

Wisconsin



QUICK FACTS ON GÜLEN CHARTER SCHOOLS WISCONSIN



NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

1

KNOWN AS **Milwaukee Math and Science Academy, Wisconsin Career Academy (closed)**

TOTAL ENROLLMENT

341

CHARTER VENDOR

Concept Schools, Inc.

TOTAL REVENUES

\$2,666,070

RELATED INSTITUTIONS



KEY PEOPLE



Y. Alp Aslandogan



Ibrahim Duyar



Harun H. Solak



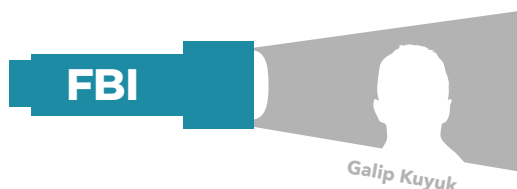
Zikeriya Baskal



Ahmet H. Aydilek

FINANCIAL ISSUES

MMSA contracts with Concept Schools, Inc. ("Concept") for external charter management services. Concept is currently involved in an ongoing FBI investigation concerning the alleged collusion of Concept employees and their vendors to **defraud the federal E-Rate grant program of millions of dollars**. Research revealed that Galip Kuyuk, former board member of Wisconsin Career Academy and the owner of Sundance International, LLC ("Sundance"), is individually implicated.



H-1B VISA ABUSES

59 H-1B

Wisconsin schools H-1B VISA APPLICATIONS 2000 to 2016

176 H-1B

Concept H-1B VISA APPLICATIONS 2000 to 2016

Evidence suggests that public funds were used to cover numerous visas



SCANDALS



Both MMSA and Wisconsin Career Academy were placed on probation due to **extremely poor academic performance** and **poor financial condition**.

Yasar Bora

Ahmet Akyol

Rauf Faik Tanriseven

Ali Tanberk

Tarik Celik

Omer Yazganoglu

Muhammet Yildiz

All figures based on available data for 2015-2016 academic year.

Quick Facts

- ▶ Region: Midwestern
- ▶ School Names (known as):
 - ▷ Milwaukee Math and Science Academy
 - ▷ Wisconsin Career Academy (closed)
- ▶ Total # of Schools in State: 1
- ▶ Total Student Enrollment 2015-16: 341¹
- ▶ Charter Holder/Governing Board(s):
 - ▷ Milwaukee Math and Science Academy, Inc.
 - Organized as a non-profit with 501(c)(3) status
 - Operates 1 charter school
- ▶ Charter Management Services Vendor: Concept Schools, Inc.
- ▶ Regional Gülen Organization Oversight Entity: Concept Schools, Inc.
- ▶ Regional Sister Networks: Math and Science (IL); Horizon (IL); Math and Science (IN); Math and Science (MN); Math and Science (MI); Gateway (MO); Horizon (OH); Noble (OH).
- ▶ Total State Revenues for the 2015-16 school year: \$2,666,070²
- ▶ Network Founders:
 - ▷ Y.AlpAslandogan: Founder, Wisconsin Career Academy; Board President, Institute Interfaith Dialog – Gülenist cultural association; Contributing Editor, Fountain Magazine – Gülenist publication; Secretary, The Gülen Institute; openly supports Fethullah Gülen; Landlord, Harmony (TX); CEO, North American University – Gülenist vendor to Harmony (TX); currently Official Spokesperson for Fethullah Gülen and Executive Director, Alliance for Shared Values – Gülen's foundation.³
 - ▷ Ibrahim Duyar: Founding Principal of Wisconsin Career Academy;⁴ Founder, Little Scholars (AR);⁵ currently Professor at University of Arkansas Little Rock.⁶
 - ▷ Harun H. Solak: founded Wisconsin Career Academy;⁷ Senior Scientist Paul Scherrer Institute; current CEO and founder of Eulitha AG.⁸

¹ Student enrollment and demographic information available at: <http://tinyurl.com/o25t69e> (last checked 4/21/2017).

² Figure includes state revenue Milwaukee Math and Science Academy (MMSA), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kjceyja> (last checked 4/23/2017). Wisconsin and the City of Milwaukee do not make audits publicly available, increasing the difficulty of determining total revenue. For comparison, MMSA reported total revenue of \$3,149,589 on its 2015 tax return, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n5pqrs> (last checked 4/23/2017).

³ Information gathered from: Wisconsin Career Academy Charter School Contract, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n77x7g3> (page 13) (last checked 4/23/2017); Yuksel Alp Aslandogan, Huffington Post, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l4laf4k> (last checked 4/23/2017); The Gülen Institute, 2013 990, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/msxhmmg> (last checked 4/23/2017); Y. Alp Aslandogan, Twitter, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kooavog> (last checked 4/23/2017); Alliance for Shared Values, <http://tinyurl.com/kz42gu5> (last checked 4/23/2017). For more information regarding Aslandogan's involvement with Harmony (TX), see the Greater Texas Regional Summary and Texas Profile.

