



La Causa, Inc.

Where Children and Families Come First

2020 Board of Directors

Lyman Tschanz - Chair
Vice President Global Manufacturing
Rockwell Automation/Robert

Kotecki – Vice Chair
Vice President-Business Insurance
Marsh & McLennan Agency

Nancy Jelen –Secretary
Community Representative

Gustavo Cueto – Treasurer
Wealth Management Prog. Mgmt.
Northwestern Mutual

George A. Torres
President & CEO
La Causa, Inc.

Erika Colon
Nursing Talent
Liaison Advocate Aurora Health

Brentell Handley
Assistant Vice President
Landmark Credit Union

Andres Gonzalez
Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer
Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin

Juan Hernandez
Founder / President
TKK Electronics

Eduard Jimenez
Senior Director, Freight Management & Transport
Molson Coors Beverage Company

Kenneth Little
Commercial Corridor Manager
City of Milwaukee

Erico Ortiz
Owner / Gallery Director
Inspiration Studios

Teri Severinsen
Chief Financial Officer
Midwest Fiber Networks, LLC

July 15, 2020

Dear MPS Officials & Board of Education,

Please accept this Letter of Intent as our notice that La Causa Charter School will be working with your staff in renewing our Charter school contract with MPS. La Causa Charter School has served the children and families on the southside of Milwaukee since 2003 at this location and the agency has served this community for 48 years with other family support services as well. Our school has evolved into a high performing school that focuses on student learning and student achievement in a bilingual, biliterate and bi-cultural setting. Our goal is for all students to be proficient in both English and Spanish thus making them a more valuable commodity for employers in the future. We are also extremely proud of the “Exceeds Expectation” rating we have been able to achieve over the past few years from the State Department of Public Instruction.

We provide our students with an engaging “Careers in Technology” programming which is anchored by a rich STEAM curriculum that provides our students the skill sets necessary to pursue professional careers that may have traditionally been less accessible and/or easily landed by our student demographic. It is for these reasons and many more, that La Causa Charter School remains a respected asset to the Milwaukee Public School district and the businesses, families, and students of the City of Milwaukee. We are very proud of the excellent partnership we have maintained with the Milwaukee Public School District for the past 17 years and look forward to partnering with MPS for many years to come in providing our students the exceptional education they deserve.

While we will be working on this process as a team, however, the renewal contact point person will be Yolanda Valdes, Principal who can be reached at 414-316-3811 or at yolandav@lacausa.org. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

George A. Torres
President & CEO
La Causa, Inc.

Yolanda Valdes
Principal
La Causa Charter School



**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

Response to Current Charter School Performance

Educational Performance

- 1. Provide a description of how the school has been faithful in implementing its educational program outlined in the charter proposal (Appendix A).**

Fidelity to Current Program Model

La Causa Charter School was contracted in 2003 by Milwaukee Public Schools, with the vision of the school focused on entrepreneurship. As La Causa's school population evolved and family needs became better understood, the focus was modified in the charter renewal of 2010 to include a developmental language and a fine arts and vocational education program, and continued with the renewal of our contract in 2015, focusing on bilingual education, English as a second language and fine arts, science and technology instruction for all students. Since then, our program model has been driven by our vision and mission, and is reflected in our curriculum, instruction, course offerings and dual language programming.

La Causa Charter School is committed to meeting the needs of our families and staying relevant in the community. Located in the heart of the Hispanic community, we understand the importance of bilingual education to our families. Furthermore, we are aware of the demand in the workforce for competent, bilingual individuals. During this contract term, we have been diligent in growing our bilingual program to include English language speakers to become bilingual as well. Resources in both English and Spanish are available at all grade levels. We employ bilingual teachers for literacy, and native Spanish and native English speakers at every grade level to support the development of both languages for all students. Teachers receive professional development on best practices in balanced literacy, teaching in the dual language classroom, and WIDA language standards and can-do descriptors for language instruction.

As part of our mission and vision, we provide opportunity for all students to learn the visual, performance, and technological arts both during the regular school day and after school. We incorporate technology into content area instruction beginning in K4 and have integrated fine arts and technology instructional courses with literacy and math learning strategies aligned to the Wisconsin Common Core Standards. Our fine arts, science and technology program has evolved over the years into a rich STEAM program that includes financial literacy and advanced art classes and builds students' skills along a progression from computer science and coding to video production and robotics, and from Project Lead the Way – Launch® to Project Lead the Way – Gateway®. Robotics. Project Lead the Way classes offer our students opportunities to develop skills in engineering, and programming and design through problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration. All our STEAM courses emphasize project-based learning, allow students to apply the skills they learn in math and literacy classes, and put students on a path to college and career readiness.

La Causa Charter School continues to implement the AGR program so that students in K5 to 2nd grade have a lower student to teacher ratio to support foundational achievement, and all classrooms are supported with academic instructional coaching for teachers to support the growth of teacher

La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

expertise. Under this program we have been able to offer K5 classrooms with a 15:1 ratio, and 1st and 2nd grade classrooms with a 30:2 ratio. This model has allowed us to provide more individualized and smaller group instruction to our students as well as focused and differentiated professional development for teachers designed to move their practice forward.

Our special education programs continue to expand as we work to provide our teachers and students with the support they need. We have four special education teachers, two speech pathologists, including one who is bilingual, a full-time psychologist, and a school social worker who all work with children from K4 to 8th grade. We work closely with MPS in the area of special education to ensure that we not only remain in compliance with the district, DPI, and state and federal law, but that we also continue to have opportunity for professional development for teachers to move beyond compliance to proficiency. We continue to follow a least restrictive model whenever possible and have created a behavioral response team that has been fully trained by Crisis Prevention Institute methodology for de-escalation of and to minimize a seclusion/restraint response for student behavior. Our special education teachers collaborate weekly with our regular classroom teachers to meet student needs and achieve student IEP goals.

