than 350 children.

Statement of proposed school Vision: VISION One City Elementary School exists so that every child who walks through its doors leaves fifth grade able to read, write, and reason, and to see themselves as capable people with a claim on the future. We believe children rise to the expectations adults hold for them, that families are partners rather than audiences, and that a school is strongest when it is woven into its community. MISSION STATEMENT (MEASURABLE) One City Schools' mission is to cultivate future leaders for our community and the world, while seeding a new model of public education that ensures children and teens are on track to succeed in a college- or career-preparatory program. One City Elementary School carries out that mission in grades 4K through 5 and holds itself to three measurable commitments: (1) that our scholars achieve annual academic growth that places the school among Wisconsin's highest-growth elementary schools; (2) that the gap between our scholars' grade-level proficiency and the statewide average narrows

year over year; and (3) that every scholar's family is a participating partner in their learning. Each is verifiable: growth against the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Report Card growth percentile; proficiency using Forward Exam and interim assessment results, disaggregated by student group; and family partnership, measured by participation data.

We propose these as the substance of the accountability provisions in a charter contract and welcome the District setting the bar. **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY** Our philosophy rests on four commitments: Children need more time on task than the traditional calendar provides, so we have extended the school day and year (until 2026-27 due to resource constraints); Children learn most durably when learning is purposeful, so instruction is organized around extended, standards-aligned learning expeditions that culminate in real work for real audiences; Early literacy is not one subject among many but the gateway to every other subject, so we teach reading using structured, evidence-aligned methods, and we intervene early and intensively through fifth grade; and And children do not learn well when the adults around them are struggling, so we work directly with families and households. **RESEARCH BASE** The model draws on the science of reading and the structured literacy research underpinning the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) approach, for which One City operates the Upper Midwest Training Hub; on the extended learning time literature showing gains concentrated among students furthest from grade level; on EL Education's evidence base for project-based, standards-aligned learning expeditions; on Teach Like A Champion's classroom management and character development standards; on an engaging STEM program built on external partnerships; a world-class tutoring program in reading and mathematics; and on two-generation intervention research in early childhood and family engagement, including the FAST family engagement model. One City's own model has been the subject of an independent longitudinal study by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Education Research and UW Evaluation Collaborative. Its July 2025 report, based on interviews with scholars and parents conducted between March 2024 and January 2025, is available now and will be submitted

with the Original Proposal. We are not asking the District to take our word for the model; we are asking it to review the independent evaluation. EVIDENCE THE MODEL WORKS, AND WHERE IT DOES NOT YET

One City Elementary School has earned two consecutive Exceeds Expectations ratings on the DPI School Report Card. Its academic growth places it near the 76th percentile among all Wisconsin elementary schools, with a student body of more than 90 percent children of color. We also want to name the harder part of the record ourselves. Single-year proficiency rates remain well below state averages. We do not explain that away, and we would not want the Board to hear it first from someone else. Five conditions bear on it: (a) our scholars' academic starting point when they enroll; (b) attendance and tardiness rates, shaped in part by our inability to provide transportation for families who cannot; (c) high rates of family mobility; (d) difficulty retaining our most experienced educators, who are regularly outcompeted on pay and benefits by neighboring districts; and (e) a revenue structure that requires us to raise roughly \$5 million each year, much of it during the school year, which prevents the kind of upfront investment a school needs to make before students arrive. We raise these not as explanations but because three of them are precisely what District authorization would address. MMSD already provides transportation. District compensation and benefits would let us compete for the educators we currently lose and give MMSD access to the highly effective educators we currently employ.

Proposed School NAME OF SCHOOL One City Elementary School. We

Logistics: propose retaining the name families and the community know, subject to any naming convention the District requires. YEARS OF OPERATION One City Elementary School has operated continuously since 2018 under authorization from the Universities of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity. One City requests a five-year initial charter term as an instrumentality charter school of MMSD, preferably commencing in 2027-2028. Because this is a conversion of an operating school rather than a start-up, no planning year is needed. Transition work, including authorizer transition, employment transition, and systems integration, would be completed in the year before the first chartered year, with District staff.

GRADES SERVED Four-year-old kindergarten (4K) through grade 5. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT: One City Elementary School budgets enrollment at two levels. At full projection, the level at which we budget expenses, the school enrolls 40 scholars in 4K and 48 in each of grades K through 5, a total of 328. At 85 percent of projection, the level at which we budget revenue, it enrolls 34 in 4K and 41 in each of grades K through 5, a total of 280. We budget revenue conservatively and staff to the lower figure while planning expenses at full enrollment, so the school absorbs scholar mobility and any lag between projected and counted enrollment. WHY THE TWO FIGURES DIFFER, AND WHY DISTRICT AUTHORIZATION CHANGES IT As an independent charter school, One City commits to staffing and most other costs before the year begins but receives state aid in four payments tied to different enrollment figures: September on enrollment projected to the Department of Public Instruction just after opening, December on the third-Friday-of-September count, and February and June on the second-Friday-of-January count. When projections exceed the actual count, the state recovers the difference from the following payment. The practical effect is that a school our size bears the full risk of enrollment variation after the costs are committed. That is why we budget two figures rather than one, and it is one of the more consequential differences District authorization would make: One City would plan enrollment on the same basis as every other MMSD school. LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR During 2025-26, One City Elementary operated a school year from September 1 to the third Friday in July and a school day from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with fee-based programming from 7:00 to 7:50 a.m. and 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Beginning in 2026-27, the school year runs September 1, 2026 to June 11, 2027, and the school day 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with no early-release days. Fee-based programming continues, one hour before school and two hours after. We want MMSD to understand why. The extended day and year were funded entirely by philanthropy and were not sustainable for us to carry alone, so we reduced them to a length comparable to most Wisconsin public schools. This is a concrete example of what the current funding structure asks

One City to give up, and one reason we seek District authorization. We still regard extended learning time as valuable, particularly for scholars furthest from grade level, and would welcome restoring it if MMSD sees value in it. We can also deliver a high-quality program within a standard calendar. We raise it now because it is a genuine design question for the partnership and an early agenda item with District leadership.

FACILITY One City Elementary operates across two owned facilities in South Madison. Grades K through 5 are housed at the Pleasant T. Rowland Campus, [1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713](#), a 157,000-square-foot building on 13.5 acres, owned outright with no lease. The property carries New Markets Tax Credit obligations, for which One City makes annual contributions escrowed in accounts maintained to cover those payments. The school's public charter 4K program is housed at [2012 Fisher Street, Madison, WI 53713](#), a 10,700-square-foot facility on approximately one acre adjacent to the Taft Street Boys and Girls Club. One City also owns this property, subject to a modest remaining balance owed to Summit Credit Union. Ownership structure for both is detailed in the Facility section.

PRESCHOOL For clarity: One City Preschool, a separate nonprofit, tuition-based program for children from infancy through age four, is operated by One City Schools, Inc. and is not part of this charter application. It would remain outside the charter, with its relationship to the school documented in the charter contract. We are also looking to relocate it within or near South Madison: the neighborhood's child population is declining, and the facility is old, needing renovation that would cost more long term than purchasing a newer building. A \$50,000 Madison Community Foundation grant in January 2025 funded a siting feasibility study, which we completed and presented to our Board in June 2025.

How will your school increase educational equity, incubate innovations, and/or increase the use of underutilized best educational practices?: ONE CITY AS A DEMONSTRATION PUBLIC SCHOOL One City Elementary School was designed from the outset as a demonstration public school. The commitment was embedded in our founding documents in 2014, before we enrolled a single scholar. The model works like a teaching hospital: innovations are developed and piloted in real classrooms, documented through research partnerships with UW-Madison, and shared with other

schools at no cost. A small school can do this in ways a large district cannot. We can design, test, and refine an approach within a single school year, and abandon one that does not work without disrupting thirty schools.

What we cannot do alone is scale a proven practice.

That takes a district. MMSD has already scaled one of ours. INCREASING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY In 2025-26, 94 percent of One City scholars were children of color, 70 percent lived in economically disadvantaged households, and 17 percent received special education services. This is not incidental to the design; it is the design. Enrollment is open and tuition-free, and when applications exceed seats, admission is by blind lottery.

We deliberately recruit in South Madison neighborhoods where families have had the fewest good options. Every innovation we test is tested with the children Madison has struggled longest to serve, which is what makes the findings useful. In practice, equity means small, intensive settings for scholars who need them, including our Scholars Academy model, which limits classes to twelve children with two dedicated teachers, an alternative to the false choice between social promotion and retention. It means structured literacy delivered by educators trained in it. And it means working with families rather than around them. One City Elementary School has earned two consecutive Exceeds Expectations ratings from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and its academic growth places it near the 76th percentile among Wisconsin elementary schools. Reading proficiency among our Black scholars rose from 2 percent to 21 percent in a single year, and among our Latino scholars from 16 percent to 57 percent. WHAT THE DEMONSTRATION MODEL HAS ALREADY PRODUCED FOR MMSD This is not a promise. It has already happened, more than once. EL Education. One City opened in 2018-19 as the first EL Education network school in Dane County. After connecting with EL Education through its work with One City, MMSD voted unanimously in April 2022 to adopt the curriculum across all 31 of its elementary schools, a \$5.6 million investment. A small charter school piloted it; the District scaled it. Project Read AI. Co-developed with One City and tested in our classrooms starting in 2024 under a research partnership funded by Ascendium, this AI reading tutor is now used in about

5,000 Wisconsin classrooms. As of October 2025, 118 MMSD teachers were using it, and Midvale Elementary adopted it schoolwide at \$3.50 per student. UFLI. One City serves as the University of Florida Literacy Institute's Upper Midwest Training Hub, providing science-of-reading training to Wisconsin educators and community volunteers, and hosted the region's first Pop-Up Reading Academy in March 2026. The four-day educator workweek. We piloted it in 2022-23 and discontinued it because our teachers concluded the fifth day with scholars mattered more. We report that with the same confidence as the successes. A demonstration school that publishes only what worked is not a demonstration school. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE Our practice is documented rather than asserted. UW-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research conducted a five-year longitudinal evaluation funded by a \$1 million Wisconsin Partnership Program grant, reporting most recently in July 2025. The District can read the findings before it decides. WHAT WE PROPOSE We propose that the charter contract name what One City is expected to test, document, and deliver to the District, and hold us accountable for producing it, with annual reporting to the Board on what we tried, what worked, and what did not: the Scholars Academy intervention model; the two-generation family model, including FAST, for which One City is a training hub for the Milwaukee, Mineral Point, and Sun Prairie districts; the volunteer literacy tutoring program; and extended learning time, which we operated for years, have data on, and would restore with District support. District staff would be welcome in our building as observers and co-designers. WHAT WE ASK OF THE DISTRICT IN RETURN Innovation is not costless, and it does not move in one direction. We seek access to District special education and student services expertise, professional learning, data infrastructure, and operational systems a school our size cannot build alone. Neither side of this exchange is charity. It is how a district and a small school make each other better, and it is what we propose to put in writing.

Describe the proposed school governance council.: One City recognizes that authorization by MMSD entails substantive governance changes, not merely formal ones. One City Elementary School is today governed by the Board of Directors of One City

Schools, Inc., the nonprofit that holds the charter. Under District authorization that changes: the Board of Education would hold the charter, and the school governance council would be an advisory and stewardship body operating under Board policy and the charter contract, not a competing board. We will work with MMSD leadership and the Board of Education to settle the structure, and the description below is our proposal, not a precondition.

PROPOSED COMPOSITION We propose a Governance Council of eleven to thirteen members: the school principal; two parents or guardians of enrolled scholars; two teachers at the school; and six to eight directors of One City Schools, Inc. We propose that parent members be elected by the school's families and teacher members selected by the school's instructional staff, so that both seats carry a constituency rather than an appointment. Members would serve staggered terms so that no more than a minority of seats turn over in any year, and the Council would meet monthly, consistent with the Board's current cadence. This structure is an extension of practice rather than a departure from it. Two seats on the current One City Schools Board are designated for and held by parents of enrolled scholars, placing families inside the governing body rather than adjacent to it.

PROPOSED AUTHORITY The Council would advise on the education program, wraparound supports, athletics, and partnerships; on the school improvement plan and annual goals; on the school budget within the allocation established by the District; and on principal selection consistent with District processes. It would review academic, attendance, discipline, and family engagement data on a set cycle; steward the school's mission and the fidelity of its instructional model; serve as the standing forum for family voice; and deliver the annual demonstration-school report to the Board of Education on what One City tested, what worked, and what did not. The Council would not employ staff, would not hold the charter, and would not exercise authority reserved to the Board of Education or the Superintendent. We state this plainly because ambiguity on this point has caused difficulty in other charter relationships, and we have no interest in creating it here.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE ONE CITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS One City Schools, Inc. would continue as

a nonprofit with its own Board of Directors because it operates One City Preschool and other programs outside this charter. The precise relationship between that Board and a District-chartered school, including the roles of the One City Schools Foundation, One City Advocates, and the One City Broadway property entities, requires careful structuring. We would want District counsel and leadership involved from the beginning rather than at the end. We are prepared to accept whatever separation the District requires, including a clear and documented wall between One City Advocates' policy advocacy and the operation of a District school, and to have that separation written into the charter contract rather than left to practice.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY The Council would operate under Wisconsin open meetings requirements as applicable; post agendas and minutes publicly; maintain a conflict-of-interest policy consistent with District policy; and report to the Board of Education on the schedule the charter contract establishes. These are current practices, not new commitments. The One City Schools Board met eleven times in regular session during 2025-26, monthly, under the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, with agendas noticed in advance and minutes approved at the following meeting. A quorum was present, and business was lawfully transacted at every meeting.

Directors serve staggered three-year terms, file annual conflict-of-interest disclosures, recuse themselves from any real or perceived conflict, and complete an annual self-assessment of collective expertise across seven domains, administered through the BoardOnTrack governance platform, which the Board uses to set its recruitment priorities. Board materials are public at www.onecityschools.org under "Board Meetings."

GOVERNANCE TRACK RECORD One City has governed a public charter school for eight years under an external authorizer, including annual reporting, independent financial audits, an external longitudinal evaluation, annual comprehensive authorizer reviews, and a charter renewal review. Where our authorizer identified governance deficiencies, we corrected them, and the corrections held in subsequent reviews. We are not new to accountability, and we are not new to being told where we fall short. We propose to be accountable to Madison.

Describe the school leadership structure.: One City proposes to preserve the leadership structure that has produced the school's growth results, adapted

to District employment and reporting expectations under instrumentality status. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Principal of One City Elementary School holds instructional and operational leadership of the school, supervises school-based staff, leads the school improvement plan, and is accountable for academic outcomes, culture, and family engagement. Under instrumentality status the Principal would be an MMSD employee. One City requests that principal selection be a joint process — a District-run selection with meaningful One City participation on the panel — and we would want that mechanism written into the charter contract rather than left to practice. The Principal is supported by One City's character coach and instructional coach, student services and special education team, and a corps of trained volunteer tutors. Instructional coaching is a deliberate investment in our model rather than an add-on, and it is the mechanism by which the extended day and the literacy practice actually reach classrooms. REPORTING

RELATIONSHIP The Principal would report to the District administrator designated by the Superintendent, consistent with the reporting structure for other MMSD instrumentality charter schools, and would work with the Governance Council in an advisory relationship as described above. One City is not asking for an exemption from District supervision. We are asking that supervision be paired with the operational latitude the charter is meant to provide.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT One City Schools, Inc. would continue to provide organizational-level support in areas where it holds capability the school benefits from, subject to what the District determines is appropriate under instrumentality status. This is one of the substantive items we would want on the agenda in early consultation: which functions transfer to the District, which remain with One City Schools, Inc., and how the boundary is documented. LEADERSHIP CONTINUITY THROUGH TRANSITION Conversion should be invisible to a child. Our commitment is that scholars return to the same building, the same teachers, and the same instructional program. Achieving that requires early and detailed work with District Human Resources on the employment

transition of school-based staff, licensure verification, and the treatment of existing agreements. We would like to begin that work in the first consultation session rather than the last.