⁴ Research Brief, Public Policy Form at 6 (Dec. 22, 2000), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kby7qak> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵ Jennifer Barnett Reed & Max Brantley, What's the Point – The LISA Academy Succeeds with Students. But Does it Succeed in Meeting the Terms of State Charter School Law, Arkansas Times (Jan. 25, 2007), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lt5ukvn> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶ Dr. Ibrahim Duyar, UA Little Rock available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n25sfca> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁷ Wisconsin Career Academy Charter School Contract, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n77x7g3> (page 13) (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁸ LinkedIn profile (graduated from University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1998), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k6lu4pl> (last checked 4/19/2017).

- Zikeriya Baskal: founded Wisconsin Career Academy;⁹ potentially Visiting Lecturer University of Houston; Assistant Professor Gaziosmanpasa University; current Associate Professor at Ipek

University.¹⁰

- Ahmet H. Aydilek: founded Wisconsin Career Academy;¹¹ current Professor University of Maryland.¹²

Overview

As of the 2016-17 school year, Wisconsin has only 1 Gülen Organization charter school in operation, the Milwaukee Math and Science Academy ("MMSA"). This school is overseen by Milwaukee Math and Science Academy Inc. ("MMSA, Inc."), a non-profit governing board of directors in operation since 2009. MMSA, Inc. is actually the second Gülenist education foundation in Wisconsin. Wisconsin Career Academy, Inc. was the first, operating the now-closed Wisconsin Career Academy ("WCA") between 2001 and 2012. WCA closed in 2013 after losing accreditation. Wisconsin Career Academy, Inc. merged into MMSA, Inc. in 2014, leaving MMSA, Inc. as the sole surviving governing board. Both

schools and governing boards contracted with Concept Schools, Inc. ("Concept"), the corporate entity responsible for the Midwestern region of the Gülen Organization charter networks, allegedly for additional educational management services. MMSA serves 3% English Language Learners vs. 5% state average; 100% free and reduced lunch population vs. 58% state; 13% students with disabilities vs. 14% state; 96% African American students vs. 9% state; 1% Caucasian students vs. 71% state; and 2% Hispanic students vs. 11% state. As these numbers indicate, MMSA serves a large percentage of vulnerable student populations.

School	Operation	Student Demographic Information*	Authorizer	Governing Board
Milwaukee Math and Science Academy ("MMSA") 110 West Burleigh St. Milwaukee, WI 53212	K-8 2011-Present	03% ELL 100% FRL 13% SWD 96% African American 01% Caucasian 02% Hispanic	City of Milwaukee	Milwaukee Math and Science Academy, Inc.

Closed Schools and Failed Applications

Wisconsin Career Academy/Wisconsin College Prep Academy (as voucher school) 4801 S. 2 nd Street Milwaukee, WI 53207	6-12 2001-2012 (charter school) 2012-2013 (voucher school) Non-compliant financial audit, low student achievement		Milwaukee Public Schools	Wisconsin Career Academy, Inc.
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⁹ Wisconsin Career Academy Charter School Contract, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n77x7g3> (page 13) (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹⁰ LinkedIn profile (attended University of Wisconsin-Madison 1998-2004), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/m3rjwdb> (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹¹ Wisconsin Career Academy Charter School Contract, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n77x7g3> (page 13) (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹² Dr. Ahmet H. Aydilek, A. James Clark School of Engineering (graduated from University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1996 and 2000), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n48vmu9> (last checked 4/23/2017).

School	Operation	Student Demographic Information*	Authorizer	Governing Board
Academy of Milwaukee	6-12 Failed Application		Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System	Academy of Milwaukee, Inc.

*Student demographic information was taken from the 2015-2016 school year. "ELL" indicates English Language Learners, "FRL" indicates students receiving free/reduced lunch, and "SWD" indicates students with disabilities.¹³

A History of Strategic Ambiguity and Conflicting Interests

In 2000, the Wisconsin Founders established the first Gülenist education foundation in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Career Academy, Inc. They applied for and received approval in 2000 to open Wisconsin Career Academy for a term from 2001-2005. The school was renewed once in 2005, but by the time the second renewal process began in 2010, Milwaukee Public Schools began to uncover problems with Wisconsin Career Academy's financial audits, delivery of special education services, and academic performance.¹⁴ The school received a series of one-year extensions laced with conditions to get a clean audit and to raise student performance. After failing to receive a renewed charter in 2012, Wisconsin Career Academy changed its name to the Wisconsin College Prep Academy and re-opened as a voucher school.¹⁵ The school shut down for good after losing accreditation due to its continuing poor performance in 2013.¹⁶

With the future of the Wisconsin Career Academy uncertain, the Gülen Organization rushed to open another school in the area under a different corporate entity. In 2010, the

application for MMSA was approved, and the school opened in 2011 with new branding, but the same issues with academic performance and poor financial conditions as its doomed sister school, Wisconsin Career Academy. In 2014, Milwaukee Public Schools placed MMSA on probation due to these issues. This probation was lifted in 2016 when the school was renewed for an additional five-year term.¹⁷ Surprisingly, no financial information appears to have been considered by the review committee in the decision to renew the school.

