



## **Notes for Completing the Facility Charter Agreement Amendment Application**

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### *Overview*

This application is for a school seeking approval from the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) to operate a new facility.<sup>1</sup> The school may operate the new facility in addition to or in lieu of the facility or facilities already recognized in the school's charter agreement.<sup>2</sup>

### *Standard for Approval*

DC PCSB staff will generally recommend that its Board approve a facility amendment if the school makes a reasonable and documented effort to engage its internal community and the community groups located in the area surrounding the proposed space. The internal community includes school staff, students,<sup>3</sup> and current families. Community groups include, but are not limited to, prospective families, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANC), civic and citizens associations, churches, public and public charter schools, and businesses. Before submitting this application, the school must

- Discuss its plans with the community during an open meeting of its board of trustees.
- Notify the appropriate ANC Chairperson and the Single-Member District Commissioner regarding its facility plans in writing. The notification must include a request to be added to an ANC meeting agenda to present the school's facility plans.

Other engagement activities may include developing an action plan that responds to community concerns, commissioning a traffic study, and initiating collaboration with neighboring schools.

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<sup>1</sup> Per DC PCSB's *Definition of School, Campus, and Facility Policy*, "a facility is a building that houses part of a campus, an entire campus, or multiple campuses. It may be temporary or permanent. A school may operate a single-campus among multiple facilities, or a school may operate multiple campuses in one facility." See the policy here: <https://bit.ly/3wUyKY>.

<sup>2</sup> If a school has multiple facilities per campus or multiple campuses per facility, DC PCSB will ask the school to identify a distinct name for the facility/facilities.

<sup>3</sup> Schools that do not enroll young adult and adult students need not demonstrate student support for the proposed changes.

Ultimately, the school must demonstrate that it has worked with its internal community and the community surrounding the proposed space to address any concerns and needs.

Finally, the school must demonstrate that opening the new facility will not harm its economic viability.

#### *Submission Deadline*

Per DC PCSB's *Charter Agreement Amendment Petition Submission Policy*,<sup>4</sup> a school must submit its facility amendment application at least three months before it intends to serve students in the proposed space. A school that participates in the My School DC (MSDC) lottery that seeks to operate a new facility should submit its amendment request ahead of MSDC's school profile data collection deadline. Failure to do so may result in students not being matched to the new facility.

#### *Contact*

Before completing the application, please contact Melodi Sampson at [msampson@dcpcs.org](mailto:msampson@dcpcs.org) to discuss the proposed change(s) or to ask general questions about the charter agreement amendment process.

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<sup>4</sup> See the *Charter Agreement Amendment Petition Submission Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/34ORPBZ>.

**LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) NAME:** Social Justice Public Charter School

**BOARD CHAIR NAME:** Yinnie Tse

**SUBMISSION DATE:** Mar 9, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Facility Amendment Request

### **SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL SUMMARY**

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**Campus name(s):** Social Justice Public Charter School

**Year(s) opened:** 6

**Grades served:** 5th-8th grade

**Year the school will undergo its next charter review or renewal:** 2030

**Proposal summary:** SJS is seeking to change its location for the 2026-2027 SY.

**Year the school plans to implement the proposed changes:** 2026-2027 SY

**When did the school's board approve the proposed changes?**

November 6, 2024

### **FACILITY**

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• **Please check the box that best describes the school's proposed change.**

- The LEA or a campus within the LEA is relocating from its current facility to a new facility.
- The LEA or a campus within the LEA is staying in its current facility *and* expanding into an additional facility (i.e., some students will attend the current facility while some will attend the proposed facility).
- The LEA seeks to open a new campus to be housed in a new facility. (Also complete the Expansion and/or Replication Amendment Application.)

- In the table below, list the facility/facilities the school operates (i.e., the facility/facilities identified in the school’s charter agreement). For each entry, report the facility name, the campus(es) and grades served within, and the address.

