



June 13, 2014

Dr. Kimberly Yates



Dear Dr. Yates,

Thank you for submitting an application to establish a public charter school in the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia Public Charter School Board ("PCSB") has completed the 2014 Application Review process. I regret to inform you that at its public meeting held on May 19, 2014, PCSB did not approve your application to establish One World as a public charter school in the District of Columbia.

The Board's decision was based on a thorough evaluation of the written application and information gathered from the capacity interview and the public hearing. The following findings were the basis for denial:

1. The educational plan lacked cohesion and contained critical components that were not fully developed. For example, the parts of the mission having to do with cultivating environmentally-conscious and technologically-skilled students are not developed.
2. The applicant group was unable to describe the systematic structures and processes that would ensure that the staff would be adequately supported to create and teach academic lessons that align with the Common Core State Standards and the components of the school's mission, including arts-infusion, while differentiating instruction based on each student's quarterly individualized learning plan. For example, the time allotted for professional development is a 90-minute block on Fridays, which is double booked as a time for students to receive extra academic support and the person identified as providing the data support for data-driven decision-making was a part-time employee.
3. The applicant group stressed the delivery of core content through the arts but did not demonstrate how it would occur or how core content area teachers would acquire the necessary arts-instruction skills to do this well. Again, the time for this professional development seemed to be during the same 90-minute window as in item 2 above.
4. The applicant group relied on partnerships with external groups for key elements of its program including arts, science, and sports, but did not demonstrate that these partnerships were actually developed. That is, the applicant group did not state, what support or services the partners have agreed to provide to the school, and what would occur if the partnerships fell through. In fact, the application did not include letters of endorsement or support from two of these identified partners: the Tiger Woods Foundation and National Aeronautics and Space Administration.
5. The description of how students with disabilities would be served violates IDEA's procedural rules. The application states that Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings would not occur until after a 30-day observation period, which would be used to determine if placement at One World PCS qualifies as the Least Restrictive Environment for students with disabilities. The IDEA requires IEP meetings to occur annually. While changes to an IEP can be made on the basis of classroom observations, these changes must be made at a duly constituted IEP team meeting at which a student's parent is invited, as opposed to a school's calendar. Thus, if an IEP meeting is required to occur during the proposed school's 30-day observation period and is delayed solely as a result of this observation period, the school would be

at risk for being untimely for purposes of IDEA. While the applicant group publicly stated that this was not their intent and that members of the team had background in teaching students with disabilities, the school's processes for evaluation of students with disabilities raised concerns about their willingness and ability to serve all students.

6. The budget included insufficient funding for some of the staff positions crucial to the school's effective operations and its facility. Examples include:
 - The absence of a Curriculum Director, although this staff member is mentioned throughout the application.
 - The Data Specialist plays a critical role in collecting, storing, and analyzing data with the leadership team, yet the salary listed is for a part-time staff member.
 - The responsibilities of the teacher of English language learners includes providing core academic content and English language, yet the budgeted salary is for a teacher's aide.
 - The sustainability of the Executive Director's role after the initial two years, during which it will be filled by a founding group member as a volunteer, is not addressed.

Should you choose to file a petition again, that petition must meet the requirements of the School Reform Act. See D.C. Code § 38-1802.02. Specifically, it should appropriately resolve the deficiencies cited above and demonstrate: (a) that all components in the petition's Education Plan are aligned to the other plans in the petition, including the budget and plans for facilities; (b) how these components will be implemented from the first day of school; (c) that the proposed approaches for serving English language learners and students with disabilities comply with applicable local and federal laws; and (d) that the proposed budget will support all aspects of the proposed program.

Should you want to appeal the denial of your application, you may seek judicial review in an appropriate court of the District of Columbia or review by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, pursuant to the procedures found in Chapter 5-A54 of the D.C. Municipal Regulations.

We recognize the hard work and effort that went into the development of your application and there were many positive parts of the application that are not mentioned in this letter. Thank you for your interest in public charter schools and your commitment to improving public education in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,



Naomi Rubin DeVeaux
Deputy Director
DC Public Charter School Board

cc: Ms. Marta del Pilar Lynch