

Intent to Submit a Charter School Application (for School Opening 2026)

Proposed Charter School Name: The Learning Connection

Proposed School Location: Portland, ME

Proposed Grade Levels: Pre-K to 8

Target Population: Pre-K through Grade 8 students, emphasis on students experiencing neurodivergence and/or trauma

Anticipated First Year Enrollment 80 students

Projected Targeted Enrollment: 150 students

Contact Person: Joanna Horton McPherson

Relationship to Applicant Entity: Founder, President

Name of Applicant Organization: Madre Tierra Foundation

Address: 11 Crescent Ave Peaks Island, ME 04108

Contact Telephone Number: (928)-821-8853

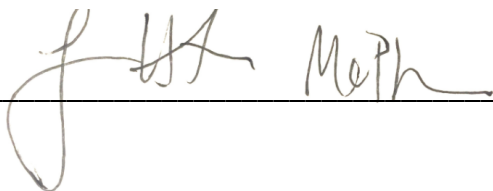
E-Mail Address: jch166@mail.harvard.edu

School Program Design (150 words or less): *Include a brief description including any anticipated contracts with an Education Service Provider (ESP).*

The Learning Connection will enroll up to 150 Pre-K through Grade 8 students in a school that emphasizes student autonomy and provides developmentally appropriate opportunities for both play and physical activity. The school will be intentionally small to create continuity of relationships over time, recognizing that belonging is a requisite condition for learning for all young people and that opportunities for problem solving and relationship building are critical to the success of many children who are neurodivergent or have experienced trauma. The curriculum will combine meaningful interdisciplinary project-based learning with direct instruction in foundational academic skills taught using a small group format. Family engagement will be a primary focus of the school, seeking to affirm student's identity and experiences within the life of the school and to establish robust two-way engagement with families to ensure optimal student outcomes.

This indicates our intention to submit an application in response to the RFP issued by the Maine Charter School Commission. I understand this document is not part of the application, but that I must provide this document to the Commission within 15 days of the issue of the RFP if I wish to submit an application.

Signature: _____



Date: July 15, 2024