

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 25, 2025 6:25 pm
Browser: Mobile Safari 17.4 / iOS
IP Address: 136.227.191.56
Unique ID: 1365437226
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Jenny White
Email	jennywhite@comcast.net
Phone	615-424-1107
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

The Forge School is the first and only school in Nashville designed to prepare students in grades 6th through 12th to thrive in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) fields by combining academic excellence with hands-on, career-connected learning. Its mission to empower students to forge their own futures with purpose and creativity is uniquely tailored to reflect the diversity and ambition within Nashville.

This school stands apart by integrating real-world experiences, industry certifications, and community partnerships into the everyday curriculum. Students wont just learn, theyll build. And in a rapidly changing Nashville, where innovation and opportunity must go hand in hand, The Forge School is exactly the kind of option our families deserve.

With educational equity at the center and a local vision leading the way, supporting The Forge means investing in both our childrens futures and a bold blueprint for Nashvilles success.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 27, 2025 7:56 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 111.93.2.2
Unique ID: 1365771288
Location: 17.3843, 78.4583

Name	Elena Ruiz
Email	ellie.c.ruiz@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 922-9842
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Prospective Parent
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 28, 2025 11:10 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 5.253.184.192
Unique ID: 1365930540
Location: 40.731, -74.0771

Name Melissa Jaramillo

Email mdt.jaramillo@gmail.com

Phone 615-818-5158

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District Community Member

I wish to comment in support of The Forge School

Written Comment

I'm writing in support of The Forge School and hope to encourage you to extend full approval to grant this much-needed charter school for Nashville students in 6th- 12th grade. I was first introduced to The Forge School this past Spring and love the concept! I've been involved in education and working with youth in our area for over 20 years, and witnessed the excitement stirring among area families. I've long recognized that all students deserve the chance to unite with their passion -- whether that is in the arts, literature, history, STEM paths, or more. While the MNPS system is making some positive strides with TCAP and National Report Card results, The Forge School would be one more impactful resource as students achieve higher when they are excited about learning. While some schools offer segments, The Forge School presents a uniquely targeted pathway by focusing fully on Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE). This centrally located school will well prepare students for highly skilled and well-paying opportunities. This can open doors for a future that can impact generations of Nashvillians with possibilities and hope that currently may feel out of reach.

The partnerships with top Nashville industry leaders will allow students hands-on experiences and potential job opportunities upon graduation, and also enable these same leaders to swiftly share real-world problems that can be addressed to keep learning up-to-date. Graduates will be ready to enter the Nashville workforce with required industry certifications in hand -- ensuring them a jump start on their counterparts joining these markets. Traditional academics will also be leveled up, fostering a lifetime love of learning, allowing these young men and women to pursue leadership roles in the future and go on to college if desired.

Not everyone belongs on a college path -- but that does NOT indicate that they should be made to feel 'less-than'. A view at hundreds (to thousands) of applicants for a single, average-salaried job posting on LinkedIn showcases that a college degree no longer equals job security. Additionally, we all see the tremendous growth that continues within the greater Nashville area. Our community needs these highly skilled, trained, confident, and empowered students to infuse our workforce with the latest industry knowledge to raise the bar and bring THE BEST to the architecture, construction, and engineering fields in Nashville. The results can be wide-reaching, including (but not limited to) higher-quality finished projects, positive ripple effects throughout our local and state economy, and improvements in our city's reputation both in education and the ACE industries.

The bottom line: You have educators, industry partners, and the community united to grant Nashville students and families a choice that can truly make a difference -- perhaps, in time, setting

a standard for similar schools throughout Tennessee and beyond. It is my sincere hope that you will grant approval and allow The Forge School to move forward with unleashing opportunities for our collective future.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 30, 2025 6:32 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 23.124.177.48
Unique ID: 1366764262
Location: 35.6174, -87.0318

Name	Rodney Rowan
Email	rrowan@mnps.org
Phone	(901) 604-1946
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Other
What is your relationship to the application?	MNPS Employee
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS
Written Comment	<p>I will provide a brief statement supporting MNPS' decision to deny The Forge School. The existence of charter schools within communities experiencing elevated levels of teacher mobility significantly amplifies the challenges of stability in the educational environment. Urban public schools often serve a diverse student population, comprising individuals with varying backgrounds and a wide range of academic and socio-emotional needs. This diversity necessitates that educators possess specialized skills and training to effectively cater to these varied requirements. When charter schools do not prioritize the distinct needs of all student subgroups, there is a risk that individual students may not receive the tailored support essential for their academic and personal growth, which can further complicate the overall educational landscape.</p>

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 31, 2025 2:32 pm
Browser: Safari 18.2 / OS X
IP Address: 134.199.81.9
Unique ID: 1367063727
Location: 34.0515, -118.2707

Name	Marie Alvarez
Email	whymeno@yahoo.com
Phone	(615) 459-8972
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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This school stands apart by integrating real-world experiences, industry certifications, and community partnerships into the everyday curriculum. Students wont just learn, theyll build. And in a rapidly changing Nashville, where innovation and opportunity must go hand in hand, The Forge School is exactly the kind of option our families deserve.

