SCHOOL NAME: AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School
SUBMITTER: Jack McCarthy
SUBMISSION DATE: 6/22/2021

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Campus name(s) and location(s): **There are six campuses: (1) Parklands at THEARC--SY2019, (2) Douglas Knoll--SY2012, (3) Oklahoma Avenue--SY2011, (4) Lincoln Park--SY2012, (5) Columbia Heights--SY2009, and (6) Southwest--SY2021.**

Year(s) opened: **See dates above**

Grade served: **PreK-3 and Pre-K-4**

Date the charter will be eligible for renewal: **July 2035**

When did the school's board approve the proposed change(s)? Please attach minutes from the meeting and vote results. **June 22, 2021, via consent resolution. The consent resolution is attached.**

EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

1. Describe the school's proposed educational approach and philosophy for educating students. How does this approach differ from the educational philosophy or methods the school articulated in its charter application and agreement?

    AppleTree believes every child should have access to high-quality early learning experiences. With support from a US Department of Education Investing in Innovation grant, AppleTree created Every Child Ready, a comprehensive instructional model differentiated for three and four-year-olds. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Division of Early Learning (DEL) recognizes Every Child Ready as a research-based model aligned with the District of Columbia Early Learning Standards (DC ELS).

    AppleTree will implement the Every Child Ready comprehensive instructional model, adapted for virtual learning with all virtual learners.

    The following modifications are in place to support virtual delivery of the Every Child Ready instructional model:

    - What to teach: Differentiated curriculum (approved by OSSE). *The Every Child Ready early learning standards are the same across virtual and in-person delivery models*
        - Modification: Teachers are provided with modified essential standards scope and sequence to prevent knowledge gaps and establish a base for future learning and development. For example, if a student is only available for XX amount of time, focus on XX
        - Modification: Comprehensive ECR@Home thematic learning packets designed to reinforce learning experienced during virtual lesson delivery

- How to teach: High-quality professional learning and coaching. *All Every Child Ready Professional Learning is delivered virtually -- regardless of in-person or virtual classroom experiences*
  - o Modification: AppleTree created the Virtual Teaching Rubric to support high-quality virtual lesson delivery
  - o Modification: AppleTree created resources at the standards level to no support family members' understanding of specific standards, and how to support the development of standards mastery. These resources are directly linked within the Every Child Ready Skills Mastery report

- How to measure success: Summative and formative assessment tools designed to support differentiated instruction
  - o Modified: Standards level checks for understanding designed to incorporate teacher and caregiver observations in the virtual learning environment.
  - o Modified: Every Child Ready Skills Mastery report, designed to support the knowledge base of family members who are serving as co-teachers in the virtual learning environment.

2. What's the rationale for the educational shift?
   Prior to the pandemic, in SY2019 28% of three-year-olds and 14% of four-year-olds did not attend District-sponsored prekindergarten programs. Undoubtedly some of these were attending private schools. However, AppleTree believes that many of those not attending were kept out of school by parents and caregivers who might have believed their children were better off at home or who were unwilling to have their children gone from home significant hours of each day. AppleTree had puzzled over how to reach these children and persuade parents and caregivers to send them to early-education classrooms, but with little success.

   The pandemic provided us with a possible answer: As in-person teaching ceased during the pandemic, AppleTree was forced to modify the Every Child Ready instructional model to serve virtual students. We believe these modifications were successful and allowed us to deliver a quality in-home education. Even with the presumed end of the pandemic and the return of most children to in-classroom settings, AppleTree believes there will continue to be a significant percentage of parents and caregivers who -- as they did pre-pandemic -- choose not to send their children to school. Providing those families with a virtual option will be a mechanism for reaching and educating those children.

3. How many students does the school plan to educate virtually? Are there any eligibility requirements a student must meet to participate in the virtual program? If so, describe them below.
   Initially, AppleTree plans to offer virtual learning "seats" to 20 students. Depending upon demand and the success of the virtual learning program, AppleTree may well apply to the PCSB for permission to increase that number.

   Eligibility requirements:

(1) Same as in-person enrollment.
(2) In-person caregiver support who is available (and willing) to provide in-person learning and play facilitation in the home environment.
(3) If families are interested in forming a pod, this could be one-two adults facilitating playful learning for multiple children.
(4) A commitment to engage in all virtual learning opportunities and participation in in-person assessments three times a year.

4. How will the proposed educational approach impact curricular choices, including resources, assessments, standards, and instructional strategies?

- Families will be provided materials and resources, including general supplies, classroom manipulatives, and books Families will be offered monthly supply pickups.

- Families may choose to pick up weekly meals for their student at the start of each week.

