

From: [Office of Educational Opportunity](#)
To: [Julie Jonuzi](#)
Subject: FW: New RFP Phase 1 submission from Phase I Application: Prospectus
Date: Thursday, November 21, 2019 11:02:36 AM

Aaron A. Seligman
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From: oeo@uwsa.edu <oeo@uwsa.edu>
Sent: Friday, November 1, 2019 12:07 PM
To: Office of Educational Opportunity <oeo@uwsa.edu>
Subject: New RFP Phase 1 submission from Phase I Application: Prospectus

Name of Organization

Prairie Hill Waldorf School

Year Founded

1,987

First and Last Name of Primary Applicant

Amber Ford

Address

N14 W29143 Silvernail Rd.
Pewaukee, USA_WI 53072
[Map It](#)

Email

amber_ford@rocketmail.com

Phone

(414) 659-4332

Provide the names, professional affiliation (current job), and role in the proposed school for all school leaders and board members.

Name	Professional Affiliation	Role in Proposed School
Risk Information Manager	Healthcare Consultant	Board of Trustees Member
DJ Gallaher	Risk Information Manager	Board President
Ariel Schoeninger	VP of Operations	Board Secretary
Alison Crow	Architectural Designer	Board of Trustees Member
Julia Warner	Fund Development	Board of Trustees Member

Jeanne Ring	School Administrator	School Administrator
Stanlee Maliszewski	Teacher	Teacher
Julie Szyba	Teacher	Teacher
Jayson Mauer	Tradesmen	Board of Trustees Member

Purpose and brief history of organization (For instance, is this a new non-profit created for this proposed school, or is it an existing non-profit seeking to expand or replicate its portfolio?)

Prairie Hill Waldorf School is a private Waldorf elementary school located in Pewaukee, WI looking to open a publicly funded charter school which follows the Waldorf method of education.

Evidence of Wisconsin Incorporation and IRS 501(c)(3) status

- [Articles-of-Incorporation-and-IRS-Tax-Exempt-Letter-1.pdf](#)
- [PHWS-OEO-Prospectus-10.15.2019.pdf](#)

Do you currently operate a school?

Yes

In what sector?

Private

For how many years has the school existed?

32

Are you converting the existing school or adding a new school?

Add new

Is your proposal a

Fresh Start Campus (Totally new school)

Where would the school be located?

N14 W29143 Silvernail Rd. Pewaukee WI 53072

When would students first enroll?

Academic Year 2021-2022

Are you applying for a charter with any other authorizers this year? If yes, please list the authorizer(s).

No

Have you applied for authorization of this concept before?

No

Application

- [PHWS-OEO-Prospectus-10.15.20191.pdf](#)

Attachments

- [PHWS-OEO-Prospectus-10.15.20192.pdf](#)

Prospectus Rubric

School/Organization	Prairie Hill Waldorf School
Reviewer Name	Aaron Seligman

Directions: Please use this rubric to guide your review of the prospectus. Responses must be submitted to the Office of Educational Opportunity electronically. However, you may record your responses electronically or in handwritten form. If you use handwriting, please scan your reviews and then submit the form electronically. As a reminder, prospectus approval does not result in authorization of a school.

A. Mission & Purpose: Is the mission/purpose of the school clearly stated?	
	Mission/purpose is clear, focused, compelling and likely to produce high-quality educational outcomes.
x	Mission/purpose is likely to produce high-quality educational outcomes
x	Mission/purpose expresses clear guiding principles.
x	Mission/purpose is evident throughout prospectus
	Mission/purpose is ambiguous, vague, or otherwise not compelling
	Mission/purpose are absent from application. (Dispositive of application. No need to proceed to subsequent sections for review.)
Comments	The application demonstrates a deep focus on Waldorf education and mission. It emphasizes the innovative and unique aspects of the Waldorf model. It demonstrates a commitment to expand access to those students from families between the Wisconsin Choice Program income limits and those able to afford private tuition.
B. Does the mission/purpose reflect the objectives of the Office of Educational Opportunity? (Multiple may apply.)	
	The prospectus includes programs that are innovative in meeting the educational needs, interests, and/or demands of the community.
	The prospectus includes programs that will serve at-risk student populations.
x	The prospectus includes programs that support effective instruction based on research literature or demonstrated best practices.
	The prospectus includes programs that will advance efforts to reform public education.
x	The prospectus includes programs that incubate new ideas or would develop innovations to current best practices.
	The prospectus includes programs that would expand educational equity.
Comments	The program is innovative in several ways relative to traditional public education. It might present new opportunities for families and students. Increasing public access to these opportunities is within the OEO goals. However, the applicant shares a comparatively small subset of families that have expressed an interest in the model but are prohibited by the current tuition structure. The application describes measures of success focused primarily on inputs from the school in terms of