With educational equity at the center and a local vision leading the way, supporting The Forge means investing in both our childrens futures and a bold blueprint for Nashvilles success.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 31, 2025 2:32 pm
Browser: Firefox 133.0 / Linux
IP Address: 136.227.183.249
Unique ID: 1367063795
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name Tricyanah Charlemagne Alvarez

Email tcalva623@gmail.com

Phone 615-423-6719

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District Community Member

I wish to comment in support of The Forge School

Written Comment

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: July 31, 2025 10:07 pm
Browser: Opera 124.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 136.227.162.235
Unique ID: 1367184692
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Arielissa Liriano
Email	arielissal52823@icloud.com
Phone	(629) 217-4556
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 2, 2025 8:48 am
Browser: Firefox 133.0 / Linux (Ubuntu)
IP Address: 134.199.75.98
Unique ID: 1367546432
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Lindsay Read
Email	lindsayread13@gmail.com
Phone	253-223-0268
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 3, 2025 11:00 am
Browser: Safari 18.0 / OS X
IP Address: 134.199.81.254
Unique ID: 1367722585
Location: 34.0515, -118.2707

Name	Brian Haden
Email	brianlhaden@gmail.com
Phone	615-545-8976
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 3, 2025 11:38 am
Browser: Firefox 132.0 / Windows
IP Address: 195.133.208.207
Unique ID: 1367728325
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name Abdoulaye Diouf

Email diouflays@gmail.com

Phone 404-626-2135

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District Community Member

I wish to comment in support of The Forge School

Written Comment We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 3, 2025 1:24 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Chrome OS
IP Address: 136.227.185.237
Unique ID: 1367743564
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Zuleyma Espinoza
Email	gonzalezandrea2012.ag@gmail.com
Phone	615-689-3189
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 4, 2025 4:33 pm
Browser: Chrome 136.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 134.199.73.17
Unique ID: 1368104049
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Kadence Williams
Email	kadenceiman@outlook.com
Phone	615-689-0623
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	Please approve this school. I am attending NYIT this fall to study architecture. I wish this school was around when I was in 6th grade!

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 5, 2025 7:11 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 111.93.2.2
Unique ID: 1368526099
Location: 17.3843, 78.4583

Name	Fiona Graig
Email	fiona.graig@gmail.com
Phone	(917) 617-4806
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Other
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

The Forge School is the first and only school in Nashville designed to prepare students in grades 6th through 12th to thrive in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) fields by combining academic excellence with hands-on, career-connected learning. Its mission to empower students to forge their own futures with purpose and creativity is uniquely tailored to reflect the diversity and ambition within Nashville.

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Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 6, 2025 8:45 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 73.88.228.112
Unique ID: 1368897601
Location: 36.1579, -86.8608

Name	Scott Campbell
Email	scott@nashvilleincubator.org
Phone	(615) 484-0667
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Prospective Parent
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	See attached letter
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18342549533

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 7, 2025 9:26 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 107.199.109.39
Unique ID: 1369284440
Location: 36.1406, -86.7508

Name Maura Sullivan

Email maura.sullivan@mnps.org

Phone (615) 983-7678

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District LEA Staff Member

I wish to comment in support of MNPS

Written Comment

Public Comment on The Forge School Charter Application
Submitted by: Maura Black Sullivan, Chief Operating Officer
Metro Nashville Public Schools

To the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission:

As Chief Operating Officer of Metro Nashville Public Schools, and a public servant with more than 25 years of experience in Tennessee's public school systems and local governments, I write to formally express my opposition to the charter application submitted by The Forge School for location within the Metro Nashville Public School District.

My review of both the original and amended application raises serious operational and planning concerns that suggest the school is not prepared to open and operate in a manner that meets the needs of students or complies with the expectations and regulations of a public charter school in Tennessee.

Outdated and Inaccurate Enrollment Justifications

The application relies on outdated data and fails to accurately reflect current capacity within the proposed geographic area. Schools in the cluster are not over capacity, and the justification for a new charter school in this area is therefore not compelling. Moreover, the amended application continues to use incomplete and outdated data, omitting several schools from the analysis, which weakens the foundation for this proposal.

Facilities Planning and Construction Feasibility

The facilities plan presented in both the original and amended applications is deeply flawed. The applicant has allotted only six months to identify and prepare a facility, an unrealistic timeframe given the complexities of commercial real estate, code compliance, and permitting in Metro Nashville. The timeline omits any period for securing necessary permits, which alone may take 60 to 90 days. The plan also assumes that the landlord will be able to provide an additional 20,000 square feet of space each year to accommodate student growth-an unreasonable assumption that lacks substantiation.

Further, the application contains no meaningful discussion of anticipated challenges in securing a facility, nor does it include adequate budget allocations for tenant improvements or expansion. It also lacks clarity about who will be responsible for overseeing construction and renovation work, which is a major gap in accountability for a project of this scale.