<b>Current Facility/Facilities</b>		
<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Campus Name(s); Grade(s) Served</b>	<b>Address</b>
Social Justice Public Charter School	5th-8th grade	333 Kennedy Street NE Washington DC 20011

- In the table below, list the facility/facilities the school seeks to operate (i.e., the facility/facilities the school will continue operating along with the facility the school proposes operating). For each entry, report the facility name, the campus(es) and grades served within, and the address.

<b>Proposed Facility/Facilities</b>		
<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Campus Name(s); Grades Served</b>	<b>Address</b>
Social Justice Public Charter School	5th-8th grade	5455 Third Street NE Washington DC 20011

- Will the school lease or purchase the proposed facility? If the school has already purchased or leased the facility, when did the school acquire it?

Social Justice School will lease the proposed facility.

- How will the new location impact current students? How will the school encourage student re-enrollment? How will the school support students in need of transportation to the new location?

More than 90% of our scholar-activists currently use the Metro for their daily commute to school. Our new location is directly across the street from our current site—just a few yards away. The current address is 333 Kennedy Street NE, and our new address will be 5455 Third Street NE. We are deeply grateful that our scholar-activists and their families will be able to remain in the same community many have called home for years. The new site remains just a five-minute walk from the Fort Totten Metro Station, maintaining the same level of accessibility and convenience for families.

As part of our re-enrollment and communication efforts, we have prioritized transparency and engagement. Before Match Day, we will continue to inform both current and prospective families about the relocation and remain available to address any questions or concerns. To date, we have reached out to all families, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive—families have expressed strong support for SJS remaining in the Ward 5 community.

We have also provided regular updates on construction progress at 5455 Third Street NE through email communications and Class Dojo, our parent and scholar-activist platform. In addition, families have been invited to tour the new facility as it develops, ensuring they remain informed and connected throughout the process.

While our physical location is changing, our academic program, culture, and commitment to love, learning, and liberation remain steadfast—ensuring a seamless continuation of the high-quality education and support our scholar-activists currently receive.

To further support families, especially those with transportation needs, SJS will provide DC One Cards to facilitate Metro access. We will also continue to collaborate with families and community partners to identify additional supports that ensure every scholar-activist can arrive safely and consistently to school. In addition, SJS has a transportation pilot with families by providing monthly shared transportation financial incentives to families who are urgently in need of transportation support.

- **Will there be newly created seats for additional students? If so, discuss**

No, there will not be newly created seats; we are approved for up to 300 students per our charter agreement with PCSB.

**What is the maximum occupancy at the new location? If the maximum occupancy load for staff and students is less than the total number of staff and students who will occupy the facility at any point in the future, please explain how you will address this issue.**

The site provides capacity for up to 300 scholar-activists which aligns to our enrollment ceiling.

**Does the proposed space require renovation? If so, describe the renovations the new location will need, either to serve as a school or to be accessible for students with disabilities.**

Yes, the building will require renovations. We are partnering with LF Jennings as our general contractor, and the Cafritz Foundation is financing the renovation. While the existing shell of the building will remain intact, the planned improvements will include—but are not limited to—new windows, a modern security system, updated electrical wiring and plumbing, IT infrastructure, an elevator, and renovated classrooms. It's important to note that this is a turnkey deal structure; SJS has not taken out any loans to pay for the cost of renovations; SJS will engage in a thirty year lease of the facility. The site will be ADA compliant.

- **Describe the proposed facility's neighborhood (i.e., is it residential or commercial, is it metro accessible). What value will the school add to the proposed neighborhood?**

Ward 5 is an amazing community that comprises both residential and commercial property. It is home to three metro stations that allow access for members of the community. The three metro stations are as follows: Fort Totten, serving the red/yellow and green lines, Brookland, serving the red lines, and NoMa-Gallaudet U. serving the red line as well. This influx of metro stations allow students, and their families to be able to access the community in a convenient and easy manner.

Since our inception, we have always been committed to being a community school. As such, we really believe in working together with our community to support our schools. We have partnered with the Lamond Riggs Civic Association, ANC 5A, the Lamond Riggs Library and the Main Street organization, all of which are located in the Lamond Riggs Community. We have been thankful to receive letters of support from ANC 5A.