We offer both before school homework club and after school and summer academic programs designed to support student learning. Funded by Title I and MPS respectively, our programs are taught by licensed teachers and serve students who are selected based on benchmark assessments, report cards, progress monitoring and student work. Extracurricular offerings have been very popular in our school and include guitar instruction, choir, dance, Girl Scouts, Boys Scouts, Girls on the Run, Boys on Track, soccer, volleyball, Taekwondo, and Eagle Scientists (science club). We have also supported parents and the community by offering ESL classes and Padres Comprometidos, a parent empowerment program sponsored by UnidosUS. The before school homework club and the after school academic program run for the entire school year, and the summer program runs for four weeks. We have served 100 – 120 students in the before and after school program, and 100 – 150 students each summer in the academic morning program. We have also offered an afternoon enrichment program in the summer filled with technology, art, music, and physical activity. Students receive free breakfast and lunch each day of the summer program, which is also open to the neighborhood children regardless of participation in our programs or enrollment at our school.

- 2. Explain how the school has met goals and measurable objectives during the term of this contract. Highlight growth in student achievement and provide evidence of how the school is making progress towards meeting its academic outcomes.**

Measurable Objectives

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction School Report Card

For the 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 school years, Wisconsin implemented a school report card to provide a standardized measure of all public schools. In each of these years, La Causa Charter School's overall accountability score increased as we improved student growth and closed the achievement gap. A few of the scores below have fluctuated slightly both up and down which we feel may be attributable to the adding of new students.

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

We are proud to advise that our State Report Card scores have increased consistently every year. In 2016-2017 and every year since, the school has achieved an “Exceeds Expectation” score.

Year	Overall Accountability Score	School Achievement Score	Student Growth Score	Closing Gap Score	On Track Post-Secondary Readiness Score
2015-2016	65.5	31.2	58.4	69.7	81.0
2016-2017	77.0	32.5	80.3	77.9	81.8
2017-2018	79.2	34.0	80.3	84.6	80.8
2018-2019	77.0	36.0	74.6	85.8	80.8

FORWARD

Math scores indicate growth in academic performance from 10.8% proficiency in 2016-17 to 13.6% proficiency in 2018-19. ELA scores indicate growth in academic performance from 16.1% proficiency in 2016-2017 to 16.6% proficiency in 2018-19.

FORWARD Results: Math and Reading, 2016-2017 through 2018-2019

Subject	Year	ETT	No. Proficient	Prof. Rate	District Prof. Rate
Mathematics	2016-2017	483	52	10.8%	15.9%
Mathematics	2017-2018	481	69	14.8%	16.5%
Mathematics	2018-2019	463	63	13.6%	16.6%
Mathematics	2019-20	Did not test due to COVID-19 closures			

Subject	Year	ETT	No. Proficient	Prof. Rate	District Prof. Rate
ELA	2016-2017	483	78	16.1%	20.9%
ELA	2017-2018	481	87	18.1%	19.6%
ELA	2018-2019	463	77	16.6%	19.0%
ELA	2019-2020	Did not test due to COVID-19 closures			

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

STAR Scores

STAR has been used to monitor student academic growth.

Math: Students consistently showed growth from fall to spring.

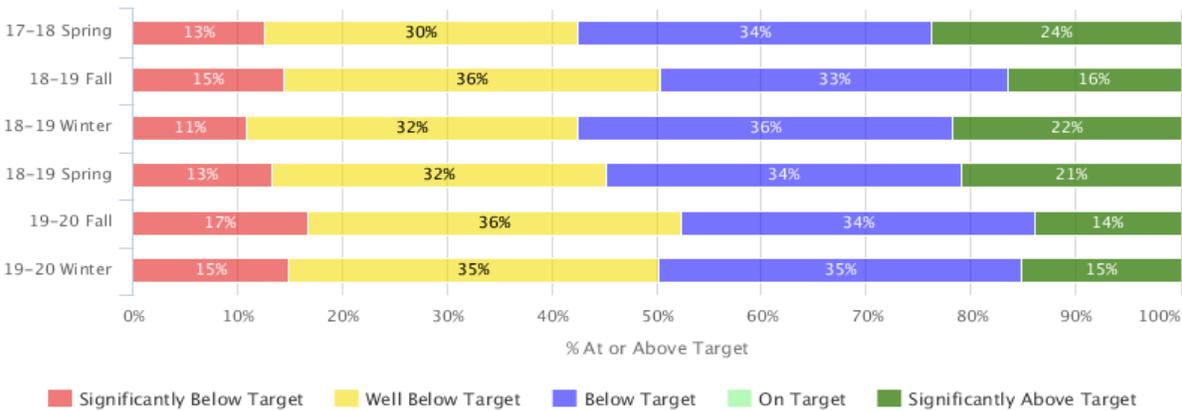
Reading: Students consistently showed growth from fall to spring on both Reading and Early Literacy tests.

With the design of our program, we anticipate increased academic growth as students acquire proficiency with the English language.