Operational Readiness and Student Services

There are multiple unresolved concerns regarding the daily schedule, recruitment strategies, and student handbook. Despite revisions in the amended application, there continues to be insufficient detail about how the school plans to attract and retain students, and how it will address the needs of all learners-particularly students requiring special education services and transportation. The special education transportation budget is not realistic or sufficient to meet federal requirements, and the

plan adds vans for general transportation without corresponding operating and maintenance funds.

Safety and Insurance

The safety plans outlined are vague and incomplete, and the applicant has made no firm commitment to securing appropriate liability or property insurance coverage. These omissions are particularly troubling given the proposed use of commercial buildings that must be brought up to public school code standards. The application emphasizes commercial code compliance but lacks understanding of school-specific building requirements, further undermining confidence in the applicant's operational readiness.

Budget and Financial Oversight

The Forge School's application shows overreliance on a third-party financial management service without demonstrating adequate internal financial oversight or planning capacity. Several budget categories lack necessary detail, particularly those related to facilities improvements, transportation, and nutrition services. Conflicting information about how meals will be provided indicates a lack of familiarity with the requirements of school nutrition programs, which are critical to student well-being and compliance.

Conclusion

Metro Nashville Public Schools is committed to providing high-quality, safe, and equitable educational options to all students. Unfortunately, the application submitted by The Forge School does not meet those standards. The proposal relies on flawed data, unrealistic timelines, insufficient financial planning, and underdeveloped safety and operational protocols. Based on these deficiencies, I respectfully urge the Commission to deny this application.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 7, 2025 10:44 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 99.14.55.186
Unique ID: 1369295770
Location: 36.3066, -86.6101

Name	Amie Coleman
Email	amie.coleman@mnps.org
Phone	(615) 594-6870
Resident District Status	Non-district Resident
What is your resident district?	Sumner
Relationship to Application/District	LEA Staff Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

MNPS employs a comprehensive, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to identify student needs early and provide targeted interventions that nurture both academic achievement and emotional wellness at every grade level. Using real-time student feedback and leading data, MNPS is able to pinpoint concerns quickly, ensuring timely, intentional, and effective support. Data-driven, tiered interventions are designed to foster both academic growth and personal development through specialized instruction. MNPS has prioritized emotional wellness by ensuring barrier-free access to resources, leveraging both internal expertise and collaborative community partnerships. Every MNPS school is staffed with master's level school social workers who provide in-house, goal oriented mental health counseling to students and families, at no cost. Advocacy Centers across the district offer dedicated spaces where trained adults help students identify emotions, practice coping skills, and reengage with learning. This approach has led to an increase in instructional time and a decrease in behavioral exclusions. Through partnerships with Centerstone, Mental Health Cooperative, STARS, and Vanderbilt, MNPS continues to expand school-based mental health services, ensuring students and families can access care with ease. A districtwide focus on restorative practices is evident in the investment in reset rooms and restorative practice assistants, fostering accountability and conflict resolution rather than punitive discipline. When paired with high academic expectations, these supports have produced measurable results: improved state test scores, increased daily attendance, increased instructional time, and stronger overall student success. There is no evidence that this level of whole-child programming, combining rigorous academics with comprehensive mental health, behavioral, and family engagement supports will be available through educational opportunities outside of MNPS

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 6:18 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 72.105.0.45
Unique ID: 1369379887
Location: 39.1094, -84.5718

Name	Carol Brown
Email	carol.brown3@mnps.org
Phone	(629) 910-6380
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	LEA Staff Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

My name is Dr. Carol L. Brown. I'm an MNPS parent and proudly serve as Director of Attendance Services-one of many departments within Student Support Services, where attendance matters all day, every day.

Over the past several years, we've built a robust support system using high-level, evidence-based strategies focused on prevention, early intervention, and intensified support for our most vulnerable students. As a result, we've seen a consistent decrease in chronic absenteeism since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our district-wide Attendance Matters campaign has helped all staff understand their role in preventing absenteeism. We believe in a holistic, coordinated approach across Student Support Services which leads to stronger academic and social-emotional outcomes vs. an isolated stand along approach that leads to diminished results for students.

While our attendance goal is ambitious - 93% or higher - which reflects our belief in what's possible for all students. In contrast, I understand that some charter schools only aims for 80% of students to attend 80% of the time. That would allow students to miss over 36 instructional days-a loss of more than two months of learning in a single year.

At MNPS, we have the systems, resources, partnerships, and proven strategies to support students and families, reduce chronic absenteeism, and increase academic growth and achievement.

Thank you again for your time-and remember: Attendance Matters. All day, every day!

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 7:55 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1369399273
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name	Beth Schroeder
Email	counselorschool@yahoo.com
Phone	(629) 224-8989
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) is already leading the way in preparing students for high-demand careers and supporting their social-emotional development. The proposed charter Forge School, while well-intentioned, seeks to replicate systems and strategies that MNPS has long had in place-and with proven success.