Anticipated attendance One City Elementary School's present geographic **area:** attendance boundary extends statewide. Any child residing anywhere in Wisconsin can attend our school. We currently serve 35 zip codes, extending as far as Beloit and Reedsburg, Wisconsin. As an instrumentality of MMSD, 81% of students who attend our charter schools currently reside in MMSD and would be eligible for MMSD without needing an open-enrollment application. Enrollment is open, tuition-free, and non-selective, with admission by blind lottery when applications exceed available seats. The school does not test, screen, or select for admission, and it does not counsel students out. We would need to discuss with MMSD how it wants to address the enrollment of our current students who reside outside its attendance boundaries. **PRIMARY ATTENDANCE AREA** The school's primary attendance area will be the boundaries of the Madison Metropolitan School District, with recruitment efforts that extend district-wide, and not confined to a particular neighborhood. One City's current scholars reside in every zip code that comprises the boundaries of MMSD. **CURRENTLY ENROLLED NON-RESIDENT FAMILIES** A number of currently enrolled scholars reside outside MMSD boundaries, as is permitted under the school's present statewide authorization. One City has an obligation to those families. We ask the District to work with us on a mechanism, such as open enrollment, pre-existing, or another approach the District prefers, that allows a child already enrolled at One City Elementary School to finish grade 5 here. We recognize this is the District's decision to make, and we raise it now so we can work on determining a solution, if any, together. **PRIORITY AND LOTTERY STRUCTURE** Subject to District policy, One City proposes an enrollment structure with priority for siblings of currently enrolled scholars, and for children of One City school staff, with all remaining seats filled by blind lottery among MMSD residents. We would defer to the District on the permissible structure and would welcome guidance in consultation. **DISTRICT-WIDE ACCESS** One City Elementary School would be open to any MMSD-

resident family, from any part of the District, on the same terms.

Primary student demographics you anticipate serving: One City Elementary School anticipates serving largely the same population it serves today, because it will serve largely the same children. RACE AND

ETHNICITY Approximately 88 percent of currently enrolled scholars are children of color, with Black scholars the largest group, followed by Latino and multiracial scholars. This composition reflects the neighborhoods the school serves and the families who have chosen it. ECONOMIC STATUS A substantial majority of One City scholars come from economically disadvantaged households. The September 2025 DPI pupil count shows 70 percent of our scholars residing in under-resourced households eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS One City currently serves seven multilingual learners whose families' primary languages are principally Spanish and French. The school provides language support and translation for family communication and conferences. We name a live challenge here. DPI's 2024-25 ESEA comprehensive monitoring review documented turnover in our English Learner Teacher/Coordinator position and the difficulty a school our size faces maintaining continuity for a small EL population, and recommended broader participation in the CESA 2 consortium. We have carried that recommendation into our planning. It also illustrates scale: a district with established EL staffing, licensure pipelines, and program models can serve seven children better than a single school recruiting for a single dually certified position. District EL capacity directly benefits these families. SCHOLARS WITH DISABILITIES Approximately 17 percent of One City scholars receive special education services. We do not screen for or discourage enrollment based on disability. We serve these scholars in compliance and with care, and the state has verified it. On February 4, 2026, DPI conducted an on-site validation visit to independently verify the accuracy of One City's Reading Drives Achievement: Procedural Compliance Self-Assessment. Reviewing a random sample of student records across five compliance areas, Evaluation, IEP Implementation, Discipline, Shortened School Day, and IEP, DPI found our self-assessment reliable in all five. Four required no corrections. The IEP sample required

three minor report-level adjustments across two records out of twenty-three items reviewed, only one of which involved a student-level correction. This was One City's first cycle through DPI's validation process. DPI's narrative identified a strong evaluation-to-IEP pipeline, student self-advocacy developed at an early age, strong internal controls, a proactively redesigned family-centered IEP process, and the absence of shortened school days as a practice, reflecting our commitment that every scholar has full daily access to instruction. Even so, special education capacity is where a school our size is most constrained, and it is a principal reason we seek District authorization. Access to MMSD's special education expertise, related services, evaluation capacity, and staffing depth would directly and immediately enhance what we can offer these scholars and their families. We are not asking the District to fix a compliance problem. We are asking it to help us extend what our team already does well.

ANTICIPATED CHANGES UNDER MMSD

AUTHORIZATION If enrollment is limited to MMSD residents, we anticipate the share of economically disadvantaged scholars and scholars of color would remain steady or increase slightly, given the neighborhoods from which we draw. We do not anticipate any change that would move the school away from the population it was created to serve, and we would propose that the charter contract commit us to serving a population demographically representative of, or more economically disadvantaged than, the District as a whole. DATA Complete disaggregated enrollment, demographic, attendance, discipline, and achievement data by student group are available through WISEdash and directly from One City, and will be submitted with the Original Proposal. The DPI validation correspondence and the 2024-25 ESEA comprehensive monitoring report are available to the District upon request.

Describe the Committee's vision and beliefs around the role of families in the school.: One City was founded on the belief that you cannot educate a child well while treating that child's family as a bystander. Family engagement is not a program at One City Elementary School. It is a structural feature of the school's design, and families most often name it when researchers ask what is different here. **WHAT WE BELIEVE** Families are the first and most durable educators in a child's life, and the school's job is to be

a genuine partner rather than an institution that issues instructions. Engagement has to be built into the school day, the calendar, and the staffing model, because engagement that depends on parents having spare time and transportation will systematically exclude the families who most need to be included. And a school that supports the adults in a household, with adult learning, connection to services, and a path to stability, produces better outcomes for children than one that does not. HOW THIS SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE One City operates a two-generation model in which family programming is designed alongside the instructional program. More than 200 One City families have completed the FAST program, an evidence-based nine-week course in which families participate in structured weekly sessions together, since 2018. Parent Success Academies connect families to outside resources and support. Our Parent Council, led by parents, publishes a monthly family calendar, brings family priorities directly to school leadership, and gives parents real voice in school decisions. Teachers make home visits and relationship-building contact at the start of each year, and translation and interpretation ensure language is not a barrier to participation. Beginning in 2026-27, One City launches a Parent Reading Academy, teaching families the same structured literacy practices their children receive in classrooms so that reading instruction continues at the kitchen table. Support extends past the school day. Through the "Own It" homeownership initiative, One City's first nineteen families became homeowners, completing a sixteen-week financial literacy course and receiving up to \$19,000 toward down payments, with thirty-two realtors signed on as ambassadors. We describe it because it illustrates what two-generation work means: a school that takes seriously the conditions under which a family lives, not only the hours a child is in the building. WHAT THE STATE FOUND In its 2024-25 ESEA comprehensive monitoring review, DPI formally commended One City for the depth and level of partnership opportunities and support provided for families, naming FAST, the Parent Success Academies, the Parent Council, the presence of parents on our Board, and the two-generation model. DPI singled out "Own It" as particularly noteworthy and commendable. Family engagement

was one of only two commendations in the review.

WHAT FAMILIES SAY The UW-Madison Center for Research on Early Childhood Education interviewed 29 scholars and 12 parents between March 2024 and January 2025 and published its findings in July 2025. Families described a school where multiple cultures and languages are celebrated, where teachers affirm scholars' identities and build individualized accommodations, and where they are known by name and treated as partners in decisions about their children. One grandmother called the school "a great soul." The same report identified where we fall short, including timeliness of communication and the range of extracurricular offerings, and we are working on both. We will submit the report with the Original Proposal and encourage District staff to speak with One City families directly during the review.

FAMILY VOICE IN GOVERNANCE Two seats on the One City Schools, Inc. Board of Directors are designated for and held by parents of enrolled scholars. Under District authorization, two parent or guardian seats on the school Governance Council would be elected by the school's families, as described in the Governance section, so that family representation carries a constituency rather than an appointment. Family voice at One City is not a suggestion box. It is a seat at the table where decisions are made.

WHAT DISTRICT AUTHORIZATION WOULD ADD Two things would improve immediately. Families who move between One City and other Madison schools, as many do over the course of a child's education, would stay inside one system, with records, services, and supports following the child rather than restarting. And District translation, family engagement, and community school capacity would extend the reach of what a small organization can staff on its own.

Describe your Curriculum vision.: One City Elementary School's curriculum vision is for scholars in grades 4K through 5 to read fluently and think deeply, through work that is demanding, purposeful, and connected to the world beyond the classroom.

CORE CURRICULUM One City Elementary School is an EL Education affiliate school and implements the EL Education curriculum, a standards-aligned, project-based program organized around extended learning expeditions in which scholars investigate a compelling question over several

weeks and produce high-quality work for a real audience. The curriculum is aligned to Wisconsin Academic Standards, and its character and community dimensions are integral rather than supplemental.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN Our 4K program uses the Anji Play approach, in which extended, child-directed play with open-ended materials is treated as serious cognitive work and documented as such by teachers. Scholars build language, problem-solving, persistence, and collaboration before formal instruction begins, and their teachers use that documentation to inform what comes next.

EARLY LITERACY Literacy is the school's first priority and where we have invested most deliberately. One City delivers explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, consistent with the science of reading and Wisconsin Act 20. UFLI Foundations is our core reading program and the basis of our reading intervention, so core instruction and intervention use one method rather than two competing ones. Project Read AI, co-developed with One City and tested in our own classrooms, gives each scholar targeted practice and gives teachers usable daily data. Forty-four UFLI-trained tutors work one-to-one with scholars in reading, and a tutoring program in mathematics does the same, using the routines and language scholars hear from their teachers, so a child encounters one consistent method from every adult who teaches them. DPI's 2024-25 monitoring review noted our structured literacy implementation and our staff's readiness to meet Act 20. This practice reaches beyond our building. One City operates the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, and Project Read AI now supports early literacy in roughly five thousand Wisconsin classrooms. What we train other educators to do is what we do.

MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES Mathematics instruction emphasizes conceptual understanding alongside fluency, with intervention structured for scholars performing below grade level. Science and social studies are substantially integrated into learning expeditions rather than taught as isolated blocks.

ENRICHMENT AND THE WHOLE CHILD Music, visual and performing arts, physical education and wellness, and STEM enrichment are part of the core program rather than the first thing cut. Protecting both

intervention and enrichment inside a 180-day calendar is the central scheduling challenge of the coming year, and it is one reason we would welcome the chance to restore extended learning time with District support. INTERVENTION Scholars performing below grade level receive intensive, small-group intervention within a multi-tiered system of support. Reading specialists work from a maintained intervention menu, and a tracker documents who is receiving what, progress made, adjustments needed, and entrance and exit criteria; administration and specialists meet on a set schedule to review both. DPI examined this system in 2024-25 and rated our Title I targeted assistance programming Acceptable, describing a well-articulated program with a genuine continuous-improvement loop. The Scholars Academy model, no more than twelve children with two dedicated teachers, is One City's alternative to the choice between social promotion and retention, and it is among the practices we would most want to document and offer to the District.

CURRICULUM AND DISTRICT ALIGNMENT On the core, alignment is not a hypothetical. One City opened in 2018-19 as the first EL Education school in Dane County, and in April 2022 MMSD voted unanimously to adopt EL Education across all 31 of its elementary schools. One City Elementary already teaches the District's core elementary ELA curriculum, and our educators have taught it longer than most. Our structured literacy practice also aligns with the same Act 20 requirements every Wisconsin school must meet. Where questions remain, they are narrower than the general case: mathematics resources, assessment calendars, and how expeditionary scheduling interacts with District instructional expectations. We would want to understand the District's adopted resources in detail during consultation and identify honestly where alignment is straightforward, where a waiver would be required, and where One City should adopt District practice because it is better. We approach this as a question to work through together, not a line to hold.

Describe your Instructional Design strategies.: EXTENDED LEARNING TIME (If MMSD chooses to bring this back to One City's Model) The foundational design decision at One City Elementary School is time. A longer instructional day and a longer school year mean scholars who arrive behind are not asked to catch up on the same clock as scholars who arrive

ahead. This structural feature has positively impacted our academic growth results and is one we most want protected through conversion.

LEARNING EXPEDITIONS AND PROJECT-BASED INSTRUCTION Instruction is organized around extended, standards-aligned expeditions culminating in high-quality work presented to authentic audiences. Scholars revise repeatedly toward a standard of craftsmanship. In grades 6-8, expeditions are deliberately interdisciplinary, integrating art, music, and STEM with core content through units such as Stories of Human Rights, the Harlem Renaissance, and Plastic Pollution. The purpose is not activity; it is the expectation that a nine-year-old can produce work worth showing to the public.

ACADEMIES: ART, MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND STEM Every scholar has access to art, music, physical education, and STEM through a sequenced K-8 Academies structure aligned to Wisconsin standards: foundational general knowledge in K-3, introductory experiences in grades 4-5, and specialty pathways in grades 6-8 that scholars select and attend daily by semester. This is not enrichment offered when time allows. It is scheduled, staffed, standards-aligned, and it satisfies DPI physical education requirements at every grade band.

COMMON INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK Teach Like a Champion gives our educators a shared instructional language and a common set of high-leverage practices, phased across the year: classroom structures first (Strong Start, Tight Transitions, What to Do, Threshold), then engagement and rigor (Cold Call, No Opt Out, Wait Time, Right is Right, Show Me, Stretch It, Ratio, Habits of Discussion, Culture of Error). We assess fidelity rather than mere usage, examining adherence to the steps, consistency across contexts, quality of delivery, and student response through a classroom culture walkthrough rubric.

SMALL GROUPS AND INTENSIVE INTERVENTION Class sizes are kept low, and scholars needing intensive support receive it in very small groups, including the Scholars Academy structure of twelve children with two teachers. Grouping is fluid and driven by assessment data rather than fixed. Scholars falling below the 25th percentile on universal screening are candidates for Tier 2, with diagnostic assessment matching intervention to identified need and a Student

Study Team convening when concerns persist. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION Educators use interim assessment and progress-monitoring data on a set cycle to identify scholars needing intervention, adjust grouping, and evaluate whether instruction is working. One City participates in state assessment and reporting and publicly holds itself to the DPI growth measure. Access to MMSD's data infrastructure and assessment expertise is one concrete gain we anticipate from District authorization.