STAR SCORES: Math

STAR Math (1st-8th)

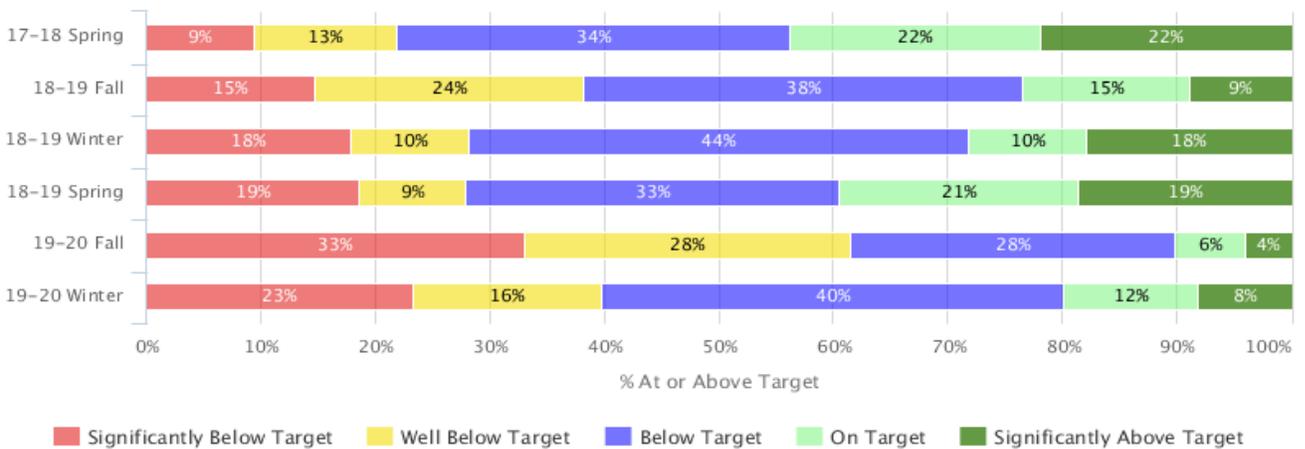
Spring 2017-18 to Winter 2019-20



STAR SCORES: Reading

STAR Early Literacy (K5-1st)

Spring 2017-18 to Winter 2019-2020

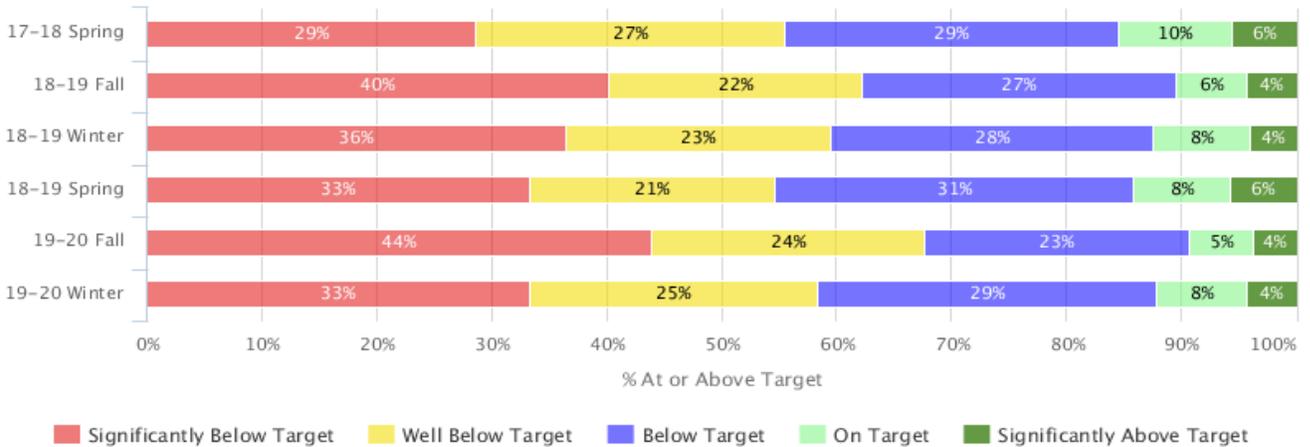


La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

STAR Reading (2nd-8th)

Spring 2017-18 to Winter 2019-2020



English Language Learners at La Causa Charter School

Data for English Language Learners exiting the ESL program at La Causa Charter School shows that the percentage of students exiting the ESL program in the 2017-18 school year and the 2019-2020 school year remained constant, with a slight .5% dip during the 2018-19 school year. The percentage of students meeting the qualifications for ESL services has increased since 2017-2018, with a slight decrease during the 2018-2019 school year. While the percentage of students in K5-3rd grade has slightly decreased since the 2017-2018 school year; the percentage of ELL students have increased from 24% in 2017-18 school year to 32% in 2019-2020. We anticipate ELL students' English language proficiency to greatly increase as they move up through the Dual Language Program; thus, exiting from the ESL program in greater numbers as they become bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish.

The students in the grade levels where Dual Language has yet to expand have received ESL services in a push-in, pull-out and/or co-teaching model. Additionally, as our dual language model continues to expand yearly with native English-speaking and native Spanish-speaking models in the role of teachers, and as we implement targeted ESL strategies in each classroom/grade, students will continue to increase ELP levels at a more rapid pace.

Year	Total School Enrollment	# of ELL K5-3rd	ELL Percent K5-3rd	# of ELL 4th-8th	ELL Percent 4th-8th	Total # of ELL	ELL Percent	Total # of Students Exited	Percent of ELL Exited
16-17	795	158	19.8%	192	24%	350	44%	0	0%
17-18	790	216	27.3%	234	29.6%	450	56.8%	10	1.2%
18-19	761	196	25.7%	244	32.1%	440	57.8%	6	.7%
19-20	735	192	26.1%	235	31.9%	427	58%	9	1.2%

