



DeKalb County School District Initial Memo  
The Museum School of Avondale Estates  
**School's Response: September 26, 2016**

The DeKalb County School District Initial Memo provides the petitioner with feedback from the DCSD Charter Petition Review Committee with the intent of improving the final petition, which will be voted upon by the DeKalb County Board of Education. This feedback may include specific directives, general impressions, requests for additional information/explanations, suggestions for improvement, and acknowledgement of strong aspects of the petition. These are organized according to the sections of DCSD Application For Renewal.

The petitioner may decide whether to accept, partially accept, or not accept the committee's suggestions written within the initial memo. Such decision may impact the committee's final recommendation for approval or denial. However, the committee fully supports the petitioner's obligation to put forth a petition that most accurately reflects the petitioner's concept.

Directions:

1. Review the feedback.
2. Construct a "Petitioner's Response to the Initial Memo," This should respond in writing to each Initial Memo item indicating if the petitioner has decided to accept, partially accept, or not accept the committee's suggestions for improvements. This shall be submitted with the revised petition.
3. Alter the original petition reflecting the changes, if any, and save the altered document in Microsoft Word. We request that any such changes be made to the original petition using the "track changes" feature in Word. No additional changes to the petition will be accepted unless requested by the DeKalb County Board of Education.
4. Email the "Petitioner's Response to Initial Memo," and an electronic copy of the altered petition to the Charter Coordinator. If the petition is too large for email, please contact the Charter Coordinator who will arrange for another method of delivery.



## **SUMMARY:**

The Museum School of Avondale Estates is a public K-8 charter school that currently serves approximately **539** students. Since initial approval in 2010, the Museum School of Avondale Estates has implemented an integrated project based learning, and real-world exploration instructional model, coupled with intentional partnerships with institutions, and museums, which are the central elements of the museum-school design. During open enrollment in 2016, 581 applications were submitted for 72 available positions. The Museum School students have outscored their peers at the district and state level on the CRCT/Milestone in every subject, in every grade, and every year. Most recently, 72% of students scored Levels 3 or 4 on the ELA Milestone Assessment, 64% in Mathematics, 68% in Science, and 67% in Social Studies. The Museum School is also fully accredited by AdvancEd/SACS. On July 11, 2016, The Museum School of Avondale Estates submitted a completed DCSD Renewal Application seeking to renew their charter for 5 additional years.

In evaluating the petition, the Charter Petition Review Committee identified aspects of the petition, which would benefit students attending the charter school.

- The concept is not currently employed in any other school in Georgia.
- The school has created partnerships with the Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta History Center, Alliance Theatre Institute for Educators and Teaching Artists, Arts Now, Georgia Aquarium, Fernbank Museum of Natural History, High Museum, Michael C. Carlos and Zoo Atlanta allowing students to conduct exploratory visits at the above listed sites.
- The school intentionally includes 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade gender-based advisory groups, along with monthly village meetings, and homeroom buddies for the purpose of building a positive school culture.
- The data analysis through the data carousel allows all teachers and administrators to take ownership of the data, and develop data aligned instruction that benefits the students individually.

However, there are other areas in the petition, which caused the committee some concern. The more significant areas of concern are identified below. These concerns are organized in the same categories as the DCSD Charter School Petition Application. Additional areas of concern may be raised by the DeKalb County Board of Education members during their review of the petition or presented by the GADOE during their review process.

**Items, which are considered mandatory, are bolded.** Optional items are in regular font.

We request the petitioner to respond to each of the following concerns in writing by August 26, 2016 via email to Kelli Peterson.



#### GENERAL COMMENTS:

- When writing goals within each section, it would be beneficial to incorporate a graph to display the charter term data related to the goal for the reader to determine the margin of growth the school needs to execute in order to meet the goals, thus determining viability.

Accepted. The state accountability spreadsheet listing annual performance against all charter goals has been added as Appendix 56 and a quick facts document has been added as Appendix 57. These documents are also labeled and attached to this communication for quick reference.

