

**To:** MMSD Board of Education

**From:** Nuestro Mundo, Incorporated

**cc:** Superintendent Dan Nerad

**Date:** July 30, 2009

**Subject:** Proposed Strategic Plan

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Nuestro Mundo, Inc. applauds the School Board's bold initiative to involve Madison community members in the construction of an unprecedented community-based strategic planning process. Involvement of all stakeholders is a formula for successfully implementing the ambitious goals set forth in the proposed Strategic Plan. We wish to contribute some recommendations from the perspective of one successful community collaborator.

Belief statements 3 and 4 establish an inclusive community where everyone has the right to contribute along with a "*...collective responsibility to sustain a respectful, culturally responsive environment...*"

Parameters 4 and 5 are even more explicit "*...community input is valued, actively sought and families, schools, businesses, organizations and communities work as partners.*"

We suggest two ways to enhance those goals through the following action steps:

1. **Inclusion of a statement that reinforces the current board charter school policy that clearly acknowledges charter schools as positive additions to current district programming and opportunities for choice.**
  - a. Under the Student and Resource Capacity Action Plans there are references to establishing meaningful community collaborations that provide more revenues, efficient delivery systems and innovative school structures.
  - b. Charters provide federal funds with strict expectations of achievement. Community partners are allowed freedom to develop new approaches that address specific needs of a school district in exchange for accountability. Wisconsin is one of five states that have recently been awarded \$30.2 million to develop more quality charter schools here.
  - c. The school board should also actively encourage potential community partners to collaborate in the creation and implementation of more charters that address identified needs, as expressed in the strategic plan.
  
2. **Inclusion of the expansion of dual language immersion education models similar to NMCS in the district's long-term plan.**
  - a. Under the Curriculum Action Plans there is discussion of creating more culturally relevant, rigorous and innovative forms of instruction that address higher-level thinking strategies and twenty-first century skills. It is our mission to support and expand quality dual language educational opportunities for Madison area families.

We appreciate the strong support and effective collaboration that has developed over the past five years between NMI, the MMSD Administration and the School Board through the Nuestro Mundo community charter school. We believe that the inclusion of these recommendations in the action steps of the proposed strategic plan would produce even more opportunities for a variety of academic pursuits and meaningful participation of more community partners who support our shared vision for future successes and the exploration of new possibilities for learning.