La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

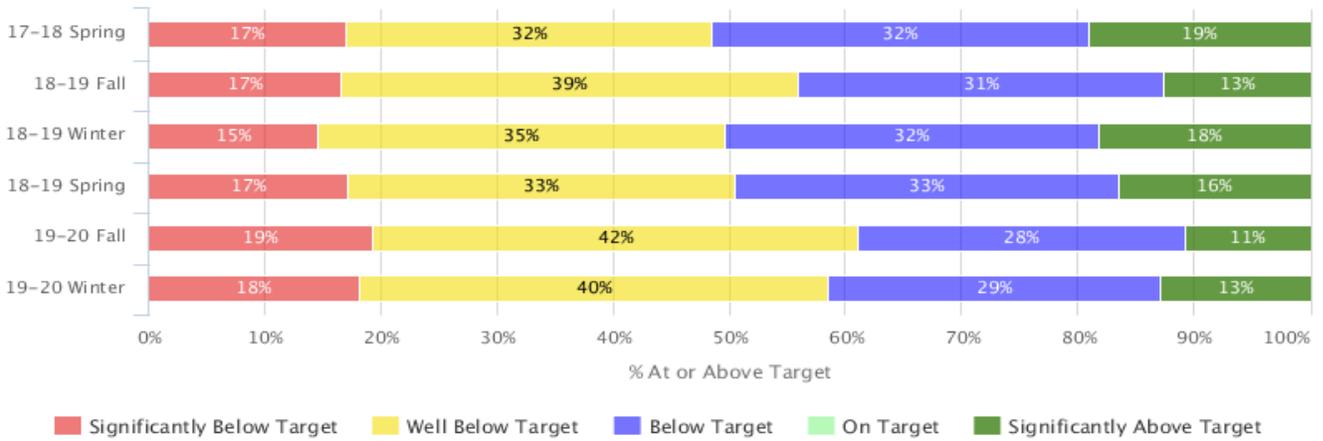
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

The graphs below confirm growth demonstrated by students in the developmental bilingual program, performing slightly below non-bilingual peers in math. However, these students consistently show growth from fall to spring, with only a minor drop from spring to fall. ELL students in K4-1st grade outperform their non-ELL peers on the Early Literacy STAR test, with significant growth from fall to spring.

STAR ELL

Math (1st-8th)

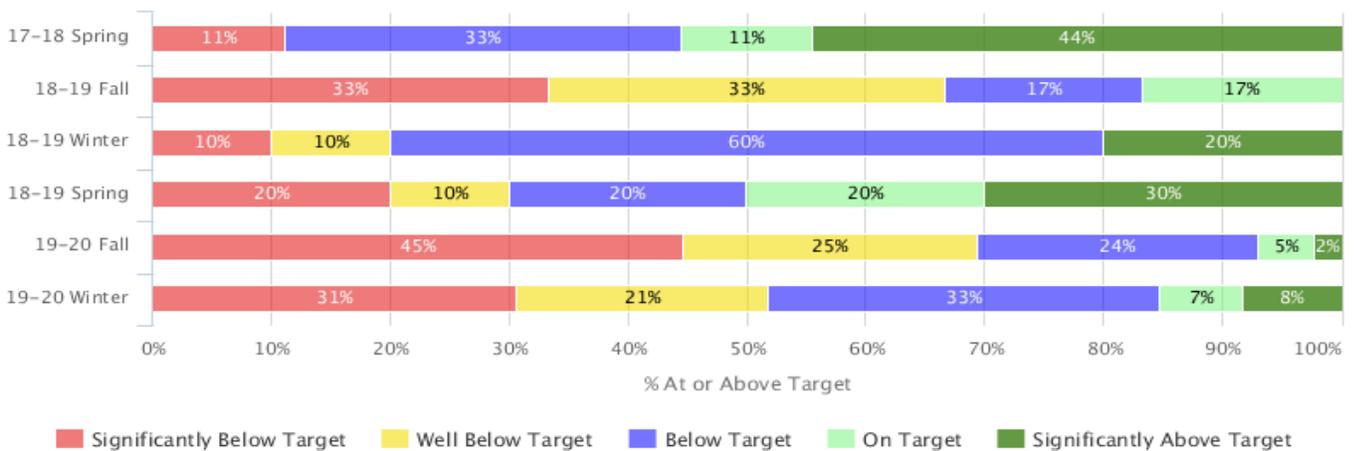
Spring 2017-18 to Winter 2019-20



STAR ELL

Early Literacy (K4-1st)

Spring 2017-2018 to Winter 2019-2020

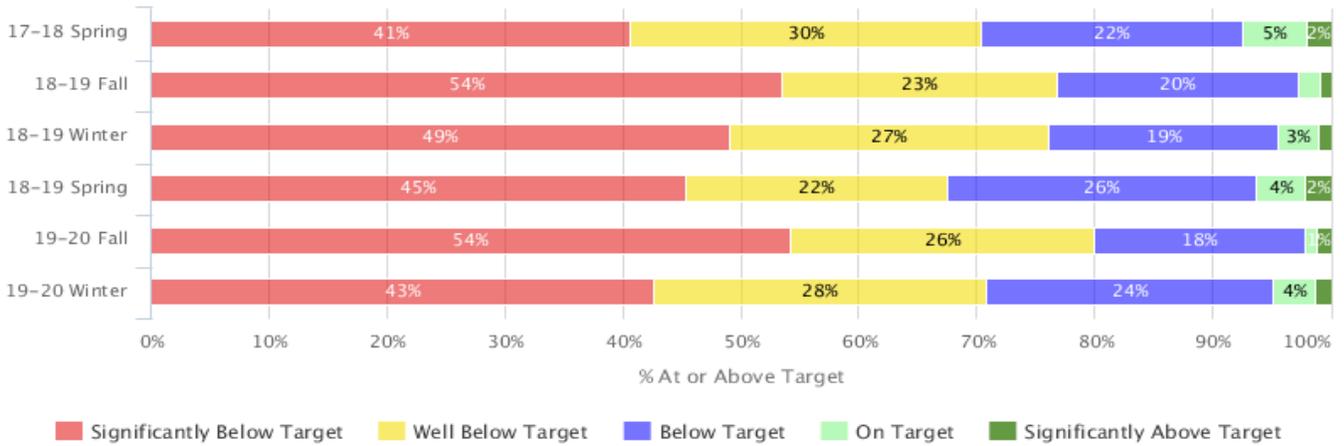


STAR ELL

Reading (2nd-8th)

Spring 2017-2018 to Winter 2019-2020

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools



3. Provide a description of how the school continued to provide educational and social-emotional support to students and families during an extended school closure. Provide evidence of its success and challenges during this time and any additional steps you might take if a similar closure would occur in the future.