	<p>student and parent participation but does not address how it might share its impact of influence on public education. OEO also questions the equity impact of becoming a public school, noting that based on current DPI report card data, Prairie Hill is less racially diverse and has significantly fewer economically disadvantaged students than neighboring districts. The application also does not address whether the school would seek to serve at-risk students.</p>
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C. Does the prospectus include a school design that is complete and well thought out?	
General Comments	<p>Generally yes, the school has been in operation for many years and the application provides substantial detail describing the Waldorf values, methods, sequence, staffing, and program overall. OEO does question the implementation of the program to fulfill the stated values openness and recruitment of new students. The application describes a key attribute of the program is for students to be with the same teacher and same classmates for many years (a “cumulative experience”) and that students and families with prior Waldorf experience are more likely to succeed. OEO is unsure how this might function if the school prioritizes the inclusion of new students to fulfill its mission. Additionally, while the applicant states there would not be admissions barriers, OEO would question how the school would determine whether a family supports the Waldorf methodology for admission.</p>
Yes or No & Provide Comments	<p>Does a similar school exist in the area? If yes, are there admissions barriers to the existing school that preclude universal access, e.g. discriminatory admissions practices such as mandatory prior curriculum, competitive admissions, or set-aside seats based on students’ zip code of residence? <i>(Potentially dispositive of application based on discretion of OEO’s Director.)</i></p> <p>Comments: There is not another Waldorf school in the area. OEO notes there are several innovative public charter schools in the Kettle Moraine district.</p>
D. Does the prospectus have a clear curricular focus? (Both may apply)	
x	<p>Core content area described, including curriculum, are either research based or proven by best practices used in school with positive student, family, and/or educator outcomes.</p>
	<p>The prospectus includes a description of the instructional program that explains how the school’s curriculum is aligned to state standards or will be aligned.</p>
Comments:	<p>The application provides great detail about the Waldorf curriculum and its broad focus, special subjects, deep study, outdoor education, communication skills</p>

	development, and individualized student growth and portfolios of student work. It cites supporting networks of other Waldorf educators and the commitment of educators towards continuous growth and professional development. It shows a thoughtful analysis of child development and instructional strategies to align with these developmental stages in an intentional manner to respond to each stage of growth. Each aspect of the curriculum appears to have a complimentary and cohesive design strategy for student engagement. The application suggests only briefly that the curriculum would align with state standards.
E. Does the prospectus include a methodology that is likely to lead to positive outcomes for students, educators, and families? (Multiple may apply)	
x	Description of why the curriculum was chosen and evidence of its success with the targeted population.
x	Methodology supported by research or best practices.
x	Proposal includes evidence of support of the model from professional educators
	Proposal includes evidence of support from students / families interested in the school.
Comments:	The application provides detail about the success of the Waldorf method at different stages of student development, and research suggesting the method could be effective for diverse groups of students. OEO notes the application and school's current website discusses standardized assessments and rubrics as not useful and questions how a charter authorizer and the public might appropriately understand students and overall school performance. The application does cite portfolio and advancement requirements as evaluation measures but does not explain what these might be. In addition, for special education, OEO is unsure how a Learning Support Coordinator might work with a local school district if the school is an independent charter school. OEO is concerned that much of the cited evidence for community support is speculative and based on only one other Wisconsin Waldorf example, but does not provide evidence of actual outreach to the local community or data from parents or community regarding if they would enroll or maintain enrollment. It also does not share if the applicant has previously sought authorization through a local district or made other efforts to implement the proposed program.
F. Does the prospectus include a governance structure that is adequate to carry out the proposed mission? Is family/community and educator participation sufficiently described? (Multiple areas may apply.)	
	Proposed board members include a wide range of expertise, e.g. education stakeholders, management, financial planning/management, law, and community outreach.
x	Clear description of transition from planning team to operating team is included.
x	Plan includes meaningful involvement of families/community in governance of the school
x	Plan includes meaningful involvement of educators in governance of the school.
Comments:	The Circle of Colleagues structure appears to be an important structure to foster a positive professional culture at the school and include educator voice in decisions. The Board of Trustees membership suggests it includes a variety of Waldorf-