MNPS serves over 81,000 students across 157 schools, representing one of the most diverse districts in the country. Our students speak more than 140 languages, and nearly 35% are economically disadvantaged. Despite these challenges, MNPS students are achieving at historic levels. In 2025, we saw record gains in TCAP and End-of-Course exams, with double-digit increases in proficiency across all core subjects. Our graduation rate reached an all-time high of 85.7%, reflecting the strength of our academic and support systems.

What sets MNPS apart is our integrated, district-wide approach to student support. The Positive Schools Supports Department, part of our Student Support Services Division, is embedded in every school. This team works to build safe, inclusive, and emotionally supportive environments where students and staff thrive. Through daily routines like morning meetings, class discussions, and school-wide activities, students learn to name emotions, solve problems, build relationships, and make safe choices. These practices are not isolated-they are foundational to our district's culture.

We don't just prepare students academically; we prepare them for life. Our career and technical education (CTE) pathways, including those in architecture, construction, and engineering, are already equipping students with the skills and certifications needed to enter high-wage, high-demand industries. The Forge School's proposed model is not new-it mirrors what MNPS is already doing, and doing well.

The difference is scale and impact. MNPS's systems are not limited to a single school or a small cohort-they reach tens of thousands of students across the district. We have invested in building adult capacity, using evidence-based practices, and creating equitable learning environments that support all learners. Our work is data-driven, community-informed, and aligned with national best practices.

We welcome innovation, but we must also recognize what is already working. The Forge School proposal does not fill a gap-it duplicates efforts already underway. Rather than diverting resources to a new charter, we should continue strengthening and expanding the successful systems MNPS has built. Our students

deserve continuity, stability, and the full benefit of a district that is already leading in academic achievement, career readiness, and whole-child development.

In short, MNPS is not waiting for a charter to lead the way-we are already there. Our students are forging their futures every day, supported by a high-functioning system that is proven, inclusive, and deeply rooted in the values of public education.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 9:13 am
Browser: Mobile Safari 18.5 / iOS
IP Address: 172.58.145.70
Unique ID: 1369421844
Location: 36.0711, -86.7196

Name	Ashley Collins
Email	ashley.collins2@mnps.org
Phone	(615) 818-7111
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	LEA Staff Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

In our district, collaboration and ensuring every student is known are top priorities. We are deeply committed to serving students in special populations, including those in foster care, hospitals, residential treatment facilities, and those supported through Section 504 plans.

Despite the vulnerabilities these students may face, we work diligently to provide comprehensive academic and non-academic support that promotes:

- Educational stability
- Reduced absenteeism
- Minimal disruption to learning

This is achieved through ongoing collaboration with Student Support Services and a wide network of internal and external partners. Together, we proactively identify and eliminate barriers so that every student-regardless of circumstance-has the opportunity to thrive.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 10:11 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 108.195.6.151
Unique ID: 1369440771
Location: 36.2134, -86.7311

Name	Makeda Watson
Email	makeda.watson@mnps.org
Phone	16299106415
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS
Written Comment	Dear Commissioners,

I join MNPS leadership in supporting the decision to decline The Forge School application. As Director of Family and Community Partnerships, I oversee work that bridges schools, families, and community organizations-ensuring students have not just academic pathways, but the supports they need to succeed in them.

Through programs like Community Achieves, Extended Learning, and our partnerships network, MNPS already offers construction, architecture, and engineering pathways alongside tutoring, mentoring, mental health services, and family engagement initiatives. These are delivered in a coordinated way that meets students where they are, without creating silos.

Approving a charter with overlapping offerings risks duplicating services, straining resources, and reducing equity of access. MNPS has a comprehensive, district-wide model that integrates career exploration with whole-child supports-benefiting every student, not just those who could attend a single school.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission to affirm the Board's decision.

Sincerely,
Makeda Watson
Director, Family and Community Partnerships
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 10:20 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1369443827
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name	Ka-Rhonda Porter
Email	karhonda.porter@mnps.org
Phone	16152915000
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS
Written Comment	Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in strong support of MNPS and the Board of Education's decision to decline The Forge School application. MNPS already provides high-quality career and technical education, supported by strong family and community partnerships, extended learning opportunities, and comprehensive student support services.

These programs are available to students across the district and are intentionally designed to meet the needs of the whole child. Introducing a new charter school with similar goals would not expand access-it would simply duplicate existing offerings and divert critical resources away from our current schools.

Upholding the Board's decision will allow MNPS to continue strengthening the proven programs and partnerships that serve all students equitably.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ka-Rhonda Porter

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 8, 2025 10:27 am
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1369446658
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name	Janelle Wommer
Email	janelle.wommer@mnps.org
Phone	(615) 997-7961
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	LEA Staff Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS
Written Comment	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am writing to support the MNPS Board of Education's decision to decline The Forge School application. MNPS already offers the types of programs The Forge is proposing-through Academies of Nashville, Early Postsecondary Opportunities, and career pathways like construction, engineering, and architecture-within our existing schools.</p> <p>These opportunities are paired with strong wraparound supports, including before- and after-school learning, family engagement initiatives, and partnerships with community organizations. This ensures all students-not just those able to attend one school-can benefit.</p> <p>Creating a new charter with overlapping offerings would duplicate services, divide resources, and reduce equitable access. I urge you to uphold the Board's thoughtful decision and keep investing in the high-quality programs and supports MNPS has in place.</p> <p>Sincerely, Janelle Wommer</p>

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 9, 2025 1:46 pm
Browser: Mobile Safari 18.5 / iOS
IP Address: 104.176.254.201
Unique ID: 1369722216
Location: 36.2195, -86.774

Name Anne (Amy) Kraus

Email amy.kraus@att.net

Phone (708) 426-4500

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District LEA Staff Member

I wish to comment in support of MNPS

Written Comment

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing in support of MNPS and the Board of Education's decision to decline The Forge School application. MNPS already delivers high-quality career and technical education, paired with strong family and community partnerships, extended learning, and student support services.