To help support students and families during the recent extended school closure, teachers provided regular live and recorded lessons, daily communication to families through Class Dojo, and regular office hours for additional support for students. Our social worker, counselor, and school nurse provided regular social emotional resources such as community resources, coping skill videos and activities, and newsletters providing families with support tips and suggestions. Due to the short notice for implementation of virtual learning, it is difficult to gauge the level of success achieved during the 2019-2020 school year. At any given time, we had 50% or less of our K4-8th students participating in virtual learning. We had families who did not have a device and/or internet access. We have embarked on a one-to-one technology initiative for the 2020-21 school year. Every student will have either a laptop or tablet. For those families who do need internet service, we will be providing a hotspot and internet service. Additionally, teachers had challenges transferring traditional in person instructional methods into virtual instruction.

Additionally, teachers will be provided professional development in Microsoft Teams to streamline the platform of instruction, as well as digital platforms and components for curriculums such as McGraw Hill’s Wonders/Maravillas and Pearson/Savvas’ Envisions, Elevate Science, and My Perspectives, which are all used in the traditional classroom. These trainings will allow teachers to incorporate virtual instruction best practices and La Causa’s literacy, math, and science curriculums into virtual teaching.

Financial Performance

4. Explain how the school has met its financial performance standards. Describe how the school is financially sound.

La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

La Causa Management and its Board of Directors annually approve the school budget for submittal to MPS by April 30th. Budget revisions are submitted as changes occur in student FTEs and as funds are reallocated between budget line items. A mid- year, unaudited balance sheet, actual expenditure-to-budget report, and narrative are submitted to MPS by January 31st to meet contract compliance. The annual Financial Audit of the Charter School is submitted by September 30th. As a result of the FY2019 audit, no findings or management letter were received.

As of June 30, 2019, La Causa Charter School assets total \$8,883,251 and include: Cash, Accounts Receivable, Prepaid Expenses, and Property and Equipment. La Causa Charter School Liabilities include: Accounts Payable, Accrued Liabilities, and Short and Long-term Debt. La Causa Charter School continues to seek out opportunities to better its facility and environment for the students served.

To ensure compliance with all contract and DPI requirements as well as items noted in the annual MPS and outside financial and performance audits, the agency has implemented an Audit and Compliance staff that reports to the CFO and monitors and ensures all best management practices are being followed and deadlines met.

Organizational Performance

- 5. Illustrate how the school has a well-functioning organizational structure. Include pertinent information about parental involvement, staffing, health and safety, school enrollment, discipline guidelines, and school facilities. Describe how the community partnerships have impacted students.**

Parental Involvement

La Causa Charter school places high importance on meeting the needs of our parents and educating them to be advocates for their children. A bilingual Parent Coordinator at the school who was responsible for developing strategies and programs to help recruit and retain current students and families; monitor and report on student/family temperament/climate, and work with the leadership team to develop plans that would ensure parents and students satisfaction with their school experience. The role of the Parent Coordinator has been transferred to the Family and Community Enrollment Specialist (FACES). This person will represent, promote, and be the school's "Head Cheerleader".

The Parent Coordinator/FACE Specialist works closely with the Parent Committee. The goal is to structure the efforts of parent volunteers and help change the focus of the Parent Committee, expanding it beyond a fundraising body to providing trainings for parents on literacy, math, special education, early education, language development, and other topics. We will continue to offer trainings on topics such as financial planning, child/adolescent development, immigration issues, buying a home, and so on. In addition, we have sponsored and will continue to sponsor small business fairs where school parents who own businesses are able to exhibit their services to our community.

La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

The school staff are also committed to parental involvement. We hold events for our parents centered around literacy and math. Staff develop trainings and prepare materials for parents. Parents are taught strategies and games they can use at home to help their children improve their reading, language, and math skills. In addition, parents are given the tools needed to work with their children at home.

Our school also holds annual events to include parents such as Family Fun Night, Career Fair, Science Fair, States Fair, 100th Day Celebration, Washington DC Trip, High School Fair, Spring and Winter concerts, and several activities for K4 outreach. These events helped to build a sense of community with our families in a fun and cooperative environment. Our continued outreach and partnership with the community has resulted in substantial benefit to our students such as the following:

- Fleck Foundation - Privately funded scholarship program that provides students high school and college scholarship grants.
- Green Bay Packers, Social Justice Award - \$50,000 for new Sports Court
- Herb Kohl - \$61,000 donation to pay for 8th grade trip to Washington DC
- Partnership with UNIDOS US (formally NCLR) - Program sponsorship such as Padres Comprometidos and CHISPAS has helped bring education and training to parents and guardians.
- UWM Extension – Provides on- site health and nutrition programs to staff, parents, and students as well as support our 4H club participation.
- And much, much more!

The partnerships La Causa has with community organizations have been beneficial to students in a variety of ways including providing improved outdoor recreation areas to support students health and physical education programming, offering students unique opportunities to travel and be immersed in our nation's history or discover the amazing value of science and technology in our lives, providing programs that prepare students for college and future careers, and supporting the rapidly changing field of technology to give students a leg up in their on educational journey. Our organizational partnerships benefit families of our students by offering programs that support parents to become strong advocates for their students' success, create opportunities for parents to become leaders in the school, and celebrate diversity and the importance of family. The benefits of these partnerships also extend to the individuals in the partnership organizations, based on the feedback that we have received, which give them a chance to have a direct impact on the students that are the future of this city, and allow volunteers to share their knowledge, expertise, gifts and talents with the younger generation. The organizations themselves also benefit from the partnership by making a connection to families in the community and having an influence on students who are potential future employees.