- **The appendix items (electronically) should be numbered, bookmarked, or cover sheets inserted, as it was difficult to find attachments as they were referenced.** Accepted.
- **The electronic copy of the Affidavit must be completed.** Accepted.
- Be sure to re-read the document for redundancy. Accepted.
- **Within the petition, it is not clear that you operate under the DeKalb Board of Education. If the charter utilizes the resources of DCSD in a given arena, the partnership should be mentioned in the petition.**

Accepted – Partnerships with DeKalb County School District are highlighted in relevant sections.

#### I. The Case

- a. Include evidence of the community involvement in petition development (meeting date, changes in the concept based on community feedback, etc.)

Accepted and added to petition - Board and school leadership presented the renewal process to parents and the community at the Spring 2016 State of the School address. The renewal team was comprised of a group of parents, community members, current and founding board members, and school leaders. The petition was reviewed multiple times at the school's public board meetings. Feedback during this process led to an additional charter goal. All board-level committee members played an active role in developing the petition.

- b. What is the data on your parent involvement contract? Participation Rate, enforcement practices, etc. What changes have you made, if any since the beginning of the school? What happens if parents can't volunteer at the school? How do you assist families in meeting their volunteer hours?

Accepted and added to petition - The Museum School seeks to form a mutually supportive relationship between students, families, the school, and the community. For this reason, students and their families are expected to contribute to the success of the school. The parent agreement, in the student application Appendix 46, outlines parent/guardian rights



and responsibilities as well as how the school will support the parents in fulfilling these responsibilities. Though the responsibilities have not changed, the number of hours changed in 2013 to reflect a family commitment of 15 hours per child as opposed to the original agreement that was based on number of parents.

98 – 99% of Museum School families annually meet the expectations set forth in the school's parent agreement. The overall expectations in the current agreement are identical to the expectations set forth in the original agreement.

The Museum School's staff and administrators work closely with families in meeting these expectations, as outlined in the Parent Agreement. These include flexible volunteer opportunities and a written commitment to be creative in helping to find a solution to satisfy parent obligations.

In some cases, the number of hours to be served may be altered based on extenuating circumstances. Typically, the principal works with about 10 families per year that have special circumstances preventing them from meeting the full commitment.

Unfortunately, if families are far from meeting their hours (> than ½ of the full commitment) and have made no attempt to request extensions, forgiveness, or additional opportunities to serve, their students may become ineligible for after school clubs and programs.

**c. Who are your partners? Provide specifics on how they contributed to the school.**

Accepted and added to petition - By design, curriculum and resource partners of The Museum School are a valued and integral part of our school and our community. The Museum School partners with the most outstanding museums and institutions in the region including the Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta History Center, Alliance Theatre Institute for Educators and Teaching Artists, ArtsNow, Georgia Aquarium, Fernbank Museum of Natural History, High Museum, Michael C. Carlos Museum and Zoo Atlanta. These partners play a vital role in the success of our school by aiding with curriculum mapping, providing students with invaluable resources, and contributing to our school's model of hands-on learning.

Partners collaborate with school educators on curriculum and provide students with educational on-site learning expeditions. The learning expeditions are structured and organized through collaboration between the school and partner, resulting in a meaningful, engaging, and thoughtful learning experience for students. Learning expeditions are, through the work of TMS teachers and partner staff, tailored to the TMS



curriculum map and curricular units. Further, The Museum School works with its partners on a variety of projects and programs including grant-writing, piloting new programs and tours, providing feedback on teacher and student resources, and serving as advisors on education committees.

Prior to the school opening, community volunteers studied potential partners, researched their organizations, and wrote profiles on each one. In a series of meetings, the Board and members of the curriculum committee discussed possible partners and generated a prioritized list of institutions to approach. Interested partners from various museums and other organizations were invited to a luncheon, during which Board members explained the museum school concept and solicited interest, which laid the foundation for the school's partnership agreements. Now, as we consider partnering with a museum, we engage in conversations about the mutual benefits of a TMS partnership and work towards developing the partnership.

As a result of these strong partnerships, Museum School students continue to vastly outperform state and district averages on the Milestones' Assessment, specifically in Science and Social Studies. See Appendix 37.

