



May 7, 2012

Mses. Maia Shanklin and Angel Anderson



Dear Mses. Shanklin and Anderson,

Thank you for submitting an application to establish a public charter school in the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (“Board”) has completed the 2012 Application Review process and I regret to inform you that at its public meeting held April 23, 2012, the Board did not approve your application to establish MaiAngel Public Charter School in the District of Columbia.

The Board’s decision was based on a thorough evaluation of your written application by the Board, Board staff, and an external adult education consultant; and information gathered from your applicant interview and the public hearing. The following findings were the basis for the Board’s denial:

- The program goals and exit outcomes were unclear as to whether the applicant group ultimately wanted to operate an adult education, alternative education, or a high school.
- The founding group chose Diploma Plus to help develop and implement a highly individualized blended-learning, performance-based curriculum. The performance of schools that use the Diploma Plus curriculum varies greatly depending on the strength of the school’s academic leader. The applicant group had yet to identify an academic leader, making it hard to determine the future success of the school.
- Diploma Plus engages with each of its schools at different levels of support and the application did not articulate the level of support MaiAngel PCS would receive.
- The two members of the founding group who are identified to run the school have limited experience running non-profits or working in schools. One has taught for one and a half years at a juvenile detention center.
- The proposed governance structure of MaiAngel PCS (MaiAngel, Inc.; MaiAngel, LLC; and MaiAngel Leadership Academy) concerned the review panel as the School Reform Act requires the charter school to be its own non-profit entity.
- The proposed salaries for the leadership positions will be challenging to fund with only 200 students. The combined salary for the Managing Directors exceeds \$200,000 in FY 2015. By FY 2018, the salary total for three leadership positions is projected to be approximately \$485,000 (\$168,000 per co-director and \$150,000 per principal).
- There is no line item in the budget to support professional development other than curriculum-related activities associated with Diploma Plus. Given the focus of the proposed school, teachers will need training in additional areas to support this challenging student population.

- The business plan mentions that there will be multiple partners that will to enhance the school curriculum but only Diploma Plus is included in the budget. There is no budget line item for a state-of-the-art technology infrastructure described by Diploma Plus.
- The budget includes funding sources categorized as grants, donations, and development that were not identified in other sections of the application.

We recognize the hard work and effort that went into the development of your application. Given the challenge that you intend to address, we strongly encourage you to reapply with a clearly defined and strongly supportive relationship with Diploma Plus. If you wish to receive additional feedback as it relates to the Board's denial decision, please e-mail Monique Miller at [REDACTED] by Thursday, May 18, 2012 to schedule an appointment. This feedback can be useful should you decide to revise your application for submission in upcoming review cycles.

Thank you for your interest in public charter schools and your commitment to improving public education in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Brian Jones. A thin, light-colored line extends from the top right corner of the box, suggesting a handwritten flourish or the end of a signature.

Brian Jones
Chair

cc: Scott Pearson, Executive Director