Staffing

La Causa is committed to ensuring we employ the best trained and qualified educators. We ensure we remain competitive by performing periodic "Salary & Benefits" comp studies. The agency goes the extra mile and expends considerable funds actively recruiting staff. Staff with specific skill sets such as bilingual talents, are provided extra compensation which ultimately benefits our

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

English Language Learners. In the 2019-20 school year, our teaching staff included 39 teachers in grades K4 through 8th, with 17 being bilingual.

Our special education section continues to be a key component of our team's success and provides loving and comprehensive services to our special needs students. In 2019-20, our special education staff was comprised of four teachers, two speech and language teachers, and one psychologist.

The agency's Human Resource department assists with all the schools HR needs and is a great partner in ensuring we are in full compliance of existing policies and best management practices. Staff recruitment is on-going so we can solicit June graduates early in their search for employment. We have expanded the search area by recruiting bilingual teachers from abroad when necessary. We believe in developing our own teachers and encouraging our paraprofessional and nonteaching staff to pursue careers in education.

Teacher recruitment and retention are very important to the long-term success of our students, so the agency has taken great steps to enhance salaries and benefits offered to staff. La Causa's competitive compensation package includes a very generous health and dental insurance coverage, paid life insurance, a comprehensive 403B retirement plan with employer match, inclement weather days, paid and unpaid leave days, birthday and generous holiday schedule, comprehensive paid professional development and tuition reimbursement. We also offer added financial compensation for longer term commitments. The school culture enjoys a positive school environment where our teachers feel valued and supported. La Causa, Inc. was voted "Best Place to Work" by the Milwaukee Business Journal in 2016, "Top Non-profit" finalist by the Biz-Times in 2019, and "Best Non-profit" in 2020 by the Shepard Express.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of our staff, students, and families is extremely important and taken very seriously. We work with MPS's Safety Division to have crossing guards available for school arrival and dismissal at both the Main Campus and Kinder Academy sites. We have updated and added more surveillance cameras and are currently expanding on-site parking with the construction of a new parking lot for staff and visitors. We provide training to our staff on different techniques of de-escalation in the classrooms. Staff members are also formally trained in CPI techniques. An AM/PM duties schedule allows for our staff members to supervise students throughout the building and around the outdoor parameter of the building during arrival and dismissal times.

The Goldfish Swim School partners with us to teach our K4 and K5 students how to be safe around water. The School Crisis Plan is updated annually, and all staff members participate in on-going professional development to review the Crisis Plan and to familiarize themselves with their responsibilities in the event of a crisis.

Our full-time school nurse and Health Assistant oversee the school's Health and Wellness initiative. They work with the guidance counselors on the physical and mental health issues of our students and work closely with the school's Food Service and Nutrition Manager on nutrition and healthy eating habits for both our students and parents. Our students have taken part in Visual Screening (Marquette), Dental Health (Smart Smiles), and the Importance of Water (Delta Dental).

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

Enrollment

Student enrollment has seen a slight decline in the last two years primarily due to parents moving their children to St. Augustine Prep (K-12 grades allows parents to only use one school), other parochial/voucher schools, or parents moving out of the area. We remain aggressive in pursuing these parents to persuade them to remain. The competition from private, voucher, and other alternative schools has greatly increased in our area. We continue to see a strong commitment and interest from the community in our school and programs. We strive to achieve full enrollment and at times have waiting lists for students interested in attending our school.

We have recently created a new Family and Community Engagement Specialist - FACES position that will be primarily responsible for the retention and recruitment of students. This position will work closely with parents, students, and teachers to ensure we are constantly monitoring the school “climate” through open conversations, surveys, focus groups, and daily interaction with all stakeholders. The position will be involved with marketing, community engagement, and partnership development as well.

Discipline Policies

La Causa Charter School implements Milwaukee Public Schools' discipline policies with fidelity. We are in communication with the Department of Family Services when needed and follow their recommendations. We are proud of the fact that our suspension rate has always been lower than that of the district. We have been very successful with the implementation of the Positive Behavior Intervention (PBIS) and Supports program. Our Administration team participate in the Essentials of School Culture and Climate training and on Deep Dive into Discipline & IC Behavior Management Training.

Facilities

La Causa Charter School is housed in two buildings owned by La Causa, Inc. The main campus building was opened in 2003 and is in excellent condition. The Kindergarten Academy is housed in the building with La Causa's Early Education & Care Center at 809 West Greenfield Ave. Both buildings are maintained by our Facilities Management Department. An outside cleaning firm supplements the work performed by our own facilities staff to ensure the buildings are in impeccable condition. The cleanliness and safety of our schools and surrounding property is a priority.

6. Provide evidence that parents and students are satisfied with the school.

Satisfaction of Parents and Students

Annually, our average mobility rate has ranged from 1.5 to 4 percent, compared to the MPS mobility rate of 9 to 11 percent. This demonstrates a high level of satisfaction among parents and students. Families who do leave often cite the reason as moving out of the state or country. We have families who leave and later return to our school. As mentioned above, we have also recently added a new position (FACES) that will help us better monitor the school's climate by maintaining closer contact with parents and students.

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

7. Demonstrate that the school has an active and effective school governance structure. Provide examples and explain.

Active and Effective School Governance Structure

La Causa's President & CEO and its Board of Directors are highly committed to the success of the Charter School. The school's leadership team works closely with the President & CEO and the CFO to ensure that the school is operating smoothly.

The School Principal with support from the agency's Compliance & Audit staff ensures that all federal, state, and district mandates are met. In addition, the Principal oversees the school's finance, personnel, operations, and instructional program with the support of the agency's Corporate support services staff. The Principal works closely with four school administrators who are charged with oversight of day-to-day operations and working closely with families, students, and staff.

