

McAuliffe International Middle School Steering Committee



Date: October 17, 2011

Board of Education
Denver Public School
900 Grant Street
Denver, Colorado 80202

Dear Board of Education:

This letter is sent on behalf of the McAuliffe International School (MIS) Steering Committee in support of the request for MIS to be classified as an innovation school. While we cannot all be present at the Public Comment Session, the Committee is strongly in favor of the proposal and would respectfully request that the Board of Education approve the request.

The Committee is a volunteer committee of a dozen or so parents that has met over the past few months to review and provide insight and comments on the proposal and plan for MIS. The Committee, which did not have any formal requirements for membership, is comprised of members from the surrounding neighborhoods of Park Hill, Lowry, and Stapleton, and its participants include parents from many of the neighboring schools (Park Hill Elementary, Bill Roberts, Westerly Creek, DSST, Denver International School, Odyssey, and Carson Elementary). Many of the Committee members have 5th grade students who are currently exploring their middle school options.

Over the course of six weeks, the Committee met on a regular basis to discuss the proposal for innovation status, the plan to create an International Baccalaureate® Middle Years Program (MYP), and various other components of the proposed plan. The Committee met with a number of individuals, including prior members of the Swigert Steering Committee (the elementary school that shares its campus with MIS), and experts on the IB program and Singapore Math. The Committee reviewed the surveys conducted prior to the opening of the Swigert McAuliffe International School campus, and considered the interests of those who participated in the surveys.

There was significant discussion and debate on each area of the plan. The Committee looked with a critical eye at each component and asked, "Does this meet the needs and expectations of the area (not just Stapleton, but the entire area) of potential student population?" While no plan can address every need and expectation, we, as a Committee, believe that this proposal does much to meet the needs of the community and students MIS will serve. Particularly, it provides a natural extension to those elementary students at Swigert International School that wish to continue their IB education at the same location. In addition, with innovation status, MIS will have greater flexibility to implement programs and policies that allow for a solid education of all students. For example, after significant debate and discussion, the Committee fully supports the plan to have a longer school day and an extended school-year calendar that allows for significantly more teacher-student contact days. We are particularly impressed with the well-rounded education the IB program provides (with a focus on eight core subjects that include the arts, sciences, and technology). We think this program will be a draw to parents seeking a



balanced education for their middle school children, and it complements the other neighboring programs (DSST, DSA, Bill Roberts, etc.).

In conclusion, as Committee members, we ask that the Board of Education, after due consideration, approve the request for MIS to be classified as an innovation school so that it can pursue its plans to qualify as an IB middle years program, and to offer the innovative programs that the administration is pursuing.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration, and for your service to our schools and our children.


Sincerely,

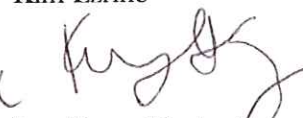

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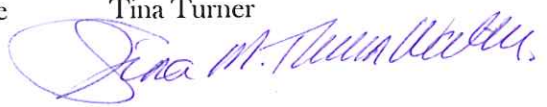

Chet Seward

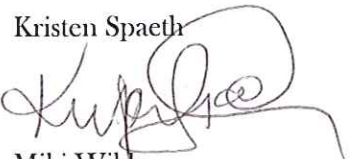
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