In addition, we always invite community members to our events, such as our celebration of learning, our End of the Year Celebration, promotion and our annual fish fry. We will also allow community members to utilize our space for monthly meetings.

We are excited to continue to partner with the local community organizations in order to support our families, and to serve as a resource for families in need through our food pantry.

- **List the traditional and public charter schools near the new location, identifying schools that educate the same grade span your school serves/will serve. Describe how the school's mission and academic performance compare to these schools. What impact will the school's relocation have on enrollment at neighboring schools?**

It is important to note that SJS has been located in the same neighborhood since opening six years ago. During its first four years, SJS co-located with Rocketship Infinity Campus. For the past two years, SJS has operated in mobile classrooms located directly across the street from that original location. If approved, the permanent facility will also be located directly across the street from our original site. The address of our first location was 5450 Third Street NE, and the address of the permanent facility will be 5455 Third Street NE.

SJS has also built intentional relationships with LEAs in Ward 5, particularly those closest to our location. This is evident in the consistent pipeline of students and families who apply to and attend Social Justice School from nearby schools such as Rocketship, DC Bilingual, Elsie Whitlow Stokes, and Bridges.

The immediate vicinity of Social Justice School's proposed location is home to several other schools, including LaSalle-Backus Elementary School (PreK–5th), Rocketship Infinity Campus (PreK–5th), DC Bilingual Public Charter School (PreK–5th), Washington Latin Public Charter School (6th–12th), Ida B. Wells Middle School (6th-8th), and Brookland Middle School (6th-8th).

Across the schools listed, Social Justice School (SJS) has a rating score of 62.7, placing it third overall among the schools in the comparison that are in close proximity to SJS and serve similar grade bands..

The two schools with higher scores are Friendship: Armstrong MS (70.8) and Friendship: Woodridge MS (68.5). Immediately below SJS are Wash Latin – Cooper MS (60.7) and Inspired Teaching (57.0).

SJS's score is 2.0 points higher than Wash Latin – Cooper MS and 5.7 points higher than Inspired Teaching. It is 6.2 points higher than Perry Street (56.5) and 12.7 points higher than DC Prep – Edgewood MS (50.0).

Schools in the middle of the distribution include Creative Minds (42.8) and Center City: NOMA (40.8), which are 19.9 and 21.9 points lower than SJS, respectively. Brookland MS (39.7) is 23.0 points lower, and Wheatley EC (37.1) is 25.6 points lower than SJS.

Several schools fall further below, including MM Bethune (35.2), Browne EC (34.2), and McKinley MS (31.7), which are between 27.5 and 31.0 points lower than SJS. The lowest scores in the comparison are KIPP DC – Northeast (24.6), Two Rivers – Young MS (19.7), and Capital Village (10.6), which are 38.1, 43.0, and 52.1 points lower than SJS, respectively.

Among middle schools in Ward 5, SJS has demonstrated the highest growth to proficiency for scholar-activists identified as at risk, as measured by the percentage of students earning a score of 4 or higher on the PARCC assessment. Additionally, SJS earned a level 2 rating on the Aspire Framework, recognizing it as a strong-performing school, and a 61.7% overall score on OSSE's School Report Card.

Because most nearby schools serve students only through fifth grade, there is minimal direct competition and meaningful opportunity for collaboration. SJS has already established partnerships with Rocketship Infinity Campus and DC Bilingual PCS, and we are eager to continue and deepen these relationships.

Finally, the broader Ward 5 community includes several additional middle schools, ensuring a robust continuum of educational options for families in the area while positioning SJS as a strong, collaborative partner in advancing high-quality education for all students.

- **When did the school hold an open board of trustees meeting to discuss the proposed change(s)?**

SJS held an open board of trustees meeting on October 30, 2024 to discuss the changes and to approve.

