

Plans underway to open 2 charter schools in Midtown Kansas City

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KANSAS CITY, MO (KCTV) - Efforts are underway to open two new charter schools in Midtown Kansas City by fall of 2016.

The neighborhood school effort started in living rooms as some parents considered moving to the suburbs for better schools.

Citizens of the World Charter Schools, a national charter school organization, announced Wednesday it will partner with Midtown Community School Initiative to open the two schools.

"It's been almost a year in the making and we're so thrilled it's finally coming to fruition," said Jessie Rosell, a parent who is helping launch the effort.

Rosell and her neighbors first started meeting last summer, many of them parents of infants who would eventually need to start considering educational opportunities within the city. Some of them considered moving to suburban districts due to their unhappiness with the Kansas City School District.



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After research and planning, Citizens of the World made a site visit earlier this year and determined Kansas City would be a viable option for the organization's sixth school nationwide. COTW currently operates three schools in Los Angeles and two in Brooklyn.

"This means families can stay in Midtown. I have a 2-year-old and I have a lot of friends with young kids who are looking at options here or are looking to move. And this means we can actually recruit and retain families to stay in this area now," Rosell said.

The initiative still has a big hill to climb. It must raise \$4 million over the next two years to successfully launch the first two elementary schools with kindergarten and first grade for 200 students. The group will begin fundraising efforts this fall and hopes to recruit an administrator by spring.

The plan is to add a grade each year after 2016 with the intention of having a kindergarten through 12th grade system in the heart of Kansas City.

MCSI will also need to recruit a local board which will control the school system and use the national charter organization as a means for support.