- d. The petition does not answer C.i. Describe in detail the community support for this school and the need for this particular school in the community it will serve. A wait list reflects that parents want to enroll (a good thing!), but the question is deeper than that. Who is your community and how does this school meet that community need? The expectation is to see demographic and academic data and perhaps charts/tables over the four years of your existence in this section. This section is your opportunity to justify why the District and State should renew the charter. Don't soft-pedal this; hit us hard with compelling data and related conclusions that shows students have benefited.**

Accepted and added to petition - The Museum School of Avondale Estates is a public charter elementary and middle school that opened its doors in 2010. Serving 135 Kindergarten - 3rd grade students in its first year, The Museum School (TMS) currently serves 539 Kindergarten through 8th grade students. As intended by its founders, The Museum School is a true neighborhood school, drawing the majority of its students from its primary attendance zone of Peachcrest and Avondale Elementary School zones. These zones include students residing in zip codes 30030, 30032, 30033, 30002, 30079, 30317 and 30035. Demographic data demonstrate that the constituency of the Peachcrest and Avondale Elementary School zones is diverse in terms of gender, race and socioeconomic status and similar to that of DeKalb County as a whole. Historical demographic data for the school can be found in Appendix 60.



School Year	Total Enrollment	Male	Female	F/R lunch	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Amer. Indian	Multi-racial	White	Special Education	EIP	504	SST	Gifted
2010-2011	135	56%	44%	16%	4%	23%	3%	1%	9%	59%	5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15%
2011-2012	199	52%	48%	12%	2%	26%	0%	1%	9%	63%	4%	15%	1%	8%	15%
2012-2013	263	52%	48%	9%	3%	23%	1%	0%	11%	62%	5%	16%	2%	2%	18%
2013-2014	341	51%	49%	13%	1%	22%	3%	0%	11%	63%	5%	12%	2%	12%	18%
2014-2015	446	50%	50%	13%	3%	23%	5%	0%	9%	60%	5%	17%	6%	7%	17%
2015-2016	514	52%	48%	15%	2%	26%	6%	0%	8%	58%	8%	8%	6%	4%	22%
2016-2017	539	53%	47%	18%	2%	27%	6%	0%	7%	59%	6%	TBD	7%	3%	26%

- e. Question iii: Contacting museums is not a plan. This is a weak answer. What have you done and how has it resulted in productive partnership to benefit students? Use your data and connect the dots. You are expecting your reader to do the work of finding the supporters in the appendix and imagining how this improved student learning or organizational effectiveness.

*Accepted. Item addressed above in c. and added to petition.*

- f. Question 2 – Where is your data? This answer is just platitudes as if the school is a start up with no history. The school has five years of performance data. Narrate that the charter approach has resulted in demonstrated student improvement or there is no reason for the charter. Don't miss this opportunity to prove your case.

*Accepted and added to petition – As a result of the school's academic and organizational innovations coupled with our autonomy as a charter school, The Museum School's student achievement scores are consistently high. The Museum School has "beat the odds" annually based on the state's rigorous metric. The Museum School's CCRPI scores are significantly higher than state and district averages. MAP data, as compared to the national norm, reflects significant student achievement with 68 – 78 % of students growing at a faster rate than their peers.*

## II. Academic Objectives, Plans, and Waivers

- a. On page 5, there is no need to cut and paste the Beating the Odds information from the state. *Accepted.*
- b. Goal 4: Given the poverty levels at the school the goal of beating the state and district average is really a low standard. Again, your data should be reflecting much more aggressive goals in either subgroups or school wide.

*Accepted. See additional academic goal 5 added to petition.*





Goal 5: In each year of the charter term, the overall percentage of students scoring Level 1 or 2 on the Georgia Milestones assessment will decrease by 2% from the previous year.

- c. In the appendix you reference a goal of 65% of students will meet SGP per NWEA. You are already largely meeting that target. Why set such a low bar?

Not Accepted - Though school-wide averages reflect more than 65% of students meeting or exceeding their growth learning projection, not all grade levels are meeting this goal across the subject areas. The current goal of 65% is an extremely aggressive goal, considerably higher than NWEA's target of 50% of learners meeting or exceeding growth learning projections. This goal is in line with the board's practice of setting SMART goals, ensuring that the goal is challenging, yet achievable.