These programs are available to students districtwide and are intentionally designed to meet the needs of the whole child. Adding a new charter with similar goals would not expand access-it would duplicate what's already available and shift resources away from existing schools.

Upholding the Board's decision ensures MNPS can continue strengthening the programs and partnerships that serve all students equitably.

Sincerely,
Anne Kraus

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 11, 2025 9:04 am
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1370044550
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name Whitney Slovick

Email slovick2@gmail.com

Phone 16309758251

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District Community Member

I wish to comment in support of MNPS

Written Comment

I am writing to formally oppose the charter application for The Forge and to respectfully urge the State Board to deny this application in support of Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS). After careful review of The Forge's proposal and consideration of the needs of our students, families, and community, I believe that approval of this charter is unnecessary, duplicative, and potentially disruptive to the ongoing success of MNPS.

MNPS currently offers a robust and proven educational model that directly aligns with-and, in many ways, surpasses-the intentions outlined in The Forge's application. Through the Academies of Nashville, MNPS has built a nationally recognized high school model that provides students with real-world learning opportunities, career pathways, and community partnerships that prepare them for college, career, and life. This model has demonstrated success in increasing student engagement, graduation rates, and postsecondary readiness.

In addition, the Community Achieves initiative has positioned MNPS as a leader in the implementation of the Community School model. Through deep partnerships with nonprofit organizations, social service providers, and local businesses, MNPS schools are serving the whole child-providing wraparound services, extended learning opportunities, and family engagement supports that meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students.

It is clear that MNPS is already providing the kind of innovative, student-centered education that The Forge seeks to implement. Rather than introducing a new charter that would divert resources and duplicate existing efforts, I believe our community is best served by continued investment and support for the effective systems already in place.

Charter approvals should be granted only when a demonstrated need exists-especially in a district like Nashville, where families already have access to a wide array of high-quality traditional and choice schools within MNPS. The Forge has not provided sufficient justification that its model would provide added value or address unmet needs that are not already being served by MNPS.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the State Board to uphold the denial of The Forge's application and continue to support the progress and innovation being led by Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to excellence in public education.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 11, 2025 5:09 pm
Browser: Firefox 126.0 / Windows
IP Address: 152.39.194.29
Unique ID: 1370235530
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Subira Gordon
Email	subira.gordon@nashvillechartercollaborative.org
Phone	615-982-4810
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

As CEO of the Nashville Charter Collaborative, I wholeheartedly support the approval of The Forge School. This forward-thinking charter school offers a unique, high-quality option for Nashville families by preparing students in grades 6 through 12 for careers in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering.

The Forge Schools mission to empower students to forge their own futures through academic excellence and hands-on, career-connected learning fits perfectly with Nashvilles growing demand for innovative education pathways. Its focus on real-world experiences, industry certifications, and community partnerships sets it apart as a transformative choice for students.

At the NCC, we are proud to advocate for public charter schools that provide meaningful opportunities for all students. We look forward to welcoming The Forge School into Nashvilles thriving charter community and urge the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission to vote YES to approve this important school.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 12, 2025 1:14 pm
Browser: Chrome 138.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 75.64.255.142
Unique ID: 1370527907
Location: 35.056, -89.8598

Name	Brittany Monda
Email	brittany@nashvilleincubator.org
Phone	(703) 795-5597
Resident District Status	Non-district Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Application Staff or Board Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	Please see the attached written comment for The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18365412999

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 10:57 am
Browser: Safari 18.5 / OS X
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1370841763
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name Mason Bellamy

Email mason.bellamy@mnps.org

Phone (931) 216-7119

Resident District Status Non-district Resident

What is your resident district? Montgomery

Relationship to Application/District LEA Staff Member

I wish to comment in support of MNPS

Written Comment As both a former Chief Academic Officer and the current Chief of Special Projects for MNPS, I evaluate charter school proposals through two essential questions:

Does the proposed school offer something meaningfully unique and better than what our district already provides?

Will it strengthen, rather than dilute, the broader public education system entrusted to us?

After reviewing the proposals for The Forge, I do not believe it meets these standards.