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING One City staffs instructional coaching deliberately and protects collaboration time within the calendar, including a weekly early-release structure. Coaching runs through practice labs, video study, peer observation of model classrooms, walkthroughs, and analysis of student work. It is also, candidly, an area where a small organization has limits, and where District professional learning capacity would materially deepen what our educators can access. CHARACTER, CULTURE, AND BELONGING Character education and community-building are part of instruction, not a separate program. Our Habits of Character (Compassion, Risk, Integrity, Self-Respect, Persistence) are defined in a grade-by-grade continuum from kindergarten through grade 8 and aligned to CASEL competencies. Daily Crew meetings, held in circle, ensure no child is anonymous.

Restorative practice is primarily proactive; when harm occurs, staff follow a structured process of regulating, relating, reasoning, restoring, and recording, with a published four-level response ladder and re-entry meetings that keep exclusionary discipline rare. TWO-GENERATION INTEGRATION Family programming is scheduled and staffed alongside the instructional program rather than run as an evening add-on, so that participation does not depend on a family having spare capacity. MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS AND SCHOLARS WITH DISABILITIES Multilingual learners receive language development support integrated with content instruction. We serve scholars with disabilities in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their IEPs, with services delivered in inclusive settings wherever possible. We state again that special education capacity is a genuine constraint at our scale and a principal reason we are seeking this partnership.

Describe the Committee's philosophy around student behavior management.: One City believes that behavior is communication, that children learn to regulate themselves in relationship with adults who know them, and that a school's discipline system should teach rather than merely remove. We also believe classrooms must be safe and orderly, and that adults owe every child an environment in which learning is possible. These are not competing commitments. CORE BELIEFS Relationship precedes correction. Every scholar is known well by at least one adult, and small class sizes, daily Crew, and a long day make that true in practice rather than in theory. Expectations are explicit and taught. Scholars are told what is expected, given practice, and given feedback, the same way they are taught to read. Consequences are logical, restorative, and instructive. When something goes wrong, the response focuses on repairing harm, understanding what happened, and building the missing skill. Exclusion is a last resort. Removing a child from instruction rarely teaches that child anything, and it disproportionately harms the children public education has already underserved. One City works to minimize exclusionary discipline and monitors its data by student group. Families are involved early. They hear from us when things are going well, not only when they are going badly.

PRACTICES We teach character development as part of the instructional program, not alongside it. Our Habits of Character – Compassion, Risk, Integrity, Self-Respect, and Persistence – are defined in a grade-by-grade continuum from kindergarten through grade 8, aligned to CASEL competencies, and practiced daily in Crew, which meets in circle so every voice carries equal weight. Classroom practice is anchored in Teach Like a Champion, which gives educators a common language for the proactive moves that prevent most behavior problems: taught routines, tight transitions, clear directions, positive narration, and least-invasive intervention. Leaders assess these with a walkthrough rubric that rates belonging and emotional safety alongside routines. When harm occurs, staff follow a structured five-step response – regulate, relate, reason, restore, and record – that returns a dysregulated scholar to a state in which problem-solving is possible before any consequence is discussed. Responses follow a published four-level ladder, from teacher- to administrator-managed, with

documented parent contact at every level and re-entry meetings that prepare a scholar to rejoin their Crew. Restorative practice at One City is roughly 80 percent proactive; circles, restorative conversations, and mediation are ordinary, not exceptional. Scholars needing more receive it through a tiered system: check-in structures, counseling, and skill groups at Tier 2, and individualized wellness or behavior plans at Tier 3, built by a Student Study Team with the family at the table and coordinated with special education services where an IEP is in place. ATHLETICS One City's athletics program serves scholars in grades 2 through 5, extending organized team sport to an age band where it is rarely offered. Participation is earned and sustained through four expectations: regular attendance; demonstrated Habits of Character rather than repeated behavior incidents; completion of schoolwork; and consistent effort in the classroom. Coaches and teachers review these together. Eligibility is treated as instruction rather than punishment — a scholar at risk of losing it receives notice, a plan, and adult support to regain it, and the family is contacted before eligibility is affected, not after. Scholars with an IEP or 504 plan have these expectations applied consistent with their plans. We review eligibility decisions for disproportionality alongside our other discipline data.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE MMSD BEHAVIOR EDUCATION PLAN One City understands that the Behavior Education Plan is among the District policies that are not waivable, and we are not seeking to waive it. We regard this as an area of genuine philosophical alignment rather than a compliance obligation: the BEP's emphasis on instruction over exclusion, on restorative response, and on addressing disproportionality is consistent with how One City already works. We propose mapping our practice against the BEP in detail during consultation, identifying every point of difference, and adopting District practice where it is stronger. We would also expect to submit our discipline data, including exclusionary discipline and any restraint or seclusion reporting, disaggregated by student group, as part of the Original Proposal, and to be held to the same standard as every other MMSD school.

ACCOUNTABILITY One City tracks behavior incidents, exclusionary discipline, and attendance by student

group, reviews the data on a regular cycle with school leadership, student services, and the Governance Council, and acts when disparities appear. We would welcome this being an explicit accountability provision in the charter contract.

Describe any partnerships that the school expects to pursue in the first few operating years of the contract.: THE MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
The most important partnership One City Elementary School expects to pursue is with the District itself. We are seeking substantive collaboration on special

education and student services, professional learning, assessment and data infrastructure, transportation, nutrition, and business services. We also want the relationship to run in both directions: One City would host District educators, share what our extended-day and early-literacy work has produced, and treat the charter as a working laboratory the District can learn from rather than a school it merely oversees. HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH UW–Madison Wisconsin Center for Education Research/WEC: independent longitudinal evaluation of the One City model since 2019, most recently reported in July 2025. We intend to continue independent external evaluation under District authorization. UW–Madison Schools of Education and Nursing, Edgewood University, Madison College, and WAICU: preparation and clinical placement of teacher candidates, early childhood educators, and nursing students, who deliver health education in classrooms and workshops for families. These partnerships give One City a pipeline into the profession and partner institutions a high-need clinical setting. University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI): One City operates the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, providing structured literacy training to educators across the region. Marquette University BLEST Hub, City Forward Collective, Pahara, and the Wisconsin Charter Schools Association: sector networks through which One City shares practice with educators statewide and beyond. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION EL Education: One City Elementary School is an EL Education affiliate school, with associated coaching, professional development, and network membership. Project Read AI: an early-literacy initiative One City helped develop that now reaches more than five thousand Wisconsin classrooms and educators well beyond the state. COMMUNITY, FAMILY, AND THE SCHOLAR ECOSYSTEM One City

organizes community partners around scholars rather than assembling them ad hoc. Each is matched to a defined need in the school day, the family, or the pathway beyond eighth grade. Health and wellness: Access Community Health Centers and Combat Blindness International provide screening and care access for scholars whose families face barriers to both. Mentoring and youth development: Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County, whose Taft Street club adjoins our Fisher Street site and serves overlapping families; Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County; Root 2 Rise, which places older students of color as tutor-mentors in under-resourced schools and opens pathways into education careers; and the Madison Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi. Literacy and books: Madison Reading Project and United Way of Dane County's Read Dane, extending structured literacy work into homes. Arts and athletics: Overture Center, Seeding Equity, Roots and Wings, UW Athletics, First Tee, and the Madison Area Independent Sports League, in which our fifth-grade scholars compete. Together, these make arts and sport part of the program rather than a privilege of family means. Food and basic needs: Second Harvest Foodbank and Goodman Community Center, including Thanksgiving baskets. Family engagement: FAST (Families and Schools Together), an evidence-based program One City runs with enrolled families. Housing, wealth-building, and financial capability: Own It partners with One City to open home ownership to our families; 32 families have purchased homes to date with a \$19,000 down-payment grant. Summit Credit Union operates a branch inside a One City building. We regard housing stability as an educational intervention rather than a service adjacent to one, because a child who moves less learns more.

PHILANTHROPIC AND FUNDING PARTNERS Of roughly \$100 million in total revenue since One City's founding in 2014, approximately \$57 million has come from 2,800 donors, 99 percent of them from Dane County. That is worth stating plainly: this school was built by this community. Support has also come from national and local philanthropy, including Ascendium Philanthropy, the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation, the Charter School Growth Fund, and the Madison Community Foundation, and from Wisconsin DPI charter school startup and

implementation grants. Under District authorization, One City would continue raising philanthropic support for programming beyond the base educational program, and would work with the District to establish how those funds are handled and reported.

FORMALIZATION Existing partnerships are governed by agreements and memoranda of understanding, which we will inventory and submit with the Original Proposal. Some may require review, amendment, or novation under District authorization, and we want District counsel and Business Services engaged early in that review.

Above and beyond the competencies the District hires staff and administration for, are there additional competencies that the proposed school would need in the hiring process? Retention or the staff evaluation process?: ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES IN HIRING Character development and behavior management: This is the competency we would most want the District to understand; it is the essence of how One City manages a school. Our behavior program is not a compliance system layered on top of instruction; it is character development, taught explicitly and modeled by adults. Educators must hold a high behavioral bar and a warm relationship at once, and treat a difficult moment with a child as an occasion to build a skill rather than assign a consequence. One City uses Teach Like a Champion, developed by Doug Lemov, as the shared vocabulary for this work: warmth paired with high expectations, positive framing, consistent routines, and emotional constancy. Candidates should expect to be trained, observed, and coached on these techniques, and our leaders must model them: staff culture and scholar culture are the same culture. Structured literacy expertise: Educators must deliver explicit, systematic, evidence-aligned literacy instruction. It is the core of our instructional program and the basis of our statewide reputation. Project-based and expeditionary instruction: Educators must plan and lead extended, standards-aligned expeditions culminating in high-quality public work, a craft distinct from delivering a scripted sequence. Skill in family partnership: Educators must work directly with families in a two-generation model, including home visits, family learning sessions, and sustained two-way communication. Cultural competence and a demonstrated belief in the capability of every child: Most One City scholars are children of color from households public education has historically underserved; educators who do not hold high

expectations for them cannot succeed here. Comfort with coaching and data. Educators are observed, coached, and expected to adjust practice based on evidence, which is frequent and normal here. A NOTE ON THE EXTENDED DAY AND YEAR Should One City return to a longer school day and year, we would need MMSD's willingness and capacity to structure and staff it, with compensation implications scoped early with Human Resources and Business Services. It is a staffing question before a calendar question.

RECRUITMENT AND DIVERSITY One City has deliberately built a staff that reflects the scholars it serves, and we regard that as a competency question as much as one of representation. As of July 1, 2026, One City employs 89 team members. Fifty-four, or 60.7%, are people of color: 29.2% Black or African American, 14.6% Hispanic or Latino, 14.6% two or more races, and 2.2% Asian, with 38.2% White. Two-thirds are women and 30% are men, a share of men, and particularly men of color, well above what is typical in early childhood and elementary settings. Ages range from 19 to 68, median 37, so early-career educators work beside veterans. We would want to continue targeted recruitment with District Human Resources and our higher education partners, and the charter contract to preserve One City's ability to recruit into its own pipeline. We raise this as an asset the partnership gains rather than an accommodation it makes: the relationships and reputation One City has built among educators of color in Dane County are something we would bring into the District. RETENTION Retention rests on induction into the instructional model, sustained coaching, protected collaboration time, and a genuine voice for educators in school decisions, including Governance Council seats. DPI's 2024-25 ESEA monitoring review commended One City for a teacher retention rate approaching 96% over recent years. We also report the harder number: staff retention at One City Preparatory Academy was 91% in 2023-24 and 88% in 2024-25, and fell to 55% in 2025-26, a year of major budget and calendar change. Under District authorization, educators would gain District compensation, benefits, and career pathways, which we expect to strengthen retention rather than weaken it. EVALUATION One City uses DPI's educator evaluation (Danielson) framework for teachers and

leaders and our own model for other positions, with mid-year and end-of-year reviews. Our CEO meets with 100% of staff each fall to hear what is working and what needs to change, and again in the spring as we plan the next year. We would ask that evaluation criteria reflect our education model so staff are assessed on the work they are asked to do. THE EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION The transition of current One City Elementary School staff to District employment is the most operationally significant unresolved issue in this conversion, and the one our educators care about most. It requires early, specific work with MMSD Human Resources on which positions transfer, licensure verification and gaps, compensation under the extended calendar if it is retained, One City's child care discount for staff, and the sequence and timing of communication.

**Are there any initial
waivers that the Charter
School Committee
believes they will need
at this time?:**

If a waiver is needed, Yes. One City anticipates requesting a limited set of
please state the item waivers, and we would rather describe the shape of
being waived and the that request now than have the District discover it later.

reason.: THE PRINCIPLE WE ARE APPLYING We are asking for latitude only where a District policy would prevent us from delivering the specific things families chose this school for, and where that latitude is tied to a stated element of the mission. We are not asking for general independence, and we are not asking to be governed differently for its own sake. Where District practice is stronger than ours, we want to adopt it. We will scope every request below in consultation with Teaching and Learning, Human Resources, and Business Services, and submit the final list with the Original Proposal. ONE YEAR VS. TWO YEAR VETTING PROCESS MMSD's timeline for considering a charter school application and opening the school is two years. Because One City is an existing school and does not need both a planning and implementation year, we ask the Board of Education to consider our application to start as an MMSD charter in 2027-28 instead of 2028-29. TIME: CALENDAR AND SCHOOL DAY The most significant request concerns time. Additional instructional time is the structural feature

most responsible for One City's growth results for scholars furthest from grade level. We would seek authority to operate an extended instructional year and an extended day, together with a weekly early-release structure that protects educator collaboration. We disclose plainly that One City reduced both the extended day and the extended year for 2026–27 because philanthropic funding could not sustain them. That reduction is itself part of our argument for conversion. What we are seeking is not permission to do something unusual today, but authority to restore what the model requires once the funding structure is stable.

STAFFING AND SCHEDULING The Scholars Academy model places twelve scholars with two teachers, and instructional coaching is staffed deliberately rather than absorbed into administrative roles. Both require a non-standard staffing configuration. We would seek latitude on staffing and scheduling sufficient to sustain them, within the employment framework that instrumentality status establishes.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION One City would seek to continue EL Education's school model and its structured literacy practice where these differ from District-adopted resources. We note that MMSD adopted EL Education across 31 elementary schools following One City's pilot, so the gap here may prove narrower than a waiver request implies. We would want that examined before assuming a waiver is needed at all.

STUDENT SERVICES AND CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMMING Three smaller requests support programs that are part of how scholars experience this school: the athletics program serving grades 2 through 5 as an extension of physical education; the One City Tutoring Program in reading and mathematics, retained as it currently operates; and the continued service of Hobbs, our therapy dog, as a member of the Student Services team.

NUTRITION One City would seek to continue its Healthy Meals Program. We recognize that federal requirements, rather than District policy, govern school nutrition, and we want the District to tell us which elements are genuinely waivable before we submit a formal request.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK PROVISIONS Certain handbook provisions on posting, transfer, calendar, preparation time, and professional development obligations may materially impede the model. We can't

specify these responsibly without Human Resources at the table, and we would rather scope them jointly than propose them unilaterally. DEMONSTRATION PUBLIC SCHOOL STATUS One City would seek to preserve its role as a demonstration school whose practice is open to other educators. This is the request we would most want the District to see as mutual rather than exceptional. WHAT WE ARE NOT SEEKING One City is not seeking waivers of Policy 4400; Policies 4502 B and C, the Behavior Education Plan; the religious holiday policy; part-time student contracts; the course credit process; restraint and seclusion requirements; or child abuse reporting requirements. One City is not seeking a waiver of the District's ELL Plan, Advanced Learner Plan, or Special Education Plan. We want to be explicit about the Behavior Education Plan in particular, because our Character Development Plan might be mistaken for a substitute. It is not. It is how One City implements the commitments the BEP expresses: instruction over exclusion, restorative response, and attention to disproportionality. We intend to map it against the BEP during consultation and adopt District practice wherever District practice is stronger.

