

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Education, Madison Metropolitan School District

FROM: District Administration

DATE: August 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Review of Initial Charter School Applications: One City Elementary School & One City Preparatory Academy

One City Schools, Inc. submitted two Initial Applications on August 14, 2026, requesting conversion of its existing charter schools from authorizer status under the University of Wisconsin Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) to instrumentality charter schools under MMSD. On Wednesday, the Board of Education will determine whether to invite the applicant to submit a Detailed Proposal in accordance with Board Policy 10,000.

Although One City submitted two distinct initial applications corresponding to different grade bands, the administration regards this submission as a single, unified application for grades 4K through 8.

Application Summary & Comparison

Detail / Feature	Application #1: One City Elementary School	Application #2: One City Preparatory Academy
Grades Served	4K through Grade 5	Grades 6 through 8
Projected Enrollment	328 max / 280 budgeted revenue enrollment *81% of One City's current students are within the MMSD Attendance Areas	144 max / 123 budgeted revenue enrollment *81% of One City's current students are within the MMSD Attendance Areas
Primary Location	Rowland Campus (1707 W. Broadway)	Rowland Campus (1707 W. Broadway)
Target Launch Year	2028-2029	2028–2029
Curriculum Base	Literacy: EL Education & UFLI Foundations / Anji Play (4K)	EL Education & Open Up Resources (Math)

Demographics (2025-26)	94% Children of Color, 70% Econ. Disadvantaged, 17% SpEd	94% Children of Color, 70% Econ. Disadvantaged, 17% SpEd
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Alignment with Board Policy 10,000

Both applications align with key guiding principles set forth in Board Policy 10,000, while presenting specific operational and policy considerations for Board review:

- **Instrumentality Status:** Both proposals explicitly seek status as instrumentality charter schools, meaning staff would become District employees accountable to Board policy and District supervision.
- **Research-Based & High Achievement:** Both schools demonstrate academic growth on the DPI Report Card, placing them near the 76th percentile (Elementary) and 99th percentile (Prep Academy) among state schools. Both utilize evidence-based frameworks, including EL Education, UFLI structured literacy, and two-generation family engagement models.
- **Equitable Access:** Both operate open-enrollment, non-selective blind lotteries, with 81% of enrolled students currently residing within MMSD boundaries.
- **Governance (501(c)(3)):** One City Schools, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) entity. Under the proposed conversion, an advisory Governance Council would operate under the Board of Education.

Key Operational & Policy Considerations

- **Timeline Waiver:** MMSD standard policy outlines a two-year timeline for charter opening (target SY 2028–29). The applicant requests a waiver to open as an MMSD charter in SY 2027–28, noting they are an existing operating school.
- **Facility Location & Jurisdiction:** The main campus at 1707 W. Broadway sits on the municipal boundary of Madison and Monona but within the Monona School District attendance area. District administration and counsel must confirm the parcel's jurisdictional status before executing the final contract.
- **Financial Alignment & Budgeting:** Under Policy 10,000, new charter schools receive per-pupil funding based on the DPI open enrollment transfer rate. Both schools currently operate with significant philanthropic subsidies (\$2.1M–\$2.5M annually) and require joint financial modeling with the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services to establish a sustainable budget under MMSD's formula.

Next Steps for the Board

Wednesday's vote will determine whether the applicant moves forward to the Detailed Proposal phase. Per Policy 10,000 Section II.B.6, if the Board approves the Proposal, the Superintendent will issue a written invitation for a Detailed Proposal, triggering comprehensive administrative analysis, public hearings, and detailed contract negotiations before any final authorization vote.