- d. The appendix MAP data compares your school to GA average. Poverty in GA is 62% and DeKalb is 72%. Museum is around 12%. Consider rethinking your goals to align with like demographics. Consider a nationwide comparison.

Not Accepted – MAP scores only compare our data to the national norm of over 10 million peers.

- e. The petition should include on page 7, within question #4, that you will follow DCSD testing in all areas.**

Accepted and added to petition – The Museum School will follow DCSD testing guidelines for state-mandated assessments.

- f. On page 9, “Exhibit night performance may include oral presentation, conducting an experiment, or teaching a skill or concept to other members of the class, school, and/or community.” Missing an “s” on “performance.”** Accepted.

- g. In order to strengthen the narrative regarding benchmarks, consider including trend data. Cohort data might be useful as well.

Accepted and added to petition - The school monitors trend and cohort data annually through a data carousel protocol, involving all instructional staff members. See Appendix 58.

- h. In describing the curriculum, the petition cites various philosophies and research. To strengthen the petition and case for the school's continuation, results of the past five years should be included which justifies the continued use of these theories.

Accepted and added the following to Answer 5a: “...the following curricular foci have proven successful (see Appendix 56 for



achievement data) and will continue to be implemented:”

- i. On page 16, expound upon how the museum model has done within DeKalb, rather than theoretically.  
Accepted and added to petition - The museum model has contributed to students’ greater understanding of state standards and more importantly, has helped students to think more critically and creatively. As evidenced by MAP and Milestones data, see Appendices 36 and 37, a vast majority of Museum School students, as a result of the model’s hands-on approach, not only exceed state standards but also grow at a faster rate than over 10 million peers nationwide. The engaging and interactive museum model has led The Museum School to “beat the odds” annually, see Appendix 34, performing at a higher rate and with more success than schools similar to it.
  
- j. How much does a student have to pay for each expedition?  
Accepted and added to petition - Students are not responsible for fees and costs associated with learning expeditions. All associated costs are covered within the school’s operating budget. \$110,000 has been allotted to learning expeditions in the FY17 budget.
  
- k. **The petition did not answer, “Provide a clear explanation of how the innovations will increase student achievement.”**  
Accepted. See chart below. It has been added as Appendix 59 to the petition.

Innovation	Impact/Result
The Museum School model and pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 68 – 78 % of Museum School students are growing at a faster rate than a national norm of over 10 million peers.</li> <li>* Museum School students significantly outperform state and district averages on the Milestones Assessment. See Appendix 37.</li> <li>* 100% of parents satisfied with the school.</li> </ul>
Community Service Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Every Museum School student participates in an annual service learning project, benefitting local communities, building community relationships and practicing core values in the field.</li> </ul>
Workshop-based Reading and Math Instruction & Differentiated Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 68 – 78 % of Museum School students are growing at a faster rate than a national norm of over 10 million peers.</li> <li>* Museum School students significantly outperform state and district averages on the Milestones Assessment. See Appendix 37.</li> </ul>
Positive School Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 98% daily attendance rate</li> <li>* 100% participation of middle school students in advisory</li> <li>* 100% of parents satisfied with the school.</li> <li>* 97% of staff members satisfied with the school.</li> </ul>





Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 100% of certified staff completing 20 hours of PD annually</li> <li>* 100% of certified staff and assistants participating in PLCs</li> </ul>
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- l. On page 25, the question is asking why a museum school approach is appropriate to improve achievement for your students. Use your data to strengthen this response.  
Accepted and added to petition on page 16 as above in feedback item i. - The museum model has contributed to students' greater understanding of state standards and more importantly, has helped students to think more critically and creatively. As evidenced by MAP and Milestones data, see Appendices 36 and 37, a vast majority of Museum School students, as a result of the model's hands-on approach, not only exceed state standards but also grow at a faster rate than over 10 million peers nationwide. The engaging and interactive museum model has led The Museum School to "beat the odds" annually, see Appendix 34, performing at a higher rate and with more success than schools similar to it.
  