The Forge

The Forge proposal lacks substantial programmatic innovation. Its instructional model and curriculum closely mirror those of existing MNPS zoned and magnet schools, with outdated or misaligned assessment references that call academic readiness into question. Enrollment demand does not support an additional charter in this area, as nearby charter schools are already underenrolled. Opening another school would unnecessarily strain public resources. Operationally, the absence of a detailed safety plan is a serious omission, and delaying the hiring of financial staff for two years creates unacceptable fiscal risk.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 4:16 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.1
Unique ID: 1370986742
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name Yolanda Jackson

Email Yolanda.Jackson@mnps.org

Phone 16154914945

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District LEA Staff Member

I wish to comment in support of The Forge School

Written Comment

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to support the MNPS Board of Education's decision to decline The Forge School application. MNPS already offers the types of programs The Forge is proposing-through Academies of Nashville, Early Postsecondary Opportunities, and career pathways like construction, engineering, and architecture-within our existing schools.

These opportunities are paired with strong wraparound supports, including before- and after-school learning, family engagement initiatives, and partnerships with community organizations. This ensures all students-not just those able to attend one school-can benefit.

Creating a new charter with overlapping offerings would duplicate services, divide resources, and reduce equitable access. I urge you to uphold the Board's thoughtful decision and keep investing in the high-quality programs and supports MNPS has in place.

Sincerely,
Yolanda Jackson

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:10 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371005462
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	John Gore
Email	jgore@bcacivil.com
Phone	(615) 324-4225
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I support The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372080989

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:15 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371006868
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Matt Relick
Email	MRelick@choateco.com
Phone	(615) 864-7975
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I fully support the opening of The Forge School!
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372101163

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:19 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371007934
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name Jordan Williams

Email jwilliams@cecinc.com

Phone (615) 577-9397

Resident District Status District Resident

Relationship to Application/District Community Member

I wish to comment in support of The Forge School

Written Comment I fully support the opening of The Forge School!

Written Comment <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372114955>

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:24 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371009391
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Brooke Allen
Email	brooke@diverselearnerscoop.com
Phone	(610) 329-4310
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I fully support the opening of The Forge School!
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372136044

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:30 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371011220
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Rachel Blackhurst
Email	rachel@naiop-nashville.org
Phone	(615) 541-5278
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I strongly back the opening of The Forge School and the opportunities it brings
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372161535

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:33 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371012023
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Danny Herron
Email	dherron@habitatnashville.org
Phone	(615) 305-4095
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	- I'm excited to see The Forge School open its doors and fully support its mission.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372172715

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:38 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371013568
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Diarese George
Email	diarese.george@tneca.org
Phone	(931) 561-6640
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I stand firmly behind the opening of The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372192375

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:40 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371014372
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Mona Hodge
Email	mhodge@smithgeestudio.com
Phone	(334) 524-1325
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	The Forge School's opening is a game-changer, and I'm fully behind it.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372203451

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:45 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371015915
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Shemicka Adams
Email	shemicka.adams@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 802-0322
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I strongly back the opening of The Forge School and the opportunities it brings.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372221830

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:48 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371017438
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Russ Brown
Email	rbrown@ttlusa.com
Phone	(615) 331-7770
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I wholeheartedly endorse the launch of The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372239784

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 5:55 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371019987
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Johnathan Eisen
Email	info@cumberlandgrowth.com
Phone	(615) 243-5717
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I stand firmly behind the opening of The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372272520

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:00 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371021276
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	William Rosenthal
Email	will@opnwrks.com
Phone	(504) 717-5535
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I strongly back the opening of The Forge School and the opportunities it brings.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372290267

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:03 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371022093
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Leslie Cowell
Email	leslie.cowell@lipscomb.edu
Phone	(615) 966-1000
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I'm excited to see The Forge School open its doors and fully support its mission.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372301098

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:06 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371023153
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Amir Mahamed
Email	royaltableinc@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 998-2882
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	The opening of The Forge School is a powerful step forward and I'm all in.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372314857

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:08 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371023802
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Jake Mitchell
Email	jmittchell@leecompany.com
Phone	(615) 468-6727
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	- I am proud to support the establishment of The Forge School.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372323672

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:11 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371024527
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Logan Newton
Email	lnewton@hmka.com
Phone	(615) 369-6020
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I strongly back the opening of The Forge School and the opportunities it brings.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372333238

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 13, 2025 6:14 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371025354
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Chad Jones
Email	cjones@stgdesign.com
Phone	(615) 248-4400
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I'm excited to see The Forge School open its doors and fully support its mission
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18372344205

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 14, 2025 12:13 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 96.4.9.131
Unique ID: 1371266218
Location: 36.0595, -86.6592

Name	Sarah Shuster
Email	sbshuster@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 418-0629
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	MNPS

Written Comment

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to support the MNPS Board of Education's decision to decline The Forge School application. MNPS already offers the types of programs The Forge is proposing-through Academies of Nashville, Early Postsecondary Opportunities, and career pathways like construction, engineering, and architecture-within our existing schools.

These opportunities are paired with strong wraparound supports, including before- and after-school learning, family engagement initiatives, and partnerships with community organizations. This ensures all students-not just those able to attend one school-can benefit.