Using the funding formula set forth by Board of Education Policy 10000, and in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Business or his/her designee, provide a budget for the first year of operation.: One City wishes to be straightforward with the District about the status of this response. Policy 10000 requires that the first-year budget be developed in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Business or a designee. That consultation has not yet occurred. We are requesting it as an early priority, and we are treating the figures below as a framework to be replaced by a jointly developed budget, in MMSD's budget format, rather than as a proposal to be evaluated on its numbers. ONE CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S APPROVED SY2026–27 OPERATING BUDGET Enrollment – 328 planned in grades 4K to 5, but budgeted at 279 (85 percent) for revenue purposes, with expenses budgeted at full enrollment. Revenue – Per-pupil charter payments, \$3,886,202 (state base of \$12,797 per pupil). Federal entitlements: \$313,557. Other government funding and grants: \$298,284. DPI charter implementation and summer funding: \$156,100. Summer school: \$105,191. Before- and after-school fees: \$143,277. Activity and other fees: \$118,285. One-time stabilization grant, \$1,500,000. Philanthropic fundraising: \$961,697. Total

projected revenue: \$7,482,592. Expenditures – Personnel salaries and benefits: \$5,296,295 (25 classroom FTE plus school leadership and support). Direct student costs: \$1,008,993. Occupancy: \$493,155. Office: \$269,741. General and business: \$231,582. Athletics: \$53,864. Parent engagement: \$25,142. Contingency: \$72,998. Total projected expenses: \$7,451,770. Projected surplus: \$30,822.

THE NUMBER THAT MATTERS MOST One City Elementary School spends approximately \$22,719 per scholar and receives approximately \$14,947 per scholar in public revenue. The difference of roughly \$7,772 per scholar, about \$2.5 million annually, is closed entirely by philanthropy. In SY2026–27, the gap was closed by a one-time \$1.5 million stabilization grant and \$961,697 in fundraising. Neither recurs. Our own five-year forecast projects annual deficits of approximately \$2.1 to \$2.2 million beginning in SY2027–28.

WHAT WE EXPECT TO CHANGE UNDER INSTRUMENTALITY STATUS Three categories require joint work before this budget means anything.

1. Central administration: The personnel line currently carries allocated shares of organization-level positions, including the CEO, CFO, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief of Staff, totaling approximately \$631,000. Under instrumentality status, some of these functions would be provided centrally by the District, some would remain with One City Schools, Inc. and fall outside the school budget, and some would not carry over at all. Drawing that line is the single largest budget question.
2. Program elements beyond the base educational program: The budget includes roughly \$855,000 in costs One City categorizes as innovation and demonstration work, including the Scholars Academy Tier-2 intervention model, EL Education school-wide implementation, two-generation family engagement, a healthy meals program, extended learning academies, school uniforms, and a childcare discount for staff. Some of these fit within a District school budget, some would continue to be philanthropically funded by One City Schools, Inc., and each needs a decision.
3. Compensation and services: Our current average lead teacher salary is \$69,206. Moving to District compensation structures changes the personnel line materially, and we would want that quantified early. So

too the treatment of transportation, which One City does not currently provide, and food service, special education, and student services, currently budgeted at a full cost of \$582,425. **WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR** We request a working session with Business Services to obtain the District's budget template and the Policy 10000 per-pupil allocation methodology, and to model this school inside the District's structure together. We will provide full access to our budget workbook, three years of audited financial statements, and our five-year forecast. We would rather the District see all of it now than discover any of it later.

What is the proposed location for the school PROPOSED LOCATION One City Schools Pleasant T. Rowland Campus, [1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713](#). One City Elementary School operates here and **(specific address, if available, otherwise a description of the town and any unique features of desired locations)?:** proposes to remain. The building is a substantially renovated former commercial facility of approximately 157,000 square feet on 13.5 acres, purpose-fitted for school use, with classrooms, specialist and enrichment spaces, administrative areas, food service, and support space. It sits in South Madison, immediately adjacent to the neighborhoods it serves; a majority of our families live and work near this school. **CAPACITY** Fully renovated, the Rowland Campus can accommodate approximately 800 scholars. With the balance of that work completed, it accommodates the projected full enrollment of both One City Elementary School and One City Preparatory Academy, with room remaining. One City Elementary School's design capacity is 328 scholars against a budgeted enrollment of 280. That figure includes the 4K cohort housed at 2012 Fisher Street, so the Rowland Campus carries fewer than 328 elementary scholars at full enrollment. One City is not proposing enrollment growth beyond existing design capacity, and no site beyond those named here is contemplated. We will provide a room-by-room allocation and the remaining renovation scope, schedule, cost, and funding plan on request, and would want responsibility for that work addressed explicitly in the charter contract rather than left to assumption. **SHARED CAMPUS** One City Preparatory Academy occupies dedicated middle-grades space in the same building and is the subject of a parallel application, so capacity verification for either school must account for the other. The room-by-room allocation will identify which spaces are dedicated to

each and which are shared, letting the District evaluate each charter on its own terms. OWNERSHIP AND ENCUMBRANCES The facility is owned by One City Schools affiliates: One City Broadway LLC holds the building and One City Broadway South LLC the grounds. Ownership is currently subject to New Markets Tax Credit financing, which carries compliance and transfer conditions. Those credits reach maturity in three years (March 9, 2029), when One City will own the property free and clear, it becomes a \$35 million asset. Any change in ownership or occupancy structure before then must be examined against the NMTC terms. One City recognizes that a District-chartered school occupying a building held by an affiliate of the operator raises legitimate questions about arm's-length dealing and public funds. We want those questions asked and answered thoroughly rather than assumed away. One City is prepared to obtain an independent fair-market rent opinion, to accept whatever lease terms District counsel and Business Services determine appropriate, to open its property books to District review, and to discuss sale to the District if the Board prefers. JURISDICTION — STATED DIRECTLY The Rowland Campus sits at the municipal boundary between Madison and Monona, and One City understands the District must determine the jurisdiction and school district of record for this parcel before a charter can be executed. We raise this ourselves, at the first opportunity, because we would rather the Board hear it from us than discover it in review. One City has no fixed position on how this is resolved. We see several paths and defer to the District on each: confirmation that the parcel falls within MMSD boundaries; a boundary or detachment process with the affected districts and municipalities; a structure in which the District leases or acquires the facility notwithstanding its location; or, if none proves workable, another South Madison site within District boundaries. One City would participate in good faith in whichever path the District chooses, and asks that it be taken up early in consultation, since it bears on nearly every other term of the contract. WHAT WE WOULD ASK THE DISTRICT TO WEIGH The scholars enrolled at One City Elementary School are, in the great majority, MMSD residents. The building was renovated for them, substantially with philanthropic and DPI grant

funds raised for that purpose; it is in the neighborhood they live in and where they go to school today. Moving them would be a real cost to real children. We ask only that this be weighed alongside the legal and policy considerations the Board must resolve on its own terms. SECOND SITE — [2012 FISHER STREET](#) One City also owns a facility at [2012 Fisher Street, Madison, WI 53713](#), approximately 10,700 square feet on roughly one acre, carrying a balance held by Summit Credit Union. It houses One City Preschool and is where One City Elementary School's 4K program will be delivered. This site is within MMSD boundaries. Because 4K instruction is part of this charter, we ask that Fisher Street be named in the contract as an approved instructional location alongside the Rowland Campus, with District 4K requirements, licensing, and funding treatment applied from day one.

If there is a specific address, verify that the location will hold the number of students expected to be enrolled when at capacity.: VERIFICATION Yes. One City Elementary School's design capacity is 328 scholars, and the facilities named in the preceding field hold that number. HOW CAPACITY IS CALCULATED The school runs two sections at every grade level: 4K at 20 scholars per section and kindergarten through grade 5 at 24 per section. That produces 40 4K seats, delivered at 2012 Fisher Street, and 288 seats in kindergarten through grade 5, delivered at the Pleasant T. Rowland Leadership Campus at 1707 W. Broadway. The Rowland Campus therefore needs to hold 288 elementary scholars at full enrollment, not 328. Against a budgeted enrollment of 280, both sites operate with headroom at every grade. No grade level is projected to exceed its two-section configuration during the five-year enrollment plan. SPACE BEYOND CLASSROOMS Capacity is not only a seat count. In addition to general classrooms, the Rowland Campus provides dedicated space for the Scholars Academy small-group model, which pairs twelve scholars with two teachers; specialist and enrichment instruction across art, music, physical education, and STEM; student services and intervention space; and family programming. A conventional elementary building of comparable enrollment would not accommodate this range of use. The configuration is what makes the model possible rather than aspirational. ACCOUNTING FOR THE SHARED CAMPUS Because One City

Preparatory Academy occupies dedicated middle-grades space in the same building, the 288 figure is net of space allocated to OCPA. The room-by-room allocation described in the preceding field will show this explicitly, so the District can verify each school's capacity without double-counting shared space. Neither school's capacity claim depends on space the other is using. DOCUMENTATION TO BE PROVIDED One City will provide the District with the current certificate of occupancy and permitted occupant load for both buildings; floor plans with room-by-room capacity; the most recent fire, health, and safety inspection reports; documentation of accessibility compliance; and the capacity calculation methodology summarized above. We will assemble this package for the Original Proposal and can provide the occupancy certificates and capacity calculation earlier on request. AN OPEN INVITATION One City invites District facilities staff to inspect either building at any point during the application and decision-making period, announced or otherwise. We would rather the District verify this itself than take our word for it. A capacity claim on paper is worth less than a walk-through, and we would welcome one. HEADROOM One City is not proposing enrollment growth as part of this conversion, and the five-year enrollment plan operates entirely within existing capacity, so no expansion, construction, or additional site is contemplated. We note only that the Rowland Campus has substantial unused capacity, described in the preceding field, so if the District later identified a need in South Madison that One City could help meet, the constraint would be operating resources rather than square footage. CONDITIONAL NOTE This verification is subject to resolution of the jurisdictional question described in the preceding field. If the District determines that an alternative site within its boundaries is required, One City would work with District facilities staff to identify a South Madison location of comparable capacity and character, and would expect the capacity analysis to be redone for that site.

To: Joe Gothard <jgothard@madison.k12.wi.us>, Carlettra Stanford <cstanford@madison.k12.wi.us>, Bob Soldner <rasoldner@madison.k12.wi.us>

Just sharing the full application.

Dr. TJ McCray

Deputy Superintendent

Madison Metropolitan School District

To schedule, please reach out to Melissa

Loiselle mloiselle@madison.k12.wi.us

TRULY HUMAN NOTICE: Getting this email out of normal working hours? I work at a digitally-enhanced pace, so I am sending you this email at a time that works for me. Please do me a favor and respond when it's convenient for you!

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <noreply@madisonk12wi.us.myenotice.com>

Date: Fri, Aug 14, 2026 at 2:35 PM

Subject: Submission ID 58505 Received for Appendix A: Initial Application Form

To: <tjmccray@madison.k12.wi.us>



You've got a new form submission!

Appendix A: Initial Application Form

Submission Date: 8/14/2026 2:35 PM

Name of Organization: One City Schools, Inc.

Year Founded: 2014

Name of Primary
Applicant - First Name: Kaleem

Name of Primary
Applicant - Last Name: Caire

Telephone: 6085312128

Email Address: kaleem@onecityschools.org

**Do you currently
operate a school?:** Yes

Is your school:: Conversion

**If you selected
conversion, what type of
conversion school
would you propose?:** Converting from one authorizer to another

**Is your charter school a
virtual school?:** No

**Where exactly would the
school be located?:** 1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713 (technically in
Monona but on the border of Madison/Monona.

**What academic school
year would the school
first open?:** 2028-2029

**Are you applying for a
charter with any other
authorizers this year?:** Yes

**List the authorizer(s)
you are applying with.:**

The University of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) first authorized One City Elementary School in 2018 and reauthorized it in 2023 for another five years, through the end of the 2027-28 school year. We recently submitted an application to the OEO to reauthorize our middle school, One City Preparatory Academy. This school was first authorized in 2022-23, and its charter contract ends on June 30, 2027. We applied to extend the contract for another five years: from 2027-28 through 2031-32. However, the Director of the OEO knows we are applying with MMSD to have our schools authorized by you and supports this. The OEO's deadline to approve our reauthorization application is April 30, 2027, while MMSD's deadline is March 30, 2027. So MMSD's decision would come first. If MMSD approves authorizing both of our charter schools, then OEO would not proceed with making a decision on approving our contract with them.

**Have you applied for
authorization of this
concept to any
authorizer before?:** Yes

**Describe the current
charter School Proposal** One City Schools, Inc. has convened a Charter School Proposal Committee to lead the conversion of One City

Committee (Proposal Development Team and/or Planning Group) and any supporting partners.: Elementary School from authorization by the Universities of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity to authorization by the Madison Metropolitan School District Board of Education. The Committee is chaired by Kaleem Caire, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of One City Schools, Inc. COMMITTEE MEMBERS Kaleem Caire: Founder and Chief Executive Officer, One City Schools, Inc., Committee Chair. Founded One City in 2014 and has led the organization through the authorization and opening of One City Preschool, One City Elementary School, and One City Preparatory Academy. Gail Wiseman: Chief of Staff, External Relations, and Interim Chief People Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Lead coordinator for the application and primary staff liaison to the District. Scott Haumerson: Chief Financial Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Maria Dyslin: Chief Academic Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Carl Hampton: VP of Government Relations and Policy, One City Schools, Inc. Natalia Navarro: Chief Operating Officer, One City Schools, Inc. Hilary Brandt: Director/Principal, One City Elementary School. James Howard: Chair, One City Schools, Inc. Board of Directors. Monica George: Parent of a currently enrolled One City Elementary School scholar who is a resident of the Madison Metropolitan School District. Ciera Carey: Classroom teacher, One City Elementary School. Current resumes for each Committee member are being compiled and will be submitted with the Original Proposal. SUPPORTING PARTNERS AND DISCLOSED AFFILIATIONS One City discloses the following affiliated entities to ensure the District has a complete picture of the organization from the outset: One City Schools Foundation, a 501(c)(3) that raises funds in support of the schools; One City Advocates, Inc., a 501(c)(4) that engages in public policy advocacy and is legally and operationally separate from school operations; and the One City Broadway property entities, which own and manage the Pleasant T. Rowland Campus facility and 13.5 acres of grounds. If MMSD's Board authorizes One City Elementary School as an instrumentality charter school, One City will structure the relationships among these entities as District counsel deems appropriate, including a clear separation of advocacy activity from the operation of a District school. Educational and community partners

supporting the school include: EL Education (for K-8 only) and Anji Play Inc. (for 4K only), whose curricula One City Elementary School has implemented as an affiliate school of each entity; the Wisconsin Center for Education Research and the UW Evaluation Collaborative at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, which have conducted an independent longitudinal evaluation of One City since 2019 and issued its most recent report in July 2025; the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Edgewood College, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Madison College, with whom One City partners to prepare teachers, early childhood educators, paraprofessionals, and nursing students; the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) and Project Read for teacher and tutor training, and scholar literacy development; Root To Rise and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County for in-school mentoring; Families and Schools Together (FAST) for family engagement; Own It, Inc., a resource for homeownership and wealth-building education for our One City families and staff; and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County, whose Taft Street club adjoins One City's Fisher Street site. One City intends for the Madison Metropolitan School District to become the Committee's most important partner in this process. We are requesting the full allocation of consultative hours available under Policy 10000, and we will participate in every consultation session the District offers.