- m. On page 25, it states "These innovations help build students into productive citizens, far extending the Museum School's reach beyond eighth grade. The methods above have proven successful and direct drivers of increased student achievement." Where is the data of a lasting impact after leaving the school to support this statement? Where is the evidence of direct drivers?  
Accepted. Statement revised.
  
- n. Have partnerships been developed for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students that matriculate from the petitioning school, to a high school?  
Accepted - The Museum School's High School Options Committee, comprised of staff members, parents, and community members, is devoted to building relationships and partnerships with local high schools to ensure a smooth transition for students. The Museum School is honored to be working with the DeKalb County's School Choice Department and developing fantastic relationships with DeKalb School of the Arts and Druid Hills High School.
  
- o. On page 26, consider revising the language about eligibility. This could be read in such a way that you would be expected to provide services that go beyond the school's obligation to provide a full continuum of services.**  
Accepted – The section was revised and new language included. "The Museum School will partner with DeKalb County Schools to provide services as needed."



- p. **On page 27, the petition should be clear that you strictly follow DCSD guidance and get District support in all federal areas.**  
Accepted and added to petition – The Museum School will seek guidance from and support from DCSD in federal areas.
- q. The petition may simply state that the school follows DCSD related to TAG, ESOL, and SST, etc.  
Accepted – Revised statement.
- r. Consider on page 27, stating that you will follow the mandated practices per the direction of DCSD and the GADOE is sufficient.  
Accepted – see p and q.
- s. **On page 30, “In addition, The Museum School will immediately notify the relevant state designee upon receipt of a complaint made by a parent/guardian or student concerning section 504 and/or Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act.” The school needs to notify the District immediately and then the state.**  
Accepted – Statement revised to reflect immediate district notification.
- t. **On page 31, the petition should include the school will follow all District directives in the area of SPED.**  
Accepted and added to petition - The Museum School will follow DCSD directives in the evaluation and identification of students with disabilities.

### III. Organizational Objectives, Plans, and Waivers

- a. In determining the goals within the organizational section, the goals should be more than meeting the requirements set forth within law.  
Accepted and added 3 goals to the petition in this section –  
**Goal 5:** The charter school will reflect the socio-demographic diversity of the community it serves with a targeted focus on economically disadvantaged students as defined by the Georgia Department of Education.\*  
**A. Measure 1:** During each year of the charter term (or until the school is within 10% of the DeKalb County School District average), the school will increase the total percentage of economically disadvantaged students (measured by those eligible for free and reduced lunch) by at least 2%. If the school fails to achieve a total growth of 4% by Year 2 and 8% by Year 4, it will implement a weighted lottery until the annual growth goal is met.

\*An economically disadvantaged student is defined as a student whose family lives below the poverty line, qualifies for free and reduced lunch, or who qualifies for federal benefits including SNAP, TANF, WIC, Medicaid or PINS.



**Weighted Lottery:** In accordance with OCGA 20-2-2066(a)(1)(A), the Charter School may utilize a weighted lottery to provide an increased chance of admission to economically disadvantaged students. To facilitate the weighted lottery, applicants can indicate their 'economically disadvantaged' status on the admissions application and such status will be verified as part of the registration process. The weight for economically disadvantaged students will be calculated annually, if necessary. The minimum weight shall be 1.5 and the maximum weight shall be 4.0. The weight will be determined by reviewing the number of 'economically disadvantaged' applications received for a given year's lottery, comparing that to the number of students needed to achieve the stated goal and assigning a weight accordingly.

**Goal 6:** The Charter School's board of directors will reflect the socio-demographic diversity of the community it serves.

**A. Measure 1:** The board will elect at least 2 new socio-demographically diverse members by the end of the charter term.

**Goal 7:** The Charter School's faculty and staff will reflect the socio-demographic diversity of the community it serves.

**A. Measure 1:** During each year of the charter term, at least 30% of the charter school's newly-hired staff will have experience working within the school's defined community or a community with similar socio-demographic diversity.

- b. The goals listed within the organizational section, based on the narrative throughout the petition, many of these goals are already being met. Thus, these are not a strong point within the petition, if you are already meeting these goals. How is the school improving by only continuing to meet the same goals?