In 2013, an Academic Leadership Committee was formed and continues to help guide the school's leadership to ensure a high performing school. The committee is comprised of the President & CEO, five to six agency Board members, and community leaders from academic fields. They meet monthly to review, discuss, and strategize on how to better advance the school's academic performance and ensure we remain a rich and vibrant school. In addition, the school maintains a School Governance Council that meets monthly to discuss school data, operations, and plans. This is an advisory group made up of the School Principal, staff, parents, and community representatives.

Plans for Continued Success

Educational Performance

1. Describe any proposed changes to the school's educational program for the term of the next charter school contract (up to five years).

We are committed to offering an exceptional Dual Language Program to our approved 810 FTE students in grades K4 through 8th. We have currently expanded the Dual Language Program (Spanish-English) to fourth grade for the 2020-2021 school year. This program seeks to develop academic, oral, and cultural competence for all students. The goals of the Dual Language Program are for students to successfully perform academically in both Spanish and English. Students will be able to use English and Spanish comfortably and effectively in both academic settings and social settings. In addition, students will communicate effectively through reading and writing in English and Spanish at their appropriate age level. Lastly, students will demonstrate an appreciation for cultural diversity and cross-cultural competence.

The school also recently expanded its technology curriculum with the addition of the "Careers in Technology" program. In the 2019-2020 school year, the school expanded its use of

La Causa Charter School Charter Contract Renewal

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

technology with the replacement, upgrading, and increase of desktop units, laptops, and tablets. Most of these expenses were covered through grants obtained by the agency's grant writer. This new curriculum will provide students with a comprehensive and engaging group of classes that will introduce them to career paths typically considered untraditional for our student demographic. We will also continue to monitor educational trends and adapt accordingly in order to stay relevant and keep children and parents interested in our school.

2. Provide the proposed enrollment and grade levels for the term of the next charter school contract.

La Causa Charter School currently offers parents the opportunity to enroll their children in grades K4 through 8th grade. We strive for 810 FTEs yearly for the term of the next charter school contract. We will continue to expand the Dual Language Program up through the grade levels on a yearly basis until we roll-up to 8th grade. Although we are currently facing many challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are confident that our families will continue to enroll their children at La Causa where they find caring and dedicated staff who meet the academic, social and emotional needs of the students in a smaller caring setting.

The addition of new and/or expanded schools such as St. Augustine Prep, Escuela Verde, St. Joseph's, St. Anthony's, UCC Acosta Middle School, and others has had an impact on our enrollment, as expected. We closely monitor and gauge what these schools are offering and adjust as needed when possible. We closely track student's movement and analyze why parents move their children and will intervene and try to persuade them to stay with La Causa. Having a school such as St. Augustine Prep, that provides a K4-12 education also gives parents the option of having all their children in one school, so that has not been helpful for many schools in the area. Unfortunately, many of our parents and students are also attracted to the Shiny New Penny"; with its \$60 million dollar state of the art campus, many parents just cannot resist.

La Causa spends a tremendous amount of time and energy recruiting students by marketing via billboards, TV and radio commercials, flyers, direct mailing, attendance at community events, and much more. The agency's Awareness and Engagement team assist with development of brochures, keeping our website current and relevant, and developing media coverage. New this year is the addition of a Family and Community Engagement Specialist "FACES" position. This individual will be responsible for maintaining even closer contact with parents, students, and the community. She will be talking to all stakeholders constantly to ensure all are "happy" with their experience at the school. This will include gauging how they feel about their teachers, support staff, building, lunch program, curriculum, activities, etc. Parents will also be monitored to make sure they too are happy with their school experience. This information will then be shared with the school and agency leadership so they can review and adjust as needed. We believe this initiative will make for a more proactive rather than a reactive environment.

We also ensure that our school leadership works hand in hand with La Causa's Early Education & Care Center division to coordinate events and develop relationships with parents that have children enrolled at the EECC to introduce them and ultimately get them to enroll their children at the Charter School, thus turning them into a feeder source.

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

3. Outline the school's goals and measurable objectives for the term of the next charter school contract and describe how the school intends to meet these goals.

La Causa Charter School Contract Renewal Goals

Goal	Measurable Objectives	Implementation	Assessment Tool
To achieve high academic performance and language proficiency in reading in English and Spanish, and math in English	Annually meet or exceed district academic performance for math & reading	Follow MPS timelines and protocols for administering mandated assessments	Standardized tests approved by DPI and selected by MPS
Students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) will make one and a half year's proficiency growth in one year's time.	ELLs will advance in one year's time as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 will move to level 2.5 or above • Level 2 will move to level 3.5 and above • Level 3 will move to level 4 or above • Level 4 will move to level 5 or above • Level 5 will exit 	Teachers will stay in the targeted language of instruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math, science and reading/writing will be taught in English daily • Social Studies and reading/writing will be taught in Spanish daily. • Math vocabulary will be bridged to English. • Social Studies vocabulary will be bridged to English. • Science vocabulary will be bridged to Spanish. • Oral-language proficiency in English and Spanish will be develop simultaneously. • ESL teachers will co-teach in math classes where the Dual Language Program hasn't rolled-up to. 	Standardized tests approved by DPI and selected by MPS for English language development (Currently ACCESS)
Students entering La Causa after first grade will be bilingual and biliterate depending on the length of their educational career at La Causa Charter School. Students will demonstrate mastery at grade-level, in all content areas in both	All students will participate in the Dual Language Program as it rolls-up to eighth grade	Students who are native-Spanish speakers will be able to enroll at any grade level regardless of English language proficiency. Non-Spanish speakers will be able to enroll in the Dual Language Program up to and	Standardized tests approved by DPI and selected by MPS for Spanish language development (possibly the new STAR assessment)

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**
Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

languages as measured by Wisconsin State Standards.		including the beginning of second grade.	
Students attend Careers in Technology classes which prepare students for college and future careers. Our goal is to support the rapidly changing field of technology to give students a leg up in their educational journey.	100% of our middle school students will participate in all Career in Technology classes during the 2020-21 school year.	Students will attend the following classes: Computer Science, Robotics, PLTW and Video Production.	Student participation in these subjects will be monitored and actively promoted.