Statement of proposed school Propose: One City Elementary School already exists. It has served Madison children since 2018 as a tuition-free public charter school authorized by the Universities of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity. We are not proposing a new school, but a change in who authorizes, oversees, and stands behind the school our families already chose. We propose this conversion because One City and the Madison Metropolitan School District serve the same children and share a mission, and because partnering, rather than competing or being seen to compete, better serves our scholars, families, and community. In 2025-26, 94% of One City's scholars were children of color, 70% lived in economically disadvantaged households, and 81% lived within MMSD boundaries (Source: 2025 Third Friday of September Pupil Count and

PowerSchool). The Office of Educational Opportunity opened a door when no other was open and gave our founding families a school that would not otherwise exist. That partnership did exactly what it was created to do. What has changed is the opportunity before us: a proven school, a shared mission, and a District ready to build together. Authorization by MMSD would place our scholars fully inside the system their neighbors attend, give them the District's capacity a few miles away, and advance our founders' dream of working with MMSD to improve outcomes for all Madison students. We have always wanted to partner with MMSD rather than sit adjacent to it. Instrumentality status would make One City Elementary unambiguously a Madison public school: operated in partnership with One City Schools, Inc., accountable to the Madison Board of Education, staffed by District employees, and collaboratively integrated into District special education, student services, transportation, nutrition, data, and professional learning infrastructure. It would also give MMSD the practices and partnerships that have made One City Elementary and Preparatory Academy leaders in academic growth in Wisconsin and Dane County, with student populations that have not traditionally achieved such outcomes. This is a win for MMSD, One City, and the City of Madison.

HOW THE SCHOOL DIFFERS FROM EXISTING DISTRICT SCHOOLS

One City Elementary brings the District four things it does not operate at scale. First, a two-generation model. One City works closely with parents and extends wraparound support to our scholars' families. Family programming, adult learning, and household support are built into the school, not bolted onto it. Second, substantially more instructional time. One City Elementary operates a longer instructional day and school year than the traditional calendar, the single most underutilized best practice in American public education, used for years with the students for whom it matters most. We have had to suspend it beginning in 2026-27 due to resource constraints; MMSD could bring it back if the desire and resources are there. Third, a Community Ecosystem Network. One City coordinates academic, health, enrichment, mentoring, business, and civic partners around each scholar as a designed system, not a set of referrals. MMSD would gain our world-

class tutoring and tutor training model, which aligns fully with the literacy model our teachers use daily, our Anji Play model in 4K, and our integrated partnerships and advocacy support. Fourth, an early-literacy practice reaching far beyond our own building. Through Project Read AI and the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, One City supports thousands of classrooms and educators across Wisconsin, the Midwest, and beyond. That is District-scale capacity within a small charter school. HISTORY WITH AUTHORIZERS The Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) first authorized One City in 2018 and reauthorized it for five years in 2023. One City Preparatory Academy was authorized in 2022 and is undergoing reauthorization, with a decision expected in April 2027. Before that, One City's leadership met with MMSD Superintendent Jennifer Cheatham, but we didn't have sufficient support to advance our proposal for an MMSD-authorized charter. We are returning because circumstances, leadership, evidence, and relationships have changed, and because Superintendent Gothard and Mr. Caire have concluded that partnership serves Madison's children better than parallel operation. The OEO is aware of and supportive of One City pursuing charter school status with MMSD. WHAT ONE CITY AND MADISON GAIN, STATED PLAINLY It would be less than candid to call this a one-way benefit. One City would gain special education and student services capacity we cannot build alone; back-office, transportation, and nutrition infrastructure; and a funding structure that lets our leadership focus on instruction rather than raising millions a year to keep the doors open. Madison would also gain some measure of property tax relief, with MMSD recapturing state and federal per-pupil aid for more than 350 children.

Statement of proposed school Vision: VISION One City Elementary School exists so that every child who walks through its doors leaves fifth grade able to read, write, and reason, and to see themselves as capable people with a claim on the future. We believe children rise to the expectations adults hold for them, that families are partners rather than audiences, and that a school is strongest when it is woven into its community. MISSION STATEMENT (MEASURABLE) One City Schools' mission is to cultivate future leaders for our community and the world, while seeding a new model of public education

that ensures children and teens are on track to succeed in a college- or career-preparatory program. One City Elementary School carries out that mission in grades 4K through 5 and holds itself to three measurable commitments: (1) that our scholars achieve annual academic growth that places the school among Wisconsin's highest-growth elementary schools; (2) that the gap between our scholars' grade-level proficiency and the statewide average narrows year over year; and (3) that every scholar's family is a participating partner in their learning. Each is verifiable: growth against the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Report Card growth percentile; proficiency using Forward Exam and interim assessment results, disaggregated by student group; and family partnership, measured by participation data. We propose these as the substance of the accountability provisions in a charter contract and welcome the District setting the bar.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY Our philosophy rests on four commitments: Children need more time on task than the traditional calendar provides, so we have extended the school day and year (until 2026-27 due to resource constraints); Children learn most durably when learning is purposeful, so instruction is organized around extended, standards-aligned learning expeditions that culminate in real work for real audiences; Early literacy is not one subject among many but the gateway to every other subject, so we teach reading using structured, evidence-aligned methods, and we intervene early and intensively through fifth grade; and And children do not learn well when the adults around them are struggling, so we work directly with families and households.

RESEARCH BASE The model draws on the science of reading and the structured literacy research underpinning the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) approach, for which One City operates the Upper Midwest Training Hub; on the extended learning time literature showing gains concentrated among students furthest from grade level; on EL Education's evidence base for project-based, standards-aligned learning expeditions; on Teach Like A Champion's classroom management and character development standards; on an engaging STEM program built on external partnerships; a world-class tutoring program in reading and mathematics;

and on two-generation intervention research in early childhood and family engagement, including the FAST family engagement model. One City's own model has been the subject of an independent longitudinal study by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Education Research and UW Evaluation Collaborative. Its July 2025 report, based on interviews with scholars and parents conducted between March 2024 and January 2025, is available now and will be submitted with the Original Proposal. We are not asking the District to take our word for the model; we are asking it to review the independent evaluation. EVIDENCE THE MODEL WORKS, AND WHERE IT DOES NOT YET One City Elementary School has earned two consecutive Exceeds Expectations ratings on the DPI School Report Card. Its academic growth places it near the 76th percentile among all Wisconsin elementary schools, with a student body of more than 90 percent children of color. We also want to name the harder part of the record ourselves. Single-year proficiency rates remain well below state averages. We do not explain that away, and we would not want the Board to hear it first from someone else. Five conditions bear on it: (a) our scholars' academic starting point when they enroll; (b) attendance and tardiness rates, shaped in part by our inability to provide transportation for families who cannot; (c) high rates of family mobility; (d) difficulty retaining our most experienced educators, who are regularly outcompeted on pay and benefits by neighboring districts; and (e) a revenue structure that requires us to raise roughly \$5 million each year, much of it during the school year, which prevents the kind of upfront investment a school needs to make before students arrive. We raise these not as explanations but because three of them are precisely what District authorization would address. MMSD already provides transportation. District compensation and benefits would let us compete for the educators we currently lose and give MMSD access to the highly effective educators we currently employ.

Proposed School NAME OF SCHOOL One City Elementary School. We

Logistics: propose retaining the name families and the community know, subject to any naming convention the District requires. YEARS OF OPERATION One City Elementary School has operated continuously since 2018 under authorization from the Universities of

Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity. One City requests a five-year initial charter term as an instrumentality charter school of MMSD, preferably commencing in 2027-2028. Because this is a conversion of an operating school rather than a start-up, no planning year is needed. Transition work, including authorizer transition, employment transition, and systems integration, would be completed in the year before the first chartered year, with District staff.

GRADES SERVED Four-year-old kindergarten (4K) through grade 5. **PROJECTED ENROLLMENT:** One City Elementary School budgets enrollment at two levels. At full projection, the level at which we budget expenses, the school enrolls 40 scholars in 4K and 48 in each of grades K through 5, a total of 328. At 85 percent of projection, the level at which we budget revenue, it enrolls 34 in 4K and 41 in each of grades K through 5, a total of 280. We budget revenue conservatively and staff to the lower figure while planning expenses at full enrollment, so the school absorbs scholar mobility and any lag between projected and counted enrollment.

WHY THE TWO FIGURES DIFFER, AND WHY DISTRICT AUTHORIZATION CHANGES IT As an independent charter school, One City commits to staffing and most other costs before the year begins but receives state aid in four payments tied to different enrollment figures: September on enrollment projected to the Department of Public Instruction just after opening, December on the third-Friday-of-September count, and February and June on the second-Friday-of-January count. When projections exceed the actual count, the state recovers the difference from the following payment. The practical effect is that a school our size bears the full risk of enrollment variation after the costs are committed. That is why we budget two figures rather than one, and it is one of the more consequential differences District authorization would make: One City would plan enrollment on the same basis as every other MMSD school.

LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR During 2025-26, One City Elementary operated a school year from September 1 to the third Friday in July and a school day from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with fee-based programming from 7:00 to 7:50 a.m. and 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Beginning in 2026-27, the school year runs September 1, 2026 to June 11, 2027, and

the school day 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with no early-release days. Fee-based programming continues, one hour before school and two hours after. We want MMSD to understand why. The extended day and year were funded entirely by philanthropy and were not sustainable for us to carry alone, so we reduced them to a length comparable to most Wisconsin public schools. This is a concrete example of what the current funding structure asks One City to give up, and one reason we seek District authorization. We still regard extended learning time as valuable, particularly for scholars furthest from grade level, and would welcome restoring it if MMSD sees value in it. We can also deliver a high-quality program within a standard calendar. We raise it now because it is a genuine design question for the partnership and an early agenda item with District leadership.

FACILITY

One City Elementary operates across two owned facilities in South Madison. Grades K through 5 are housed at the Pleasant T. Rowland Campus, 1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713, a 157,000-square-foot building on 13.5 acres, owned outright with no lease. The property carries New Markets Tax Credit obligations, for which One City makes annual contributions escrowed in accounts maintained to cover those payments. The school's public charter 4K program is housed at 2012 Fisher Street, Madison, WI 53713, a 10,700-square-foot facility on approximately one acre adjacent to the Taft Street Boys and Girls Club. One City also owns this property, subject to a modest remaining balance owed to Summit Credit Union. Ownership structure for both is detailed in the Facility section.

PRESCHOOL

For clarity: One City Preschool, a separate nonprofit, tuition-based program for children from infancy through age four, is operated by One City Schools, Inc. and is not part of this charter application. It would remain outside the charter, with its relationship to the school documented in the charter contract. We are also looking to relocate it within or near South Madison: the neighborhood's child population is declining, and the facility is old, needing renovation that would cost more long term than purchasing a newer building. A \$50,000 Madison Community Foundation grant in January 2025 funded a siting feasibility study, which we completed and presented to our Board in June 2025.

How will your school ONE CITY AS A DEMONSTRATION PUBLIC SCHOOL
increase educational, One City Elementary School was designed from the
equity, incubate outset as a demonstration public school. The
innovations, and/or commitment was embedded in our founding
increase the use of documents in 2014, before we enrolled a single
underutilized best scholar. The model works like a teaching hospital:
educational practices?: innovations are developed and piloted in real
classrooms, documented through research
partnerships with UW-Madison, and shared with other
schools at no cost. A small school can do this in ways a
large district cannot. We can design, test, and refine an
approach within a single school year, and abandon one
that does not work without disrupting thirty schools.
What we cannot do alone is scale a proven practice.
That takes a district. MMSD has already scaled one of
ours. INCREASING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY In 2025-
26, 94 percent of One City scholars were children of
color, 70 percent lived in economically disadvantaged
households, and 17 percent received special education
services. This is not incidental to the design; it is the
design. Enrollment is open and tuition-free, and when
applications exceed seats, admission is by blind lottery.
We deliberately recruit in South Madison
neighborhoods where families have had the fewest
good options. Every innovation we test is tested with
the children Madison has struggled longest to serve,
which is what makes the findings useful. In practice,
equity means small, intensive settings for scholars who
need them, including our Scholars Academy model,
which limits classes to twelve children with two
dedicated teachers, an alternative to the false choice
between social promotion and retention. It means
structured literacy delivered by educators trained in it.
And it means working with families rather than around
them. One City Elementary School has earned two
consecutive Exceeds Expectations ratings from the
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and its
academic growth places it near the 76th percentile
among Wisconsin elementary schools. Reading
proficiency among our Black scholars rose from 2
percent to 21 percent in a single year, and among our
Latino scholars from 16 percent to 57 percent. WHAT
THE DEMONSTRATION MODEL HAS ALREADY
PRODUCED FOR MMSD This is not a promise. It has
already happened, more than once. EL Education. One
City opened in 2018-19 as the first EL Education

network school in Dane County. After connecting with EL Education through its work with One City, MMSD voted unanimously in April 2022 to adopt the curriculum across all 31 of its elementary schools, a \$5.6 million investment. A small charter school piloted it; the District scaled it. Project Read AI. Co-developed with One City and tested in our classrooms starting in 2024 under a research partnership funded by Ascendium, this AI reading tutor is now used in about 5,000 Wisconsin classrooms. As of October 2025, 118 MMSD teachers were using it, and Midvale Elementary adopted it schoolwide at \$3.50 per student. UFLI. One City serves as the University of Florida Literacy Institute's Upper Midwest Training Hub, providing science-of-reading training to Wisconsin educators and community volunteers, and hosted the region's first Pop-Up Reading Academy in March 2026. The four-day educator workweek. We piloted it in 2022-23 and discontinued it because our teachers concluded the fifth day with scholars mattered more. We report that with the same confidence as the successes. A demonstration school that publishes only what worked is not a demonstration school. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE Our practice is documented rather than asserted. UW-Madison's Wisconsin Center for Education Research conducted a five-year longitudinal evaluation funded by a \$1 million Wisconsin Partnership Program grant, reporting most recently in July 2025. The District can read the findings before it decides. WHAT WE PROPOSE We propose that the charter contract name what One City is expected to test, document, and deliver to the District, and hold us accountable for producing it, with annual reporting to the Board on what we tried, what worked, and what did not: the Scholars Academy intervention model; the two-generation family model, including FAST, for which One City is a training hub for the Milwaukee, Mineral Point, and Sun Prairie districts; the volunteer literacy tutoring program; and extended learning time, which we operated for years, have data on, and would restore with District support. District staff would be welcome in our building as observers and co-designers. WHAT WE ASK OF THE DISTRICT IN RETURN Innovation is not costless, and it does not move in one direction. We seek access to District special education and student services expertise,

professional learning, data infrastructure, and operational systems a school our size cannot build alone. Neither side of this exchange is charity. It is how a district and a small school make each other better, and it is what we propose to put in writing.