Not Accepted. The Governing Board believes these goals are in line with our practice of setting SMART goals. Of note, in this renewal petition, the Board did remove a measure within a goal related to student promotion rates which we did not believe was an effective goal, as we were clearly exceeding the expectation.

- c. Goal 4 focuses on the retention rates of teachers; however, the retention goal (85%) is being met. Again, new goals should be set, rather than consistently meeting the same goal. How can the school build upon the goals that it has already met?

Not Accepted. As noted in our accountability report, we did not meet this goal in 2014-2015 and in several years, we narrowly achieved it. The Governing Board does believe this is an essential goal, in line with our goal-setting practices and the school does continue to work hard to achieve it.



#### IV. Governance

- a. **In question 17 – Please add the language reflecting the school is under the control and management of the DeKalb Board of Education.**  
Accepted. Statement added at top of question 17.
- b. There is a repeated sentence on page 40 about parent involvement.  
Accepted.
- c. There appears to be a conflict. If community members nominate from their ranks, then how is there any recruitment on the part of the governing board? This needs to be clarified. Also are new members elected by a simple majority of the board or by two thirds both? The petition seems to reflect both.  
Accepted. Response to question 17a has been revised to clarify process and that new members are elected by a simple majority of the board.
- d. There is no reason to list the principal evaluation subject twice. Remove one and simply refer to it.  
Accepted.
- e. Consider revising section m, on page 47, if revisions are made to the community member's nomination response.  
Accepted. Revisions were made as outlined in c. above.
- f. Is the governing board the same as Avondale Educational Association, Inc.? This needs to be made clear in the petition.  
Accepted. Clarified at top of question 17.
- g. **On page 48, question #18, the response seems to speak to if issues arise between the School and District; however, the question is regarding teachers, parents, and student issues. Thus, the question is not answered.**  
Accepted – A portion of the original question was excluded and has been added to better reflect the response.

#### V. Contracts with Educational Services Providers or Other Charter Partners

- a. **None Identified**

#### VI. Financial Objectives, Plans, and Waivers

- a. In determining the goals within the financial section, the goals should be more than meeting the requirements set forth within law.  
Not Accepted. The Governing Board of The Museum School believes the goals listed in financial objectives section are in line with our practice of setting SMART goals.



- b. What is the justification for the state and local revenues amounts in the budget of around \$9,000 in the Assumptions and only \$5,200 in the Revenues Section of the 5-year budget projection in the appendix?  
Not Accepted. This statement is incorrect. The number is actually 5.2 million and reflects total revenue, not per student revenue.

## VII. Student Admissions

- a. How does the school educationally or operationally justify having an attendance zone? Why should this school not be available to every student in DeKalb? The school is not reflective of DeKalb County as a whole.

Question Addressed. Response included below and within petition question 29a as well as additional organizational goal 5, question 14.

Enrollment shall be open to any student who resides within the attendance zone, which is defined as the attendance zone for Peachcrest and Avondale Elementary as drawn by the DeKalb County School District for the 2016-2017 school year. These zones include students residing in zip codes 30030, 30032, 30033, 30002, 30079, 30317 and 30035. Demographic data demonstrate that the constituency of the Avondale and Peachcrest Elementary School zones is diverse in terms of gender, race and socioeconomic status and similar to that of DeKalb County as a whole.

In the event space remains available at any grade level at the time of the application deadline set by the Charter School, the attendance zone shall be expanded to include the entire DeKalb County School District. The Charter School shall have a single lottery with all applicants if the number of applicants exceeds the number of spots.

One of the founding principles of The Museum School is simple: **Local community involvement in and ownership of a school is central to its success.** In 2010, after demographic research, public input and legal counsel, the school's founders defined a primary attendance zone that reflects the DCSD-defined attendance areas of Avondale Elementary and (now) Peachcrest Elementary that are immediately adjacent to The Museum School. A secondary zone includes all of DeKalb County.

The founding board's goals in establishing this primary and secondary attendance zone are clearly held in the organization's historical documents:

- Ensure a diverse, growing area with ample students to fill the school.
- Ensure racial and socioeconomic diversity.
- Maintain a community school focus per the school's mission.
- Ensure the zone allows for fiscal responsibility.