- **Describe how the school has engaged its internal community in its decision to relocate or expand into the proposed location. Submit documentation of the school's communications with its staff and families regarding the proposed space. Identify the internal community's concerns and how the school is responding to their needs.**

Social Justice School (SJS) has been located in our current neighborhood for four wonderful years, with the past two years spent in the modular classrooms at 333 Kennedy Street NE. From the beginning, we have been transparent about our need and desire to identify a permanent facility following the expiration of our current license agreement. Throughout this process, we have consistently engaged all of our key stakeholders—including staff, scholar-activists, families, and Board members—to ensure open communication and shared decision-making.

SJS hosts monthly community meetings, known as “Chit Chats,” where our Principal, Brandon Johnson, and Executive Director, Myron Long, share updates about our progress as a school community. These gatherings provide an opportunity for leaders to communicate important developments and for families to ask questions and share feedback. We have regularly used this space to keep families informed about our facility search and related updates.

In addition to our Chit Chats, SJS uses Class Dojo, our primary communication platform, to share timely updates with families regarding our facility plans for the 2024–2025 school year. We also include ongoing updates in our monthly school newsletter to ensure consistent communication across platforms.

We understand that transportation has been one of the primary concerns raised by families and community members. We have proactively addressed this issue in our communications, emphasizing that most of our families currently use the Metro for commuting. The proposed facility is conveniently located near a Metro station along the same Green Line, ensuring accessibility and minimizing disruptions to families' routines.

Additionally, some community members have expressed two primary concerns

related to traffic along Third Street: speeding and congestion, particularly given the street's narrow layout. To address speeding, a speed bump has been installed on Third Street to help calm traffic and improve safety for students and families. To address congestion, SJS has worked closely with Rocketship Infinity Campus to stagger arrival and dismissal times so that both school communities are not arriving or leaving at the same time. These coordinated efforts have helped reduce traffic volume during peak times and improve overall safety in the area.

**Describe how the school has engaged the community surrounding the proposed location.** *Please attach documentation of communications with nearby principals, neighbors, ANC representatives, Councilmembers, and other community groups, notifying them of the school's plans.*

Social Justice School has been actively engaged in discussions with key community stakeholders to ensure transparency and alignment with the interests of our neighbors. Specifically, we have maintained ongoing communication with Shelagh Bocoum, the ANC representative for the single-member district where our new facility will be located. Ms. Bocoum has been a valuable partner in our planning process, offering thoughtful insights and perspectives from the local community. The Social Justice School also received a unanimous letter of support from ANC5A, reflecting broad community backing for our efforts. SJS contacted Commissioner Bocoum on Friday, Jan 23, 2026. SJS is slated to present at their next ANC meeting which is scheduled for March 26th, 2026.

In addition, we have established a strong working relationship with Councilmember Zachary Parker, who represents Ward 5. Councilmember Parker has expressed great enthusiasm and support for the Social Justice School's presence in the ward. His guidance and advocacy have been instrumental as we move forward. Both elected officials remain supportive and excited about our temporary location and the continued growth of our school community in Ward 5. In addition, SJS has met with the Lamon Riggs Safety Group and the Michigan Park Civic Association.

**When did the school inform the ANC representatives of its facility plans? Has the school already presented its facility plans during an ANC meeting? If not, when will it do so?**

We contacted Councilmember Parker on February 21 and March 27, 2024. We also reached out to Commissioner Fletcher, who referred us to the current Commissioner,

Commissioner Bocoum, on March 20, 2025. SJS presented at the ANC 5A meeting on March 26, 2025.

SJS contacted Commissioner Bocoum again in January 2026 and is scheduled to present at the upcoming ANC 5A meeting on March 26, 2026.

**Summarize the external community's concerns, if any, and describe the school's response with specificity.**

In addition, some community members initially expressed concern about traffic patterns given the narrowness of Third Street. SJS partnered with Rocketship Infinity Campus and the Cafritz Foundation to address these concerns, including exploring traffic calming measures such as a potential speed bump to slow traffic. SJS and Rocketship also implemented staggered start and end times. These issues have since been addressed and resolved through these collaborative efforts.

- **Complete and submit DC PCSB's [5-Year Operating Budget](#) template in accordance with its instructions. (in progress)**