Describe the proposed school governance council.: One City recognizes that authorization by MMSD entails substantive governance changes, not merely formal ones. One City Elementary School is today governed by the Board of Directors of One City Schools, Inc., the nonprofit that holds the charter. Under District authorization that changes: the Board of Education would hold the charter, and the school governance council would be an advisory and stewardship body operating under Board policy and the charter contract, not a competing board. We will work with MMSD leadership and the Board of Education to settle the structure, and the description below is our proposal, not a precondition.

PROPOSED COMPOSITION We propose a Governance Council of eleven to thirteen members: the school principal; two parents or guardians of enrolled scholars; two teachers at the school; and six to eight directors of One City Schools, Inc. We propose that parent members be elected by the school's families and teacher members selected by the school's instructional staff, so that both seats carry a constituency rather than an appointment. Members would serve staggered terms so that no more than a minority of seats turn over in any year, and the Council would meet monthly, consistent with the Board's current cadence. This structure is an extension of practice rather than a departure from it. Two seats on the current One City Schools Board are designated for and held by parents of enrolled scholars, placing families inside the governing body rather than adjacent to it.

PROPOSED AUTHORITY The Council would advise on the education program, wraparound supports, athletics, and partnerships; on the school improvement plan and annual goals; on the school budget within the allocation established by the District; and on principal selection consistent with District processes. It would review academic, attendance, discipline, and family engagement data on a set cycle; steward the school's mission and the fidelity of its instructional model; serve as the standing forum for family voice; and deliver the annual demonstration-school report to the Board of Education on what One

City tested, what worked, and what did not. The Council would not employ staff, would not hold the charter, and would not exercise authority reserved to the Board of Education or the Superintendent. We state this plainly because ambiguity on this point has caused difficulty in other charter relationships, and we have no interest in creating it here.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE ONE CITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS One City Schools, Inc. would continue as a nonprofit with its own Board of Directors because it operates One City Preschool and other programs outside this charter. The precise relationship between that Board and a District-chartered school, including the roles of the One City Schools Foundation, One City Advocates, and the One City Broadway property entities, requires careful structuring. We would want District counsel and leadership involved from the beginning rather than at the end. We are prepared to accept whatever separation the District requires, including a clear and documented wall between One City Advocates' policy advocacy and the operation of a District school, and to have that separation written into the charter contract rather than left to practice.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY The Council would operate under Wisconsin open meetings requirements as applicable; post agendas and minutes publicly; maintain a conflict-of-interest policy consistent with District policy; and report to the Board of Education on the schedule the charter contract establishes. These are current practices, not new commitments. The One City Schools Board met eleven times in regular session during 2025-26, monthly, under the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, with agendas noticed in advance and minutes approved at the following meeting. A quorum was present, and business was lawfully transacted at every meeting. Directors serve staggered three-year terms, file annual conflict-of-interest disclosures, recuse themselves from any real or perceived conflict, and complete an annual self-assessment of collective expertise across seven domains, administered through the BoardOnTrack governance platform, which the Board uses to set its recruitment priorities. Board materials are public at www.onecityschools.org under "Board Meetings."

GOVERNANCE TRACK RECORD One City has governed a public charter school for eight years under

an external authorizer, including annual reporting, independent financial audits, an external longitudinal evaluation, annual comprehensive authorizer reviews, and a charter renewal review. Where our authorizer identified governance deficiencies, we corrected them, and the corrections held in subsequent reviews. We are not new to accountability, and we are not new to being told where we fall short. We propose to be accountable to Madison.

Describe the school leadership structure.: One City proposes to preserve the leadership structure that has produced the school's growth results, adapted to District employment and reporting expectations under instrumentality status.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP The Principal of One City Elementary School holds instructional and operational leadership of the school, supervises school-based staff, leads the school improvement plan, and is accountable for academic outcomes, culture, and family engagement. Under instrumentality status the Principal would be an MMSD employee. One City requests that principal selection be a joint process — a District-run selection with meaningful One City participation on the panel — and we would want that mechanism written into the charter contract rather than left to practice. The Principal is supported by One City's character coach and instructional coach, student services and special education team, and a corps of trained volunteer tutors. Instructional coaching is a deliberate investment in our model rather than an add-on, and it is the mechanism by which the extended day and the literacy practice actually reach classrooms.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIP The Principal would report to the District administrator designated by the Superintendent, consistent with the reporting structure for other MMSD instrumentality charter schools, and would work with the Governance Council in an advisory relationship as described above. One City is not asking for an exemption from District supervision. We are asking that supervision be paired with the operational latitude the charter is meant to provide.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT One City Schools, Inc. would continue to provide organizational-level support in areas where it holds capability the school benefits from, subject to what the District determines is appropriate under instrumentality status. This is one of the substantive items we would want on the agenda in

early consultation: which functions transfer to the District, which remain with One City Schools, Inc., and how the boundary is documented. LEADERSHIP CONTINUITY THROUGH TRANSITION Conversion should be invisible to a child. Our commitment is that scholars return to the same building, the same teachers, and the same instructional program. Achieving that requires early and detailed work with District Human Resources on the employment transition of school-based staff, licensure verification, and the treatment of existing agreements. We would like to begin that work in the first consultation session rather than the last.

Anticipated attendance One City Elementary School's present geographic area: attendance boundary extends statewide. Any child residing anywhere in Wisconsin can attend our school. We currently serve 35 zip codes, extending as far as Beloit and Reedsburg, Wisconsin. As an instrumentality of MMSD, 81% of students who attend our charter schools currently reside in MMSD and would be eligible for MMSD without needing an open-enrollment application. Enrollment is open, tuition-free, and non-selective, with admission by blind lottery when applications exceed available seats. The school does not test, screen, or select for admission, and it does not counsel students out. We would need to discuss with MMSD how it wants to address the enrollment of our current students who reside outside its attendance boundaries. PRIMARY ATTENDANCE AREA The school's primary attendance area will be the boundaries of the Madison Metropolitan School District, with recruitment efforts that extend district-wide, and not confined to a particular neighborhood. One City's current scholars reside in every zip code that comprises the boundaries of MMSD. CURRENTLY ENROLLED NON-RESIDENT FAMILIES A number of currently enrolled scholars reside outside MMSD boundaries, as is permitted under the school's present statewide authorization. One City has an obligation to those families. We ask the District to work with us on a mechanism, such as open enrollment, pre-existing, or another approach the District prefers, that allows a child already enrolled at One City Elementary School to finish grade 5 here. We recognize this is the District's decision to make, and we raise it now so we can work on determining a solution, if any, together.

PRIORITY AND LOTTERY STRUCTURE Subject to District policy, One City proposes an enrollment structure with priority for siblings of currently enrolled scholars, and for children of One City school staff, with all remaining seats filled by blind lottery among MMSD residents. We would defer to the District on the permissible structure and would welcome guidance in consultation. **DISTRICT-WIDE ACCESS** One City Elementary School would be open to any MMSD-resident family, from any part of the District, on the same terms.

Primary student demographics you anticipate serving: One City Elementary School anticipates serving largely the same population it serves today, because it will serve largely the same children. **RACE AND**

ETHNICITY Approximately 88 percent of currently enrolled scholars are children of color, with Black scholars the largest group, followed by Latino and multiracial scholars. This composition reflects the neighborhoods the school serves and the families who have chosen it. **ECONOMIC STATUS** A substantial majority of One City scholars come from economically disadvantaged households. The September 2025 DPI pupil count shows 70 percent of our scholars residing in under-resourced households eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. **MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS** One City currently serves seven multilingual learners whose families' primary languages are principally Spanish and French. The school provides language support and translation for family communication and conferences. We name a live challenge here. DPI's 2024-25 ESEA comprehensive monitoring review documented turnover in our English Learner Teacher/Coordinator position and the difficulty a school our size faces maintaining continuity for a small EL population, and recommended broader participation in the CESA 2 consortium. We have carried that recommendation into our planning. It also illustrates scale: a district with established EL staffing, licensure pipelines, and program models can serve seven children better than a single school recruiting for a single dually certified position. District EL capacity directly benefits these families. **SCHOLARS WITH DISABILITIES** Approximately 17 percent of One City scholars receive special education services. We do not screen for or discourage enrollment based on disability. We serve these scholars in compliance and with care, and the

state has verified it. On February 4, 2026, DPI conducted an on-site validation visit to independently verify the accuracy of One City's Reading Drives Achievement: Procedural Compliance Self-Assessment. Reviewing a random sample of student records across five compliance areas, Evaluation, IEP Implementation, Discipline, Shortened School Day, and IEP, DPI found our self-assessment reliable in all five. Four required no corrections. The IEP sample required three minor report-level adjustments across two records out of twenty-three items reviewed, only one of which involved a student-level correction. This was One City's first cycle through DPI's validation process. DPI's narrative identified a strong evaluation-to-IEP pipeline, student self-advocacy developed at an early age, strong internal controls, a proactively redesigned family-centered IEP process, and the absence of shortened school days as a practice, reflecting our commitment that every scholar has full daily access to instruction. Even so, special education capacity is where a school our size is most constrained, and it is a principal reason we seek District authorization. Access to MMSD's special education expertise, related services, evaluation capacity, and staffing depth would directly and immediately enhance what we can offer these scholars and their families. We are not asking the District to fix a compliance problem. We are asking it to help us extend what our team already does well.

ANTICIPATED CHANGES UNDER MMSD

AUTHORIZATION If enrollment is limited to MMSD residents, we anticipate the share of economically disadvantaged scholars and scholars of color would remain steady or increase slightly, given the neighborhoods from which we draw. We do not anticipate any change that would move the school away from the population it was created to serve, and we would propose that the charter contract commit us to serving a population demographically representative of, or more economically disadvantaged than, the District as a whole. DATA Complete disaggregated enrollment, demographic, attendance, discipline, and achievement data by student group are available through WISEdash and directly from One City, and will be submitted with the Original Proposal. The DPI validation correspondence and the 2024-25 ESEA

comprehensive monitoring report are available to the District upon request.

Describe the Committee's vision and beliefs around the role of families in the school.: One City was founded on the belief that you cannot educate a child well while treating that child's family as a bystander. Family engagement is not a program at One City Elementary School. It is a structural feature of

the school's design, and families most often name it when researchers ask what is different here. WHAT WE BELIEVE Families are the first and most durable educators in a child's life, and the school's job is to be a genuine partner rather than an institution that issues instructions. Engagement has to be built into the school day, the calendar, and the staffing model, because engagement that depends on parents having spare time and transportation will systematically exclude the families who most need to be included. And a school that supports the adults in a household, with adult learning, connection to services, and a path to stability, produces better outcomes for children than one that does not. HOW THIS SHOWS UP IN PRACTICE One City operates a two-generation model in which family programming is designed alongside the instructional program. More than 200 One City families have completed the FAST program, an evidence-based nine-week course in which families participate in structured weekly sessions together, since 2018. Parent Success Academies connect families to outside resources and support. Our Parent Council, led by parents, publishes a monthly family calendar, brings family priorities directly to school leadership, and gives parents real voice in school decisions. Teachers make home visits and relationship-building contact at the start of each year, and translation and interpretation ensure language is not a barrier to participation. Beginning in 2026-27, One City launches a Parent Reading Academy, teaching families the same structured literacy practices their children receive in classrooms so that reading instruction continues at the kitchen table. Support extends past the school day. Through the "Own It" homeownership initiative, One City's first nineteen families became homeowners, completing a sixteen-week financial literacy course and receiving up to \$19,000 toward down payments, with thirty-two realtors signed on as ambassadors. We describe it because it illustrates what two-generation work means: a school that takes seriously the

conditions under which a family lives, not only the hours a child is in the building. **WHAT THE STATE FOUND** In its 2024-25 ESEA comprehensive monitoring review, DPI formally commended One City for the depth and level of partnership opportunities and support provided for families, naming FAST, the Parent Success Academies, the Parent Council, the presence of parents on our Board, and the two-generation model. DPI singled out "Own It" as particularly noteworthy and commendable. Family engagement was one of only two commendations in the review. **WHAT FAMILIES SAY** The UW-Madison Center for Research on Early Childhood Education interviewed 29 scholars and 12 parents between March 2024 and January 2025 and published its findings in July 2025. Families described a school where multiple cultures and languages are celebrated, where teachers affirm scholars' identities and build individualized accommodations, and where they are known by name and treated as partners in decisions about their children. One grandmother called the school "a great soul." The same report identified where we fall short, including timeliness of communication and the range of extracurricular offerings, and we are working on both. We will submit the report with the Original Proposal and encourage District staff to speak with One City families directly during the review. **FAMILY VOICE IN GOVERNANCE** Two seats on the One City Schools, Inc. Board of Directors are designated for and held by parents of enrolled scholars. Under District authorization, two parent or guardian seats on the school Governance Council would be elected by the school's families, as described in the Governance section, so that family representation carries a constituency rather than an appointment. Family voice at One City is not a suggestion box. It is a seat at the table where decisions are made. **WHAT DISTRICT AUTHORIZATION WOULD ADD** Two things would improve immediately. Families who move between One City and other Madison schools, as many do over the course of a child's education, would stay inside one system, with records, services, and supports following the child rather than restarting. And District translation, family engagement, and community school capacity would extend the reach of what a small organization can staff on its own.

Describe your Curriculum vision.: One City Elementary School's curriculum vision is for scholars in grades 4K through 5 to read fluently and think deeply, through work that is demanding, purposeful, and connected to the world beyond the classroom. CORE CURRICULUM One City Elementary School is an EL Education affiliate school and implements the EL Education curriculum, a standards-aligned, project-based program organized around extended learning expeditions in which scholars investigate a compelling question over several weeks and produce high-quality work for a real audience. The curriculum is aligned to Wisconsin Academic Standards, and its character and community dimensions are integral rather than supplemental. FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN Our 4K program uses the Anji Play approach, in which extended, child-directed play with open-ended materials is treated as serious cognitive work and documented as such by teachers. Scholars build language, problem-solving, persistence, and collaboration before formal instruction begins, and their teachers use that documentation to inform what comes next. EARLY LITERACY Literacy is the school's first priority and where we have invested most deliberately. One City delivers explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, consistent with the science of reading and Wisconsin Act 20. UFLI Foundations is our core reading program and the basis of our reading intervention, so core instruction and intervention use one method rather than two competing ones. Project Read AI, co-developed with One City and tested in our own classrooms, gives each scholar targeted practice and gives teachers usable daily data. Forty-four UFLI-trained tutors work one-to-one with scholars in reading, and a tutoring program in mathematics does the same, using the routines and language scholars hear from their teachers, so a child encounters one consistent method from every adult who teaches them. DPI's 2024-25 monitoring review noted our structured literacy implementation and our staff's readiness to meet Act 20. This practice reaches beyond our building. One City operates the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, and Project Read AI now supports early literacy in roughly five thousand Wisconsin classrooms. What we train other educators to do is what we do. MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND

SOCIAL STUDIES Mathematics instruction

emphasizes conceptual understanding alongside fluency, with intervention structured for scholars performing below grade level. Science and social studies are substantially integrated into learning expeditions rather than taught as isolated blocks.

