B.1 Applicant Organization

Judy Webster, our Founder and Director, has been a dedicated educator for 18 years, and devoted practitioner of Montessori education and philosophy for about 16 years. Throughout her career, Ms. Webster has continually tested, honed and worked to perfect her practice and philosophy. She has a strong commitment to work with and for children in whatever capacity that leads to their success and development. The idea (our Founder refers to it as an *epiphany*) of Camino Montessori finally came to fruition in May of 2009 when Ms. Webster resigned from her teaching position at a local private Montessori school in order to dedicate the necessary time and energy to see her vision manifest. Important aspects of Ms. Webster's vision include the goal of contributing to the expansion of Montessori education by offering a new Montessori primary and elementary school within a community that does not currently have level. She is also motivated to contribute in her way to much needed educational reform ensuring the choice is available to as many students and families with a desire for this method, without a tuition based fee system—we wish to provide our quality Montessori education at no charge and with minimal enrollment fees.

In June 2009 we found our name—*Camino Montessori*. "Camino" comes from the Spanish term, *el camino*, which means the path, the road, the journey. Our logo includes a hand, which represents the hand-mind connection discussed by Dr. Montessori in her theory. The spiral within the hand represents several aspects of our work—not only does our integrated curriculum unfold as a spiral, but we believe the spiral is a powerful metaphor for our external and internal journey through life. Once we chose our name and created our logo, efforts to establish our nonprofit school began in earnest. We applied for and received our Employer Identification Number: EIN# 27-1328060.

We selected and met with our attorney and accountant July-November of 2009 to begin composing our Articles and Bylaws. We also began our market search to identify areas we felt had the greatest need for and potential for our success. After a "chance" meeting with the owners of Legacy Montessori Preschool (the first preschool to open in Maricopa), we decided to focus on this city as a candidate for our school. There are few progressive alternatives and the fact there is a Montessori preschool already in existence were also factors in our choice. Ms. Webster and the owners of Legacy Montessori share in their desire to expand Montessori in Maricopa, and are working in collaboration to achieve this goal, which gives Camino a strong local connection so important for the early stages of establishing and developing the school.

During this time Ms. Webster also met with many of the families who have children enrolled at Legacy Montessori, and found an overwhelming sentiment and desire to see their children continue Montessori through the elementary years. On several occasions we have met with the Chamber of Commerce, City of Maricopa representatives, and several other business leaders who were in agreement that an elementary Montessori program would benefit their community. After extensive due diligence, we completed our market research and decided Maricopa was an excellent community in which to open our school. Given the economic climate, we believe this community cannot fiscally support a private school at this time and opted to seek a charter school authorization from the Arizona Board of Charter Schools.

Our founding Board members met for the first time in November 2009. With her initial selections, Ms. Webster chose to select a small number of Members who shared her vision for

Camino, and offer a wide range of experience including non-profit, education, business development, management, and human services backgrounds. Also of note, Members chosen have experience with business start-up, human resources, administration, record keeping, and leadership. All of these traits were considered to be extremely important in the start-up phases of a new charter school.

Camino Montessori submitted its Articles of Incorporation on November 11, 2009, and received approval on December 3, 2009, by the Arizona Corporation Commission. We are currently pending with 501(c)3 status—we submitted our Application for Recognition of Exemption to the Internal Revenue Service on June 16, 2011.

Article III of the Articles of Incorporation of Camino Montessori states:

"The Corporation is formed and organized and shall always be operated exclusively for educational and other charitable activities, solely and exclusively in the interest of the general public. More specifically, the objects, purposes and nature of the business of the Corporation will include (but not limited to) organizing and operating a charter school or charter schools within the State of Arizona and under Arizona law."

Throughout this application, detailed information will be found on how Camino Montessori intends to operate its educational program providing superior learning opportunities to children enrolled. The nature of a Montessori school lends itself to the interest of the general public through a variety of methods. Specifically, through the Montessori educational process, students will be better prepared to be active members of their community and the school will also be engaged in the community.

Camino Montessori joined the Arizona Charter School Association (ACSA) in January 2010, and is currently a member. Ms. Webster attended the ACSA's first Charter Starter workshop series in February and March 2010; she and several Board members attended the 2010 ACSA Business Conference; and in August 2010, Ms. Webster completed a week long course, designed for school owners and administrators, in Whole Montessori School Management sponsored by North American Montessori Teacher Association (NAMTA).

Although Camino Montessori completed their charter application in June 2010, we did not meet the submission deadline. Over the past year, Ms. Webster has remained committed, and has continued her research and learning in this process. She has continued networking with families, businesses, and leadership in Maricopa. Our website was established and up at the beginning of 2011.

Camino Montessori takes seriously its obligation to foster a love for learning through partnerships involving students, parents, teachers, staff and the community.
Currently, our Organizational Principals as listed in our current Articles of Incorporation are Judy Webster, Kevin Webster, Marianne Mulligan, Rebecca Brandon and Carol Hoover. (Please note changes in status in Section B.2.) Our Founder and Board are extremely pleased to submit Camino Montessori's 2011-2012 charter application for review, and are ready and confident to move forward once authorized.

SEE ATTACHED LETTER