Network support received by Citizens of the World schools

This fact sheet describes the relationship between CWC schools, the CWC network and our teachers, families and communities. We hope this information helps parents, teachers and community members understand how CWC schools are managed, governed and supported to ensure that the needs of CWC children are being met.

What is the Citizens of the World network, and how do CWC Schools benefit from membership? The CWC Schools network is a nonprofit organization that 1) enables individual CWC schools to access national resources and knowledge to supplement their work, and 2) ensures that while nearly all decisions affecting students are made at the local CWC school-level, all schools continue to adhere to fundamental CWC values.

CWC Schools and our parents share the interest in making sure that the fundamental values of being a CWC school – challenging academics, children of all backgrounds learning together, and community building – are present in every school. We also agree that each school needs adequate resources and support so as many resources as possible get to the classroom level, and local decision-makers are best situated to make decisions based on student needs.

The CWC network ensures that each CWC school reflects its communities, parents, students and teachers by maintaining a significant amount of autonomy at the school level regarding key decisions like curriculum, staffing, budgeting, school and classroom materials and professional development. At the same time, CWC school leaders and teachers have indicated that high-quality network support and services provided through the “licensing and affiliation agreement” frees up more of their time, energy and resources to be focused on what really matters -- educating children.

For example:

- **Access to a national “knowledge network” of CWC teachers, parents, principals and administrators**, who can learn from one another and share best practices on project-based learning, curriculum development, and the creation of a strong school and staff culture, among other things, which allow us to figure out what is working best to educate children.
- **Meaningful professional development opportunities and fair evaluation tools** that help CWC staff grow professionally and provide insights into school performance.
- **Access to best practice student assessment tools and help in tracking student achievement regularly and accurately**.
- **Ongoing training and development for school leaders**, for example, in how to operate schools efficiently.
- **Long-term financial planning assistance** to ensure financial stability, including training in financial management, and financial oversight and assistance if useful.
- **Help resolving outstanding academic issues**, when requested by the school.
- **Communications support** to keep parents, teachers and communities up-to-date on their schools.
• *Interest-free start-up loans* of up to $450,000 to help new schools get off the ground, funds that communities would otherwise have to raise or borrow (the interest on which could unnecessarily cost $17,000 annually – dollars that would go to banks, not children).
• *Attracting great teachers and school leaders.* Being a part of the “Citizens of the World” nonprofit school network brings association with a brand that helps attract talented teachers, school leaders, staff, parents and partners.

**Is membership in the CWC network cost effective?** Being part of a national network not only minimizes overhead, but also makes it possible for CWC schools to save hundreds of thousands of dollars they would otherwise have to spend to hire additional school-level administrators and vendors to perform the functions listed for each school. CWC Schools is proud that the licensing fee for receiving these services is lower than the standard management fee charged by many charter networks.

**Are school-based budgets and locally raised dollars managed by the schools?** Yes. CWC schools believe in empowering principals to drive decision-making locally: principals propose and execute their own budgets. Boards of directors approve annual and five-year budgets, as well as serve as fiduciary officers of the schools. All parent and philanthropic dollars raised at the schools remain at the schools and are not included in licensing and services fee calculations.

**Will the licensing and affiliation agreement be different in different regions?** Yes. Each region will determine the appropriate licensing fee with CWC Schools when negotiating their licensing and affiliation agreement.

**What does the functional relationship look like between the network, the regions and the schools?**
When opening new schools, the network writes a charter and organizes the regional board. The regional board, with guidance and support from the network, hires the executive director (ED) and first year principals, who in turn hire their teachers/staff. Principals report to the ED, and the ED reports to the regional board.

CWC schools are accountable to their regional board, which is responsible for the financial health of each school within their region.

When a new school opens, when it comes to the development of curriculum for example, the network will provide a “road map” for curriculum Principals and teachers work to tailor the curriculum “road map” to meet their student needs, with the ED providing oversight and direction.

The schools, the regions and the network are directly accountable to the public through official charter authorizing entities.

**How does the network ensure CWC parent and community engagement?** We greatly value parent and community engagement. All CWC schools encourage parents to be engaged, but participation in the schools is not required. The schools work to create numerous opportunities for parents to be actively involved in the schools, including volunteer opportunities, parent surveys, and community-building events. Each region decides how to best work with and include their parents in the schools. CWC schools engage parents and communities through a variety of channels, including e-mail and text messages, letters sent home from school, parent meetings, and phone calls – and invite parents who are able to be active participants onto school-level committees.

[www.citizensoftheworld.org](http://www.citizensoftheworld.org)