Creating a new charter with overlapping offerings would duplicate services, divide resources, and reduce equitable access. I urge you to uphold the Board's thoughtful decision and keep investing in the high-quality programs and supports MNPS has in place.

Sincerely,
Sarah Shuster

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 14, 2025 3:40 pm
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 68.53.77.64
Unique ID: 1371367947
Location: 36.1876, -86.6119

Name	Jonathan Saad
Email	jonathan@theforgenashville.org
Phone	(615) 589-1397
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	I'm excited to see The Forge School open its doors and fully support its mission.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18376906204

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 15, 2025 10:03 am
Browser: Chrome 136.0.0.0 / Windows
IP Address: 136.227.162.111
Unique ID: 1371566444
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Josh Stephens
Email	bsdtux@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 638-0134
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

The Forge School is the first and only school in Nashville designed to prepare students in grades 6th through 12th to thrive in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) fields by combining academic excellence with hands-on, career-connected learning. Its mission to empower students to forge their own futures with purpose and creativity is uniquely tailored to reflect the diversity and ambition within Nashville.

This school stands apart by integrating real-world experiences, industry certifications, and community partnerships into the everyday curriculum. Students wont just learn, theyll build. And in a rapidly changing Nashville, where innovation and opportunity must go hand in hand, The Forge School is exactly the kind of option our families deserve.

With educational equity at the center and a local vision leading the way, supporting The Forge means investing in both our childrens futures and a bold blueprint for Nashvilles success.

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 15, 2025 10:44 am
Browser: Chrome 139.0.0.0 / OS X
IP Address: 68.254.133.248
Unique ID: 1371580775
Location: 36.2195, -86.774

Name	Shelby Doyle
Email	shelbytank@gmail.com
Phone	(832) 244-7121
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Application Staff or Board Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School
Written Comment	See attached letter.
Written Comment	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/18379918963

Form Name: New Start Public Hearing Form - Written - TheForge/MNPS
Submission Time: August 15, 2025 10:48 am
Browser: Chrome Mobile 138.0.0.0 / Android
IP Address: 134.199.78.235
Unique ID: 1371582120
Location: 37.751, -97.822

Name	Philip Byard
Email	hardscapesbytheyard@gmail.com
Phone	(615) 809-4078
Resident District Status	District Resident
Relationship to Application/District	Community Member
I wish to comment in support of	The Forge School

Written Comment

We stand in full support of The Forge School. As decision-makers review the application, we urge a vote to approve the opening of this forward-thinking charter school that offers a high-quality choice for Nashville families.

The Forge School is the first and only school in Nashville designed to prepare students in grades 6th through 12th to thrive in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) fields by combining academic excellence with hands-on, career-connected learning. Its mission to empower students to forge their own futures with purpose and creativity is uniquely tailored to reflect the diversity and ambition within Nashville.

This school stands apart by integrating real-world experiences, industry certifications, and community partnerships into the everyday curriculum. Students wont just learn, theyll build. And in a rapidly changing Nashville, where innovation and opportunity must go hand in hand, The Forge School is exactly the kind of option our families deserve.

With educational equity at the center and a local vision leading the way, supporting The Forge means investing in both our childrens futures and a bold blueprint for Nashvilles success.



To the TN Charter Commission,

I am honored to write this letter of support on behalf of The Forge School and founder Sara Tuttle. Sara is an extraordinary leader with over 20 years of experience serving students in Washington, California, and Nashville. As the Director of Social and Emotional Learning for Metro Nashville Public Schools, Sara was a well-respected data driven leader of her department. It has been an honor to help her fulfill her dream of opening a career-connected industry-aligned school for families in Nashville. As the Executive Director of the Nashville Incubator, we are proud to walk beside her and provide her with the financial and social capital needed to be successful in launching and running a successful career-connected charter in our community..

The Nashville Incubator was founded in 2021 with the goal to recruit and support school leaders to launch innovative high-quality schools that provide families with diverse public school options here in Nashville. In the first three years under the leadership of Amy Huffman, the Nashville Incubator supported the opening of Aventura Community School, MNPS District approved charter, and Tennessee Nature Academy, a commission approved school. We also supported the charter application of the Invictus Nashville Charter School, Encompass Community School, and Nurses Middle College Nashville which were all approved by the Tennessee Charter Commission last fall. In addition to providing funding to allow Sara to be a full-time founder, the Incubator has supported Sara with multiple learning trips, professional coaching, community development support, and is committed to continuing these supports until opening. Sara has been working hand in hand with a truly talented program designer, Brittany Monda, who has years of experience supporting founders to build excellent schools in Memphis. Brittany is now on our staff at the Nashville Incubator. She also has a coach, Lisa Stone, who spent the last 7 years running Valor's Leadership Development Program coaching school leaders across the country. I have personally worked with her every step of the way to ensure she is getting the best possible coaching and support in her school design.

The Nashville Incubator is supported by the generous contributions and leadership of the Joe C. Davis Foundation, SCORE, City Fund, and the Bill and Crissy Haslam Foundation. These foundations are committed to high-quality innovative schools in our city and state and the incubator is one of the primary strategies identified for launching these schools.