ENRICHMENT AND THE WHOLE CHILD Music, visual and performing arts, physical education and wellness, and STEM enrichment are part of the core program rather than the first thing cut. Protecting both intervention and enrichment inside a 180-day calendar is the central scheduling challenge of the coming year, and it is one reason we would welcome the chance to restore extended learning time with District support.

INTERVENTION Scholars performing below grade level receive intensive, small-group intervention within a multi-tiered system of support. Reading specialists work from a maintained intervention menu, and a tracker documents who is receiving what, progress made, adjustments needed, and entrance and exit criteria; administration and specialists meet on a set schedule to review both. DPI examined this system in 2024-25 and rated our Title I targeted assistance programming Acceptable, describing a well-articulated program with a genuine continuous-improvement loop. The Scholars Academy model, no more than twelve children with two dedicated teachers, is One City's alternative to the choice between social promotion and retention, and it is among the practices we would most want to document and offer to the District.

CURRICULUM AND DISTRICT ALIGNMENT On the core, alignment is not a hypothetical. One City opened in 2018-19 as the first EL Education school in Dane County, and in April 2022 MMSD voted unanimously to adopt EL Education across all 31 of its elementary schools. One City Elementary already teaches the District's core elementary ELA curriculum, and our educators have taught it longer than most. Our structured literacy practice also aligns with the same Act 20 requirements every Wisconsin school must meet. Where questions remain, they are narrower than the general case: mathematics resources, assessment calendars, and how expeditionary scheduling interacts with District instructional expectations. We would want to understand the District's adopted resources in detail during consultation and identify honestly where

alignment is straightforward, where a waiver would be required, and where One City should adopt District practice because it is better. We approach this as a question to work through together, not a line to hold.

Describe your Instructional Design strategies.: EXTENDED LEARNING TIME (If MMSD chooses to bring this back to One City's Model) The foundational design decision at One City Elementary School is time.

A longer instructional day and a longer school year mean scholars who arrive behind are not asked to catch up on the same clock as scholars who arrive ahead. This structural feature has positively impacted our academic growth results and is one we most want protected through conversion. LEARNING EXPEDITIONS AND PROJECT-BASED INSTRUCTION

Instruction is organized around extended, standards-aligned expeditions culminating in high-quality work presented to authentic audiences.

Scholars revise repeatedly toward a standard of craftsmanship. In grades 6-8, expeditions are deliberately interdisciplinary, integrating art, music, and STEM with core content through units such as Stories of Human Rights, the Harlem Renaissance, and Plastic Pollution. The purpose is not activity; it is the expectation that a nine-year-old can produce work worth showing to the public. ACADEMIES: ART, MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND STEM Every scholar has access to art, music, physical education, and STEM through a sequenced K-8 Academies structure aligned to Wisconsin standards: foundational general knowledge in K-3, introductory experiences in grades 4-5, and specialty pathways in grades 6-8 that scholars select and attend daily by semester. This is not enrichment offered when time allows. It is scheduled, staffed, standards-aligned, and it satisfies DPI physical education requirements at every grade band.

COMMON INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK Teach Like a Champion gives our educators a shared instructional language and a common set of high-leverage practices, phased across the year: classroom structures first (Strong Start, Tight Transitions, What to Do, Threshold), then engagement and rigor (Cold Call, No Opt Out, Wait Time, Right is Right, Show Me, Stretch It, Ratio, Habits of Discussion, Culture of Error). We assess fidelity rather than mere usage, examining adherence to the steps, consistency across contexts, quality of delivery, and student response

through a classroom culture walkthrough rubric.

SMALL GROUPS AND INTENSIVE INTERVENTION

Class sizes are kept low, and scholars needing intensive support receive it in very small groups, including the Scholars Academy structure of twelve children with two teachers. Grouping is fluid and driven by assessment data rather than fixed. Scholars falling below the 25th percentile on universal screening are candidates for Tier 2, with diagnostic assessment matching intervention to identified need and a Student Study Team convening when concerns persist. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION Educators use interim assessment and progress-monitoring data on a set cycle to identify scholars needing intervention, adjust grouping, and evaluate whether instruction is working. One City participates in state assessment and reporting and publicly holds itself to the DPI growth measure. Access to MMSD's data infrastructure and assessment expertise is one concrete gain we anticipate from District authorization.

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING AND PROFESSIONAL

LEARNING One City staffs instructional coaching deliberately and protects collaboration time within the calendar, including a weekly early-release structure. Coaching runs through practice labs, video study, peer observation of model classrooms, walkthroughs, and analysis of student work. It is also, candidly, an area where a small organization has limits, and where District professional learning capacity would materially deepen what our educators can access. CHARACTER, CULTURE, AND BELONGING Character education and community-building are part of instruction, not a separate program. Our Habits of Character (Compassion, Risk, Integrity, Self-Respect, Persistence) are defined in a grade-by-grade continuum from kindergarten through grade 8 and aligned to CASEL competencies. Daily Crew meetings, held in circle, ensure no child is anonymous.

Restorative practice is primarily proactive; when harm occurs, staff follow a structured process of regulating, relating, reasoning, restoring, and recording, with a published four-level response ladder and re-entry meetings that keep exclusionary discipline rare. TWO-GENERATION INTEGRATION Family programming is scheduled and staffed alongside the instructional program rather than run as an evening add-on, so that

participation does not depend on a family having spare capacity. **MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS AND SCHOLARS WITH DISABILITIES** Multilingual learners receive language development support integrated with content instruction. We serve scholars with disabilities in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their IEPs, with services delivered in inclusive settings wherever possible. We state again that special education capacity is a genuine constraint at our scale and a principal reason we are seeking this partnership.

Describe the Committee's philosophy around student behavior One City believes that behavior is communication, that children learn to regulate themselves in relationship with adults who know them, and that a school's

management.: discipline system should teach rather than merely remove. We also believe classrooms must be safe and orderly, and that adults owe every child an environment in which learning is possible. These are not competing commitments. **CORE BELIEFS** Relationship precedes correction. Every scholar is known well by at least one adult, and small class sizes, daily Crew, and a long day make that true in practice rather than in theory.

Expectations are explicit and taught. Scholars are told what is expected, given practice, and given feedback, the same way they are taught to read. Consequences are logical, restorative, and instructive. When something goes wrong, the response focuses on repairing harm, understanding what happened, and building the missing skill. Exclusion is a last resort. Removing a child from instruction rarely teaches that child anything, and it disproportionately harms the children public education has already underserved. One City works to minimize exclusionary discipline and monitors its data by student group. Families are involved early. They hear from us when things are going well, not only when they are going badly.

PRACTICES We teach character development as part of the instructional program, not alongside it. Our Habits of Character – Compassion, Risk, Integrity, Self-Respect, and Persistence – are defined in a grade-by-grade continuum from kindergarten through grade 8, aligned to CASEL competencies, and practiced daily in Crew, which meets in circle so every voice carries equal weight. Classroom practice is anchored in Teach Like a Champion, which gives educators a common language for the proactive moves that prevent most behavior problems: taught routines, tight transitions,

clear directions, positive narration, and least-invasive intervention. Leaders assess these with a walkthrough rubric that rates belonging and emotional safety alongside routines. When harm occurs, staff follow a structured five-step response – regulate, relate, reason, restore, and record – that returns a dysregulated scholar to a state in which problem-solving is possible before any consequence is discussed. Responses follow a published four-level ladder, from teacher- to administrator-managed, with documented parent contact at every level and re-entry meetings that prepare a scholar to rejoin their Crew. Restorative practice at One City is roughly 80 percent proactive; circles, restorative conversations, and mediation are ordinary, not exceptional. Scholars needing more receive it through a tiered system: check-in structures, counseling, and skill groups at Tier 2, and individualized wellness or behavior plans at Tier 3, built by a Student Study Team with the family at the table and coordinated with special education services where an IEP is in place. ATHLETICS One City's athletics program serves scholars in grades 2 through 5, extending organized team sport to an age band where it is rarely offered. Participation is earned and sustained through four expectations: regular attendance; demonstrated Habits of Character rather than repeated behavior incidents; completion of schoolwork; and consistent effort in the classroom. Coaches and teachers review these together. Eligibility is treated as instruction rather than punishment — a scholar at risk of losing it receives notice, a plan, and adult support to regain it, and the family is contacted before eligibility is affected, not after. Scholars with an IEP or 504 plan have these expectations applied consistent with their plans. We review eligibility decisions for disproportionality alongside our other discipline data.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE MMSD BEHAVIOR EDUCATION PLAN One City understands that the Behavior Education Plan is among the District policies that are not waivable, and we are not seeking to waive it. We regard this as an area of genuine philosophical alignment rather than a compliance obligation: the BEP's emphasis on instruction over exclusion, on restorative response, and on addressing disproportionality is consistent with how One City already works. We propose mapping our practice

against the BEP in detail during consultation, identifying every point of difference, and adopting District practice where it is stronger. We would also expect to submit our discipline data, including exclusionary discipline and any restraint or seclusion reporting, disaggregated by student group, as part of the Original Proposal, and to be held to the same standard as every other MMSD school.

ACCOUNTABILITY One City tracks behavior incidents, exclusionary discipline, and attendance by student group, reviews the data on a regular cycle with school leadership, student services, and the Governance Council, and acts when disparities appear. We would welcome this being an explicit accountability provision in the charter contract.

Describe any partnerships that the school expects to pursue in the first few operating years of the contract.: THE MADISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
The most important partnership One City Elementary School expects to pursue is with the District itself. We are seeking substantive collaboration on special education and student services, professional learning, assessment and data infrastructure, transportation, nutrition, and business services. We also want the relationship to run in both directions: One City would host District educators, share what our extended-day and early-literacy work has produced, and treat the charter as a working laboratory the District can learn from rather than a school it merely oversees. HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH UW–Madison Wisconsin Center for Education Research/WEC: independent longitudinal evaluation of the One City model since 2019, most recently reported in July 2025. We intend to continue independent external evaluation under District authorization. UW–Madison Schools of Education and Nursing, Edgewood University, Madison College, and WAICU: preparation and clinical placement of teacher candidates, early childhood educators, and nursing students, who deliver health education in classrooms and workshops for families. These partnerships give One City a pipeline into the profession and partner institutions a high-need clinical setting. University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI): One City operates the UFLI Upper Midwest Training Hub, providing structured literacy training to educators across the region. Marquette University BLEST Hub, City Forward Collective, Pahara, and the Wisconsin Charter Schools Association: sector networks through

which One City shares practice with educators statewide and beyond. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION EL Education: One City Elementary School is an EL Education affiliate school, with associated coaching, professional development, and network membership. Project Read AI: an early-literacy initiative One City helped develop that now reaches more than five thousand Wisconsin classrooms and educators well beyond the state. COMMUNITY, FAMILY, AND THE SCHOLAR ECOSYSTEM One City organizes community partners around scholars rather than assembling them ad hoc. Each is matched to a defined need in the school day, the family, or the pathway beyond eighth grade. Health and wellness: Access Community Health Centers and Combat Blindness International provide screening and care access for scholars whose families face barriers to both. Mentoring and youth development: Boys and Girls Clubs of Dane County, whose Taft Street club adjoins our Fisher Street site and serves overlapping families; Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dane County; Root 2 Rise, which places older students of color as tutor-mentors in under-resourced schools and opens pathways into education careers; and the Madison Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi. Literacy and books: Madison Reading Project and United Way of Dane County's Read Dane, extending structured literacy work into homes. Arts and athletics: Overture Center, Seeding Equity, Roots and Wings, UW Athletics, First Tee, and the Madison Area Independent Sports League, in which our fifth-grade scholars compete. Together, these make arts and sport part of the program rather than a privilege of family means. Food and basic needs: Second Harvest Foodbank and Goodman Community Center, including Thanksgiving baskets. Family engagement: FAST (Families and Schools Together), an evidence-based program One City runs with enrolled families. Housing, wealth-building, and financial capability: Own It partners with One City to open home ownership to our families; 32 families have purchased homes to date with a \$19,000 down-payment grant. Summit Credit Union operates a branch inside a One City building. We regard housing stability as an educational intervention rather than a service adjacent to one, because a child who moves less learns more. PHILANTHROPIC AND FUNDING

PARTNERS Of roughly \$100 million in total revenue since One City's founding in 2014, approximately \$57 million has come from 2,800 donors, 99 percent of them from Dane County. That is worth stating plainly: this school was built by this community. Support has also come from national and local philanthropy, including Ascendium Philanthropy, the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation, the Charter School Growth Fund, and the Madison Community Foundation, and from Wisconsin DPI charter school startup and implementation grants. Under District authorization, One City would continue raising philanthropic support for programming beyond the base educational program, and would work with the District to establish how those funds are handled and reported.

FORMALIZATION Existing partnerships are governed by agreements and memoranda of understanding, which we will inventory and submit with the Original Proposal. Some may require review, amendment, or novation under District authorization, and we want District counsel and Business Services engaged early in that review.

Above and beyond the competencies the District hires staff and administration for, are there additional competencies that the proposed school would need in the hiring process? Retention or the staff evaluation process?: **ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES IN HIRING** Character development and behavior management: This is the competency we would most want the District to understand; it is the essence of how One City manages a school. Our behavior program is not a compliance system layered on top of instruction; it is character development, taught explicitly and modeled by adults. Educators must hold a high behavioral bar and a warm relationship at once, and treat a difficult moment with a child as an occasion to build a skill rather than assign a consequence. One City uses Teach Like a Champion, developed by Doug Lemov, as the shared vocabulary for this work: warmth paired with high expectations, positive framing, consistent routines, and emotional constancy. Candidates should expect to be trained, observed, and coached on these techniques, and our leaders must model them: staff culture and scholar culture are the same culture. Structured literacy expertise: Educators must deliver explicit, systematic, evidence-aligned literacy instruction. It is the core of our instructional program and the basis of our statewide reputation. Project-based and expeditionary instruction: Educators must plan and lead extended, standards-aligned expeditions

culminating in high-quality public work, a craft distinct from delivering a scripted sequence. Skill in family partnership: Educators must work directly with families in a two-generation model, including home visits, family learning sessions, and sustained two-way communication. Cultural competence and a demonstrated belief in the capability of every child: Most One City scholars are children of color from households public education has historically underserved; educators who do not hold high expectations for them cannot succeed here. Comfort with coaching and data. Educators are observed, coached, and expected to adjust practice based on evidence, which is frequent and normal here. A NOTE ON THE EXTENDED DAY AND YEAR Should One City return to a longer school day and year, we would need MMSD's willingness and capacity to structure and staff it, with compensation implications scoped early with Human Resources and Business Services. It is a staffing question before a calendar question. RECRUITMENT AND DIVERSITY One City has deliberately built a staff that reflects the scholars it serves, and we regard that as a competency question as much as one of representation. As of July 1, 2026, One City employs 89 team members. Fifty-four, or 60.7%, are people of color: 29.2% Black or African American, 14.6% Hispanic or Latino, 14.6% two or more races, and 2.2% Asian, with 38.2% White. Two-thirds are women and 30% are men, a share of men, and particularly men of color, well above what is typical in early childhood and elementary settings. Ages range from 19 to 68, median 37, so early-career educators work beside veterans. We would want to continue targeted recruitment with District Human Resources and our higher education partners, and the charter contract to preserve One City's ability to recruit into its own pipeline. We raise this as an asset the partnership gains rather than an accommodation it makes: the relationships and reputation One City has built among educators of color in Dane County are something we would bring into the District. RETENTION Retention rests on induction into the instructional model, sustained coaching, protected collaboration time, and a genuine voice for educators in school decisions, including Governance Council seats. DPI's 2024-25 ESEA monitoring review commended One City for a

teacher retention rate approaching 96% over recent years. We also report the harder number: staff retention at One City Preparatory Academy was 91% in 2023-24 and 88% in 2024-25, and fell to 55% in 2025-26, a year of major budget and calendar change. Under District authorization, educators would gain District compensation, benefits, and career pathways, which we expect to strengthen retention rather than weaken it. EVALUATION One City uses DPI's educator evaluation (Danielson) framework for teachers and leaders and our own model for other positions, with mid-year and end-of-year reviews. Our CEO meets with 100% of staff each fall to hear what is working and what needs to change, and again in the spring as we plan the next year. We would ask that evaluation criteria reflect our education model so staff are assessed on the work they are asked to do. THE EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION The transition of current One City Elementary School staff to District employment is the most operationally significant unresolved issue in this conversion, and the one our educators care about most. It requires early, specific work with MMSD Human Resources on which positions transfer, licensure verification and gaps, compensation under the extended calendar if it is retained, One City's child care discount for staff, and the sequence and timing of communication.