- Virtual teachers will deliver Every Child Ready.

- Caregivers will be asked to reinforce learning via off-screen activities, aligned with Every Child Ready early learning standards.

- Caregivers and teachers will be asked to complete curriculum-based assessments.

- If PCSB will require formal assessment, families will be asked to bring their child to a physical AppleTree campus, of their choice for assessments up to three times a year.

   a. Identify the virtual platform(s) the school will adopt and provide a rationale for its selection.

AppleTree is committed to using a virtual platform that is safe, accessible, and flexible to meet our needs. We will begin with Zoom, given the improvements that have been made during the pandemic but could migrate to other platforms if one offered a superior experience and value proposition.

- Families will engage in virtual synchronous lessons for (30-60 min daily) via Zoom or Hangouts.
- Families will engage in asynchronous content via:
  o Every Child Ready website
  o Sparkler Learning

   b. Identify the new curricular choices the school will adopt and provide a rationale for the curricular shift.

AppleTree will use Every Child Ready, modified for virtual learning, delivered via synchronous and asynchronous methods.

   c. Describe the long-range plan for curriculum implementation and professional development. How will the school ensure implementation fidelity?

- AppleTree will track family engagement and student participation in synchronous lessons.
- AppleTree will assign Every Child Ready Implementation Specialists to the virtual learning cohort of teachers.
- Virtual Teachers will receive the same number of hours of professional development sessions as traditional, in-person teachers.
- Virtual Teachers will be observed using the Virtual Teaching Rubric, and/or Virtual CLASS Observations (as required by PCSB).

5. How will the school ensure all students—including students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged and at-risk students, and students above or below grade level—benefit from the proposed educational approach?
- AppleTree will provide Every Child Ready at home resources in three languages (English, Spanish, and Amharic).
- Every Child Ready provides tiered, flexible small group plans and differentiated instruction strategies.
- Every Child Ready provides robust reporting at the student level to ensure teachers and families are positioned to support the child's progression across key domains of early learning including math, literacy, language, and social-emotional development.

6. How will the school ensure its proposed educational approach will result in successfully meeting its charter goals and academic achievement expectations? How will the school track outcomes among its virtually educated students?
- AppleTree will administer assessments and track children's mastery of early learning standards with the same rigor as the traditionally operated programs.
- AppleTree will leverage the comprehensive Every Child Ready instructional model to provide differentiated instruction based on the needs of individual students.

7. How will this approach further serve the school in meeting its mission?
AppleTree's mission is to educate three- and four-year-old children so that they are ready to succeed in kindergarten. We believe we effectively accomplish this mission for those children who attend our brick-and-mortar schools. However, it is our belief that we are not able to reach a significant number of young children whose parents and caregivers do not wish to send their child to a brick-and-mortar school. A virtual option such as the one we are proposing would, we think, allow AppleTree to educate these children. If this approach is successful and can be expanded, it would further increase the likelihood of providing *all* young children with a solid educational background by the time they reach kindergarten.

8. How did the school engage its internal community in redeveloping its educational approach? Include evidence demonstrating staff and parent support for the proposed changes.

AppleTree's virtual program grew out of its response to the academic and educational challenges caused by the pandemic. AppleTree's at-home version of Every Child Ready

was developed through extensive collaboration among teachers, leadership, families, and children.
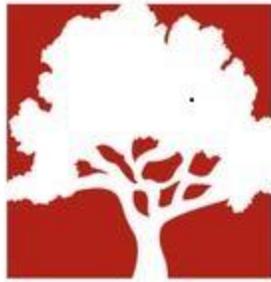
AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School (AELPCS)
Consent Resolution Relating to
**Every Child Ready @ Home**
June 22, 2021

Whereas, AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School faced significant challenges from the pandemic and in response developed Every Child Ready @ Home, a virtual learning curriculum, and

Whereas, the Board believes the Every Child Ready @ Home curriculum could be a valuable tool for teaching children who otherwise might not attend one of AppleTree's brick-and-mortar schools,

Now therefore it is --

Resolved, that the Board of Directors of AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School hereby approves Management applying to the DC Public Charter School Board for an amendment to its charter that would grant AELPCS the right to conduct virtual learning classes.

I hereby certify that the above resolution was approved and adopted by unanimous consent of the Board of Directors of AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School effective June 22, 2021.
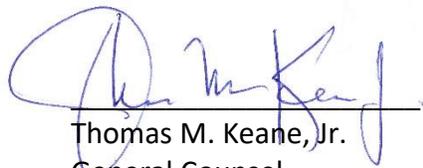
Thomas M. Keane, Jr.
General Counsel