We know that one of the greatest challenges faced by founders is the ability to find a great incubation facility to launch. In order to ensure that facilities are not the barrier that prevents these schools from being successful the Nashville Incubator is providing targeted facilities support to our founders in a few ways. First of all, we hired a full-time Director of Facilities to support each of our founders in the selection, acquisition, and renovation of their incubation facility last fall. Shelby Goodfriend, our Director of Facilities, is the former Director of Charter Schools for the Tennessee Department of Education. She also served in various charter operations and leadership roles as well as has experience



in construction and architecture. Second, we are covering pre-construction costs associated with acquisition, architects, and construction management. Third, the Nashville Incubator board members have generously committed to supporting these schools in their opening upon approval. One example is a grant opportunity of up to \$250,000 from the SCORE to support construction costs associated with the opening of an incubation facility. This grant can be used by The Forge to cover any financial expenses related to the construction, downpayment, or rent of a short-term incubation facility. We have also supported each of our founders in the application process for CSP, State Facility, NSVF, and GSGF grants with a high rate of success. Our board members are committed to ensuring that Incubator schools are ultimately successful. So each school we incubate will have opportunities for additional grant applications upon approval and opening.

Finally, from a personal level, I wanted to share my confidence in Sara Tuttle as a leader. As I have worked to recruit and support innovative leaders in this city, one truth holds true, great schools always have great leaders. Sara Tuttle is an experienced, passionate, thoughtful, joyful, and visionary leader with years of experience across this country. She has opened schools before and has earned the trust of this community as a Director for our school district. Her vision for this school is clear and compelling and responds directly to a need for connected learning of students towards high-wage high-demand careers. I know that some will respond by saying “our academies already teach that”, but what the Forge is doing is truly innovative and unlike any current academy model. Rather than just teaching 1-2 classes in a pathway a year, The Forge will provide integrated instruction from 6th grade through 12th grade giving students opportunities in every subject area to connect their core academics with this career content. Students will also have unique opportunities to earn various industry certifications as early as middle school. The design is not just preparing students for a trade, it will prepare them to lead in the fields of architecture, construction, and engineering. Previous to my new role I was able to serve on the TN Charter Commission Review Board and review multiple applications and participate in capacity interviews. As I review The Forge School’s application it checks all the boxes of what the Commission has expressed interest in seeing more of. It is an innovative school with a strong leader, lots of community support, a team of experts committed to helping it open and operate successfully, and a school that will provide a choice for families they desperately need and don’t currently have. The Forge is going to be a school that will impact generations of Nashvillians and reform the way we think about career-connected learning. Sara Tuttle is an extraordinary leader and her school will be an extraordinary school that fulfills the commitment we make as public educators in Tennessee to grow an informed citizenry. I am grateful to play a small role in seeing The Forge School flourish.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Campbell
Executive Director, The Nashville Incubator



Tennessee Public Charter School Commission,

At the **Nashville Charter Incubator**, our mission is to launch and support excellent, equitable charter schools that expand opportunity for students across our city. We are committed to removing barriers to success by providing embedded coaching, operational guidance, and facilities support to leaders committed to high-quality outcomes for students. Currently, our portfolio includes nine charter schools in various stages of development and growth. We work side by side with founding teams and school leaders to ensure they are equipped not only to open but to sustain mission-aligned schools that meet the needs of their communities.

We believe so strongly in the mission of creating these opportunities for students and families that we've grown our team and aligned support. Over the past few months, the Incubator has expanded the team to include my role, as the Director of Strategy and a Director of Fellows to work closely with school teams to build layers of strategic support that is necessary from inception through full-scale operations. Our roles have been created to provide a plan from inception to start-up, which includes intensive one-on-one coaching to emerging school leaders as they create their models, facilitating a future pipeline of founders, individualized sessions on topics most relevant to each fellow's school design, and school visit and leadership development opportunities. These roles allow us to offer highly customized and comprehensive support across all critical aspects of launching and sustaining a high-quality school in Tennessee.

In my work as a founding charter school team member and former district leader overseeing the largest public school system in Tennessee, I have seen firsthand the dedication and resilience required to open and grow a successful school. The task is complex — ensuring a school is operationally sound, innovative, values-driven, and truly responsive to students and families is no small feat. That is why I believe the Incubator's support for **The Forge School** is necessary. Our team will continue to support leaders where they are with exactly what they need — individualized coaching, governance development, facilities expertise, and a responsive partnership. This kind of tailored, on-the-ground support doesn't just launch a school; it helps build a thriving, high-quality community where students and families flourish.

At the Incubator, we are all invested in the work because we believe every family deserves the right to choose the public school that best fits their child. Education is not one size fits all. Parents should have access to schools that reflect their values, challenge their children, and offer a deep sense of belonging. We have seen families choose charter schools for innovative learning models, safer environments, and stronger alignment with their goals and hopes for the future.

At the Incubator, we are proud to support the development of **The Forge School** as an option for families while supporting our leaders who make them possible.

Sincerely,

Brittany Monda

Director of Strategy

Nashville Charter Incubator