	<p>connected perspectives and committees to share in the efforts of school governance and oversight. It is unclear the diversity of the boards, and how this might change if the school intends to reflect the cultural diversity of the community.</p> <p>While other schools have done this successfully and OEO does not doubt the applicant might succeed as well, the application does not fully address how the private or early childhood governance structure of the school would function together with the K4-8 components. OEO would also question how the two boards might function together under a charter and who might have ultimate oversight and decision-making authority, given the Circle of Colleagues currently has authority over personnel and hiring while the Trustees have financial responsibilities.</p>
<p>G. Does the prospectus include evidence the organization has the financial capability to plan, develop, and operate the school? (Multiple may apply)</p>	
	The prospectus includes evidence there is an adequate and reasonable plan to manage startup costs without complete dependence on federal or private funds.
	There is a plan for raising funds needed beyond 2(x) per pupil funds
	The financial analysis appears to be realistic and the proposers gave adequate consideration to primary elements of a business plan including marketing, student recruitment, and fundraising.
x	Financial concerns exist and are described below.
Comments:	OEO notes that the current tuition rate exceeds the rate the school would receive as a public charter school on a per-pupil basis. While understanding not all students might currently pay the full rate, but without more information about fundraising opportunities, it appears a potential funding gap would remain. OEO also notes the DPI charter funding would only be a short-term solution to support some planning and implementation but is not an on-going financial support. The application provides assurances the school is stable but does not cite specific data for the projected sustainability, fundraising capacity, or other revenue sources.
<p>H. Is the business plan well thought out and likely to lead to a successful initiation of the school?</p>	
Comments:	OEO notes a well-developed timeline and map from planning through authorization and pre-opening, with clear lines of responsibilities and deadlines. It also shows a strong understanding of needs with appropriate timing to lead to a charter opening. However, a few items would require much more detail including compliance with state regulation, staff certification (and any implication for recruitment) and separation of the charter from the private aspects of the school.
<p>I. Prospectus's strengths</p>	
Comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission to expand access to a previously limited educational opportunity. • Detailed, specific curricular plan and strategies. • Innovative approach and demonstration of contrast to traditional education with research support. • Robust involvement of teachers and parents in school governance and feedback. • Detailed timeline and priorities to transition to public school.

J. Areas of concern / need improvement	
Comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of evidence of community involvement or discussion overall, particularly regarding interest in public charter or student recruitment. • Data supporting equity impact or cultural diversity in governance or student population. • Lack of detail regarding key transition issues for budgeting/fundraising, marketing, special education and English language learners, compliance with state law. • Challenges to implement performance frameworks and assessments to public oversight. • Complication or potential obstacle to align new students and families to educational model. • Details regarding transition to public charter governance.
K. Do you recommend the school/organization proceed to Phase 2? (Yes or no.)	
No.	

November 22, 2019

Aaron Seligman
Office of Educational Opportunity
1564 Van Hise Hall
1220 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706

Amber Ford
N14 W29143 Silvernail Road
Pewaukee, WI 53072

Dear Ms. Ford:

Thank you for your submission of the Phase I Prospectus for Prairie Hill Waldorf School. The prospectus and attachments have been reviewed using the Prospectus Reviewer Guide. I regret to inform you that Prairie Hill Waldorf School is not invited to proceed to the next phase of the charter school authorization application process at this time. The enclosed Prospectus Reviewer Guide includes all relevant comments and items you and your team should consider if you decide to resubmit a Phase I Prospectus to the Office of Educational Opportunity (OEO) in the future. Information regarding the next Request for Proposals process will be made available on the OEO website in the coming months.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please contact me at aseligman@uwsa.edu or 608-263-7481.

Sincerely,



Aaron A. Seligman, Director
Office of Educational Opportunity

Enclosure