Now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year of operation, the schools serves 539 diverse students.



School Year	Total Enrollment	Male	Female	F/R lunch	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Amer. Indian	Multi-racial	White	Special Education	EIP	504	SST	Gifted
2010-2011	135	56%	44%	16%	4%	23%	3%	1%	9%	59%	5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	15%
2011-2012	199	52%	48%	12%	2%	26%	0%	1%	9%	63%	4%	15%	1%	8%	15%
2012-2013	263	52%	48%	9%	3%	23%	1%	0%	11%	62%	5%	16%	2%	2%	18%
2013-2014	341	51%	49%	13%	1%	22%	3%	0%	11%	63%	5%	12%	2%	12%	18%
2014-2015	446	50%	50%	13%	3%	23%	5%	0%	9%	60%	5%	17%	6%	7%	17%
2015-2016	514	52%	48%	15%	2%	26%	6%	0%	8%	58%	8%	8%	6%	4%	22%
2016-2017	539	53%	47%	18%	2%	27%	6%	0%	7%	59%	6%	TBD	7%	3%	26%

86% of those students come from our primary attendance zone, while the remaining 14% come from our secondary zone.

The school's governing board stands firm in our belief that our tiered attendance zone allows The Museum School to provide a quality education to as many children as possible, ensure the school remains financially responsible, and uphold our mission to develop and maintain a community school. We believe:

1. Having a community school that's within a geographic boundary allows us to create a neighborhood school with tight-knit student, parent, partner and community relationships. Building relationships and putting learning into action outside of the school building is critical to our model.

2. Having a geographically manageable attendance zone allows our parents to fulfill their significant commitment to our school. Fulfilling their parent volunteer commitment, participating in exhibit nights, PTO programs and learning expeditions could be an obstacle to parents coming from far corners of DeKalb County. This parent involvement is central to our mission and success.

3. Having a clearly defined attendance zone helps mitigate transportation barriers. It allows a diverse group of students within the primary attendance zone who would not be able to provide transportation to another charter or magnet school access to our innovative model by walking, biking or short car rides.

4. Our facility was originally built as a neighborhood school in the 1950s and is located deep within a neighborhood. It was designed to handle





walkers, bikers and a limited number of cars. Additional vehicle traffic created by a broad attendance zone would exceed the capacity of existing neighborhood streets and school facilities.

5. State law allows for the creation of charter attendance zones within school districts.

While we will always be limited in the number of students we can serve at our facility (588) and believe a tiered attendance zone is the best model for our school, we do strongly desire to share our model with as many students, teachers and parents as possible. We believe we can best do that by actively sharing our model with students, teachers and administrators within other DeKalb County Schools. Sharing our model is part of our strategic plan and we have successfully implemented systems and programs to do so, though we would welcome additional conversation with DCSD about how we might expand and enhance our knowledge sharing among charter and traditional schools.

**VIII. Facilities**

**a. None Identified**

**IX. Student Discipline**

**a. None Identified**

**X. Employment and Human Resources**

a. Does the school conduct its own background checks or does it use DCSD? Accepted. The school conducts its own background checks using Cogent services.

**XI. Other Information**

On page 73, the petition states that you will offer transportation to prevent such being a barrier and use a survey to document family need. What were the latest survey results and what were the criteria used to determine that your community did not desire transportation? Also, you don't budget for transportation at all? How does that work? What about transportation for the partner locations?

Accepted and added to petition - Families new to TMS are asked to complete a transportation survey each spring. The survey is completed by families who live outside of a 1-mile radius of The Museum School. The survey asks: Is your child unable to attend The Museum School without morning and afternoon bus transportation? 2015-2016 survey results reflected 0 families requesting assistance with transportation. The 2016-2017 survey reflected 6 families interested in possible transportation opportunities. We are working with these families now, pairing them with other families that live nearby. Typically 2-4 families each year ask for assistance in arranging transportation.



Students are not responsible for fees and costs associated with bi-weekly learning expeditions. All associated costs are covered within the school's operating budget. \$110,000 has been allotted to learning expeditions in the FY17 budget.