Financial Performance

4. Explain the school's financial plans and forecast.

The school will continue to embrace best management practices while following the fiscally prudent and responsible philosophy implemented by the agency’s corporate leadership. We are committed to ensuring that every dollar spent always has the student’s best interest in mind. We will continue to strive for a balance of expenditures that maximizes resources and tools for both students and staff and still allows us to maintain a competitive compensation package for our staff; achieve a blend of ensuring modern, clean, state of the art schools that provide students an environment that makes learning easy, fun, yet challenging. We will continue to upgrade and enhance our technology and equipment to provide our students the best chances of success.

We will continue to pay close attention to and react to what it takes to keep and attract top educators however, we are not interested in leading the compensation race, rather we will continue to work hard to create a school culture and environment where teachers want to be.

As with all schools, enrollment will drive expenses. We fully understand the correlation between registered students, staffing needs, and related instructional and non-instructional expenses. We will always ensure that we operate with an eye on revenues versus expenses so that we can maintain a sound and fiscally responsible school while providing the highest level of quality education available. La Causa Charter School and the agency will continue to pursue other outside funding from both private and corporate partners and supporters that will help supplement the funds received from DPI/MPS. This will include things such as grants and private donations to help grow our student scholarship program, and other fund raising activities that will help our students realize activities, such as the annual 8th grade trip to Washington DC, and other educational activities.

Organizational Performance

5. Illustrate plans for strengthening parental and community involvement in the

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

school's educational mission.

La Causa Charter School understands the extremely important role that parents and the community play in the education and success of our children. As mentioned above, to ensure we are providing parents all the tools and resources needed to be fully engaged in this process, the school has hired a Family and Community Engagement Specialist (FACES) for the 2020-2021 school year and restructured other positions to also include full engagement with all key stakeholders. This position will be responsible for all aspects of student recruitment and student retention. She will be partnering with the school administrative team, teachers and support personnel and agency leadership team to develop and implement an effective parent and community involvement plan. In collaboration with all stake holders, she will create a marketing plan to recruit new students and retain current students. The FACES position will promote the school to the community, develop and coordinate events, maintain marketing/recruiting materials, coordinate, attend, and represent the school at all events; develop tracking reports, etc., and hosting tours, initiating parent surveys, meet and greets, developing communications to parents, actively engaging the Parent Committee to host and participate in school functions and activities such as "Parent Appreciation Night, Muffins with Mom, Donuts with Dad, Mother's Day Celebration, etc.

The FACES position will meet regularly with students and parents maintaining constant contact with families to ensure the school is meeting their needs. The person will manage the student tracking report and assist with website updates. This position's main focus will be to foster parental involvement and to provide parents with information on community resources, coordinate educational opportunities for parents (GED, ESL, Computer Skills), develop programs and/or activities for parents that will promote school/child participation and most importantly, ensure students are enjoying their experience here at the school and holding the school and staff in high regard.

We are very proud of the strong partnership developed with our Parent Committee and the School Governance Council, all of whom play a critical role in keeping parents fully engaged, not only with their children, but incorporating them in the school's culture and environment.

We will continue to collaborate with other organizations such as the UNIDOS US, participating in their "Padres Comprometidos" and CHISPAS programs, which works with schools to empower parents so they can become stronger advocates for their children. We will continue to partner with the University of Wisconsin Outreach program to provide additional education to our students and parents. Our goals include continuing to provide strong support, resources, and educational opportunities that will increase parent involvement and provide a strong support network to help our students excel.

We value all that community partners can offer our school. We will continue to partner with organizations that can help us broaden our students' educational experiences. By partnering with companies such as Rockwell, Caterpillar, and Northwestern Mutual, and others, we will be able to give our students an opportunity to see how the FAST classes are put into use in the work force. These experiences will motivate our students to continue to pursue math, science, engineering, and art courses in high school and higher education.

6. Describe any changes to the school's governance structure.

**La Causa Charter School Charter
Contract Renewal**

Submitted to Milwaukee Public Schools

La Causa Charter School has a well-established School Governance structure. Primary responsibility for school oversight lies with the La Causa, Inc. Board of Directors, the President & CEO, and the Academic Leadership Committee. The School Principal along with our Compliance and Audit department are responsible for ensuring that compliance with Federal, State, and District mandates are met. In addition, the Principal works closely with the agency President & CEO as well as the agency CFO on school finances and oversees personnel matters, day to day operations, and instructional programming. The School Principal collaborates closely with school administrators, who in turn work with staff, students, and families to ensure that we are offering a high level of customer service and meeting the educational needs of all our students. In addition, the school has a strong School Governance Council which consists of the School Principal, staff, parents, and community representatives.

In the coming years, La Causa Charter School will continue to strengthen its Academic Leadership Committee. This committee consists of professionals who work or have worked in the field of education or in related fields. They bring with them a vast amount of knowledge regarding best education practices and are charged with reviewing the school's education program and making recommendations for improvement.

La Causa Inc. is very proud of the excellent relationship and partnership we share with the Milwaukee Public School district. As an MPS charter for 18 years, we feel we provide parents of the district an option for their children's education that allows students to still be included in the district's enrollment numbers and keeps them out of other competing schools like those mentioned above. We hope you find merit in what we have accomplished and respectfully request that you please extend our contract for another five (5) years.