**Are there any initial
waivers that the Charter
School Committee
believes they will need
at this time?:**

If a waiver is needed, Yes. One City anticipates requesting a limited set of
please state the item waivers, and we would rather describe the shape of
being waived and the that request now than have the District discover it later.

reason.: THE PRINCIPLE WE ARE APPLYING We are asking for latitude only where a District policy would prevent us from delivering the specific things families chose this school for, and where that latitude is tied to a stated element of the mission. We are not asking for general independence, and we are not asking to be governed differently for its own sake. Where District practice is stronger than ours, we want to adopt it. We will scope every request below in consultation with Teaching and Learning, Human Resources, and Business Services, and submit the final list with the

Original Proposal. ONE YEAR VS. TWO YEAR VETTING PROCESS MMSD's timeline for considering a charter school application and opening the school is two years. Because One City is an existing school and does not need both a planning and implementation year, we ask the Board of Education to consider our application to start as an MMSD charter in 2027-28 instead of 2028-29. TIME: CALENDAR AND SCHOOL DAY The most significant request concerns time. Additional instructional time is the structural feature most responsible for One City's growth results for scholars furthest from grade level. We would seek authority to operate an extended instructional year and an extended day, together with a weekly early-release structure that protects educator collaboration. We disclose plainly that One City reduced both the extended day and the extended year for 2026–27 because philanthropic funding could not sustain them. That reduction is itself part of our argument for conversion. What we are seeking is not permission to do something unusual today, but authority to restore what the model requires once the funding structure is stable. STAFFING AND SCHEDULING The Scholars Academy model places twelve scholars with two teachers, and instructional coaching is staffed deliberately rather than absorbed into administrative roles. Both require a non-standard staffing configuration. We would seek latitude on staffing and scheduling sufficient to sustain them, within the employment framework that instrumentality status establishes. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION One City would seek to continue EL Education's school model and its structured literacy practice where these differ from District-adopted resources. We note that MMSD adopted EL Education across 31 elementary schools following One City's pilot, so the gap here may prove narrower than a waiver request implies. We would want that examined before assuming a waiver is needed at all. STUDENT SERVICES AND CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMMING Three smaller requests support programs that are part of how scholars experience this school: the athletics program serving grades 2 through 5 as an extension of physical education; the One City Tutoring Program in reading and mathematics, retained as it currently operates; and the continued service of Hobbs, our therapy dog, as a

member of the Student Services team. **NUTRITION** One City would seek to continue its Healthy Meals Program. We recognize that federal requirements, rather than District policy, govern school nutrition, and we want the District to tell us which elements are genuinely waivable before we submit a formal request. **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK PROVISIONS** Certain handbook provisions on posting, transfer, calendar, preparation time, and professional development obligations may materially impede the model. We can't specify these responsibly without Human Resources at the table, and we would rather scope them jointly than propose them unilaterally. **DEMONSTRATION PUBLIC SCHOOL STATUS** One City would seek to preserve its role as a demonstration school whose practice is open to other educators. This is the request we would most want the District to see as mutual rather than exceptional. **WHAT WE ARE NOT SEEKING** One City is not seeking waivers of Policy 4400; Policies 4502 B and C, the Behavior Education Plan; the religious holiday policy; part-time student contracts; the course credit process; restraint and seclusion requirements; or child abuse reporting requirements. One City is not seeking a waiver of the District's ELL Plan, Advanced Learner Plan, or Special Education Plan. We want to be explicit about the Behavior Education Plan in particular, because our Character Development Plan might be mistaken for a substitute. It is not. It is how One City implements the commitments the BEP expresses: instruction over exclusion, restorative response, and attention to disproportionality. We intend to map it against the BEP during consultation and adopt District practice wherever District practice is stronger.

Using the funding One City wishes to be straightforward with the District **formula set forth by** about the status of this response. Policy 10000 **Board of Education** requires that the first-year budget be developed in **Policy 10000, and in** consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of **consultation with the** Business or a designee. That consultation has not yet **Assistant** occurred. We are requesting it as an early priority, and **Superintendent of** we are treating the figures below as a framework to be **Business or his/her** replaced by a jointly developed budget, in MMSD's **designee, provide a** budget format, rather than as a proposal to be **budget for the first year** evaluated on its numbers. **ONE CITY ELEMENTARY** **of operation.:** **SCHOOL'S APPROVED SY2026–27 OPERATING** **BUDGET** Enrollment – 328 planned in grades 4K to 5,

but budgeted at 279 (85 percent) for revenue purposes, with expenses budgeted at full enrollment. Revenue – Per-pupil charter payments, \$3,886,202 (state base of \$12,797 per pupil). Federal entitlements: \$313,557. Other government funding and grants: \$298,284. DPI charter implementation and summer funding: \$156,100. Summer school: \$105,191. Before- and after-school fees: \$143,277. Activity and other fees: \$118,285. One-time stabilization grant, \$1,500,000. Philanthropic fundraising: \$961,697. Total projected revenue: \$7,482,592. Expenditures – Personnel salaries and benefits: \$5,296,295 (25 classroom FTE plus school leadership and support). Direct student costs: \$1,008,993. Occupancy: \$493,155. Office: \$269,741. General and business: \$231,582. Athletics: \$53,864. Parent engagement: \$25,142. Contingency: \$72,998. Total projected expenses: \$7,451,770. Projected surplus: \$30,822.

THE NUMBER THAT MATTERS MOST One City Elementary School spends approximately \$22,719 per scholar and receives approximately \$14,947 per scholar in public revenue. The difference of roughly \$7,772 per scholar, about \$2.5 million annually, is closed entirely by philanthropy. In SY2026–27, the gap was closed by a one-time \$1.5 million stabilization grant and \$961,697 in fundraising. Neither recurs. Our own five-year forecast projects annual deficits of approximately \$2.1 to \$2.2 million beginning in SY2027–28.

WHAT WE EXPECT TO CHANGE

UNDER INSTRUMENTALITY STATUS Three categories require joint work before this budget means anything.

1. Central administration: The personnel line currently carries allocated shares of organization-level positions, including the CEO, CFO, Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, and Chief of Staff, totaling approximately \$631,000. Under instrumentality status, some of these functions would be provided centrally by the District, some would remain with One City Schools, Inc. and fall outside the school budget, and some would not carry over at all. Drawing that line is the single largest budget question.
2. Program elements beyond the base educational program: The budget includes roughly \$855,000 in costs One City categorizes as innovation and demonstration work, including the Scholars Academy Tier-2 intervention model, EL Education school-wide implementation, two-

generation family engagement, a healthy meals program, extended learning academies, school uniforms, and a childcare discount for staff. Some of these fit within a District school budget, some would continue to be philanthropically funded by One City Schools, Inc., and each needs a decision. 3.

Compensation and services: Our current average lead teacher salary is \$69,206. Moving to District compensation structures changes the personnel line materially, and we would want that quantified early. So too the treatment of transportation, which One City does not currently provide, and food service, special education, and student services, currently budgeted at a full cost of \$582,425. WHAT WE ARE ASKING FOR We request a working session with Business Services to obtain the District's budget template and the Policy 10000 per-pupil allocation methodology, and to model this school inside the District's structure together. We will provide full access to our budget workbook, three years of audited financial statements, and our five-year forecast. We would rather the District see all of it now than discover any of it later.

What is the proposed location for the school (specific address, if available, otherwise a description of the town and any unique features of desired locations)?: PROPOSED LOCATION One City Schools Pleasant T. Rowland Campus, 1707 W. Broadway, Madison, WI 53713. One City Elementary School operates here and proposes to remain. The building is a substantially renovated former commercial facility of approximately 157,000 square feet on 13.5 acres, purpose-fitted for school use, with classrooms, specialist and enrichment spaces, administrative areas, food service, and support space. It sits in South Madison, immediately adjacent to the neighborhoods it serves; a majority of our families live and work near this school. CAPACITY Fully renovated, the Rowland Campus can accommodate approximately 800 scholars. With the balance of that work completed, it accommodates the projected full enrollment of both One City Elementary School and One City Preparatory Academy, with room remaining. One City Elementary School's design capacity is 328 scholars against a budgeted enrollment of 280. That figure includes the 4K cohort housed at 2012 Fisher Street, so the Rowland Campus carries fewer than 328 elementary scholars at full enrollment. One City is not proposing enrollment growth beyond existing design capacity, and no site beyond those named here is contemplated. We will provide a room-

by-room allocation and the remaining renovation scope, schedule, cost, and funding plan on request, and would want responsibility for that work addressed explicitly in the charter contract rather than left to assumption. SHARED CAMPUS One City Preparatory Academy occupies dedicated middle-grades space in the same building and is the subject of a parallel application, so capacity verification for either school must account for the other. The room-by-room allocation will identify which spaces are dedicated to each and which are shared, letting the District evaluate each charter on its own terms. OWNERSHIP AND ENCUMBRANCES The facility is owned by One City Schools affiliates: One City Broadway LLC holds the building and One City Broadway South LLC the grounds. Ownership is currently subject to New Markets Tax Credit financing, which carries compliance and transfer conditions. Those credits reach maturity in three years (March 9, 2029), when One City will own the property free and clear, it becomes a \$35 million asset. Any change in ownership or occupancy structure before then must be examined against the NMTC terms. One City recognizes that a District-chartered school occupying a building held by an affiliate of the operator raises legitimate questions about arm's-length dealing and public funds. We want those questions asked and answered thoroughly rather than assumed away. One City is prepared to obtain an independent fair-market rent opinion, to accept whatever lease terms District counsel and Business Services determine appropriate, to open its property books to District review, and to discuss sale to the District if the Board prefers. JURISDICTION — STATED DIRECTLY The Rowland Campus sits at the municipal boundary between Madison and Monona, and One City understands the District must determine the jurisdiction and school district of record for this parcel before a charter can be executed. We raise this ourselves, at the first opportunity, because we would rather the Board hear it from us than discover it in review. One City has no fixed position on how this is resolved. We see several paths and defer to the District on each: confirmation that the parcel falls within MMSD boundaries; a boundary or detachment process with the affected districts and municipalities; a structure in which the District leases or acquires the facility

notwithstanding its location; or, if none proves workable, another South Madison site within District boundaries. One City would participate in good faith in whichever path the District chooses, and asks that it be taken up early in consultation, since it bears on nearly every other term of the contract. WHAT WE WOULD ASK THE DISTRICT TO WEIGH The scholars enrolled at One City Elementary School are, in the great majority, MMSD residents. The building was renovated for them, substantially with philanthropic and DPI grant funds raised for that purpose; it is in the neighborhood they live in and where they go to school today. Moving them would be a real cost to real children. We ask only that this be weighed alongside the legal and policy considerations the Board must resolve on its own terms. SECOND SITE — 2012 FISHER STREET One City also owns a facility at 2012 Fisher Street, Madison, WI 53713, approximately 10,700 square feet on roughly one acre, carrying a balance held by Summit Credit Union. It houses One City Preschool and is where One City Elementary School's 4K program will be delivered. This site is within MMSD boundaries. Because 4K instruction is part of this charter, we ask that Fisher Street be named in the contract as an approved instructional location alongside the Rowland Campus, with District 4K requirements, licensing, and funding treatment applied from day one.

If there is a specific address, verify that the location will hold the number of students expected to be enrolled when at capacity.: VERIFICATION Yes. One City Elementary School's design capacity is 328 scholars, and the facilities named in the preceding field hold that number. HOW CAPACITY IS CALCULATED The school runs two sections at every grade level: 4K at 20 scholars per section and kindergarten through grade 5 at 24 per section. That produces 40 4K seats, delivered at 2012 Fisher Street, and 288 seats in kindergarten through grade 5, delivered at the Pleasant T. Rowland Leadership Campus at 1707 W. Broadway. The Rowland Campus therefore needs to hold 288 elementary scholars at full enrollment, not 328. Against a budgeted enrollment of 280, both sites operate with headroom at every grade. No grade level is projected to exceed its two-section configuration during the five-year enrollment plan. SPACE BEYOND CLASSROOMS Capacity is not only a seat count. In addition to general classrooms, the Rowland Campus

provides dedicated space for the Scholars Academy small-group model, which pairs twelve scholars with two teachers; specialist and enrichment instruction across art, music, physical education, and STEM; student services and intervention space; and family programming. A conventional elementary building of comparable enrollment would not accommodate this range of use. The configuration is what makes the model possible rather than aspirational. ACCOUNTING FOR THE SHARED CAMPUS Because One City Preparatory Academy occupies dedicated middle-grades space in the same building, the 288 figure is net of space allocated to OCPA. The room-by-room allocation described in the preceding field will show this explicitly, so the District can verify each school's capacity without double-counting shared space. Neither school's capacity claim depends on space the other is using. DOCUMENTATION TO BE PROVIDED One City will provide the District with the current certificate of occupancy and permitted occupant load for both buildings; floor plans with room-by-room capacity; the most recent fire, health, and safety inspection reports; documentation of accessibility compliance; and the capacity calculation methodology summarized above. We will assemble this package for the Original Proposal and can provide the occupancy certificates and capacity calculation earlier on request. AN OPEN INVITATION One City invites District facilities staff to inspect either building at any point during the application and decision-making period, announced or otherwise. We would rather the District verify this itself than take our word for it. A capacity claim on paper is worth less than a walk-through, and we would welcome one. HEADROOM One City is not proposing enrollment growth as part of this conversion, and the five-year enrollment plan operates entirely within existing capacity, so no expansion, construction, or additional site is contemplated. We note only that the Rowland Campus has substantial unused capacity, described in the preceding field, so if the District later identified a need in South Madison that One City could help meet, the constraint would be operating resources rather than square footage. CONDITIONAL NOTE This verification is subject to resolution of the jurisdictional question described in the preceding field. If the District determines that an alternative site within its boundaries

is required, One City would work with District facilities staff to identify a South Madison location of comparable capacity and character, and would expect the capacity analysis to be redone for that site.