In 2014, Wisconsin Career Academy, Inc. merged into MMSA, Inc., leaving MMSA, Inc. as the surviving entity. By using various names for the two schools, and renaming the Wisconsin Career Academy after it lost its charter, the organizations have made it difficult to track the Gülenist presence in Wisconsin over time. The changes in names and branding also allowed MMSA to hide from the negative press surrounding Wisconsin Career Academy.

Like Wisconsin Career Academy, MMSA

¹³ Student enrollment and demographic information available at: <http://tinyurl.com/o25t69e> (last checked 4/23/2017); <http://tinyurl.com/l7zhr4y> (FRL) (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹⁴ Board of School Directors, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Dec. 13, 2011), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/nxvdooc> (p. 651) (last checked 4/23/2017); see also Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹⁵ Erin Richards, Photo Appears to Show Milwaukee Teacher Sleeping at Defunct School, Milwaukee – Wisconsin Journal Sentinel (June 13, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/hh95e4d> (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹⁶ Meghan Dwyer, College Applicant Told Charter School Diploma Is Worthless, Fox6 (Aug. 18, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/h99uwvj> (last checked 4/23/2017).

¹⁷ Renewal documents, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kdzftv> (last checked 4/28/2017).

also contracts with Concept Schools, Inc. ("Concept") for external charter management services. Concept is currently involved in an ongoing FBI investigation concerning the alleged collusion of Concept employees and their vendors to defraud the federal E-Rate grant program of millions of dollars.¹⁸ According to the released FBI's search warrant application, Concept executives allegedly violated the competitive bidding rules of the E-Rate program by selecting a vendor complicit with Concept's purported plans to defraud E-Rate outside of the normal procurement process. Then, Concept's Chief Information Officer directed that vendor to divert hefty "subcontracts" to affiliated Turkish individuals and companies in exchange for a cut of the proceeds. The actual work was performed by Concept employees themselves, not by the complicit vendor who was approved by E-Rate to provide the work, or the so-named companies and Turkish vendors for the subcontracts.¹⁹ Concept continues to award substantial business to the vendors under scrutiny and named in the search warrant application.²⁰

The Wisconsin Gülen charter network is extensively involved in the Concept fraud investigation. Our research revealed that Galip Kuyuk, former board member of Wisconsin Career Academy and the owner of Sundance International, LLC ("Sundance"), is individually implicated. Kuyuk's business Sundance provided E-Rate services for the Wisconsin Career Academy, constituting a clear conflict of interest for Kuyuk.²¹ MMSA also utilized Advanced Solutions for Educations and the Core Group for E-Rate funded work in 2014, both vendors

heavily in the Concept E-Rate fraud investigation.²² Even more troubling, Huseyin A. Akyurek, the vice president for Advanced Solutions for Education, served as the initial executive director of MMSA, another clear conflict of interest.²³ The FBI investigation is ongoing.

Amidst the pending closure of Wisconsin Career Academy, its executive director Ali Yilmaz denied that the school had any connections to Fethullah Gülen.²⁴ Yilmaz made this denial in spite of the fact that Fethullah Gülen, in court pleadings, took credit for founding numerous charter schools across the United States and Alp Aslandogan, the founder of the Wisconsin Career Academy, would go on to work and write for Gülenist institutions like The Gülen Institute, Fountain Magazine, and become Gülen's Official Spokesperson through his role as executive director of the Alliance for Shared Values.²⁵ Aslandogan has connections and relationships with Gülenist-controlled charter networks throughout the U.S., often seemingly personally profiting through his role as Gülen's right-hand man and charter liaison by acquiring properties from Gülenist organizations and selling them to other Gülenist organizations at a profit, as he did with the Oklahoma Gülenist charter network and its Gülenist cultural association, or by renting his properties to Gülenist charter schools at a profit, as he did with the Harmony (TX) network.

When Wisconsin Career Academy closed, it sold its property and equipment to other Concept charter schools at alarmingly high prices. For example, two Horizon (OH) schools paid a total of \$4,750 for two iPad 2s. But Wisconsin Granite

¹⁸ Dan Mihalopoulos & Jon Seidel, *Charter Firm Suspected of Cheating Federal Grant Program*, Chicago Sun-Times (Dec. 16, 2015), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/j3snbad> (last checked 9/8/2016).

¹⁹ Search Warrant application available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jt9j4ed> (last checked 9/8/2016).

²⁰ See Dan Mihalopoulos, *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

²¹ Search Warrant application available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jt9j4ed> (last checked 9/8/2016).

²² Id.; FCC Form 471, MMSA, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k7q62t5> (last checked 4/25/2016).

²³ Compare Advanced Solutions for Education, Inc. corporate documents available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mv7qmro> (last checked 4/27/2017) with MMSA 2011 990-EZ available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lyuqakj> (last checked 4/26/2017).

²⁴ Eric Richards, *Milwaukee Charter Schools Tied to Turkish Islamic Cleric?*, Milwaukee – Wisconsin Journal Sentinel (May 14, 2012), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lz37d3u> (last checked 4/23/2017).

²⁵ See the brief biography of Y. Alp Aslandogan, *supra*.

Depot received a much better deal; it paid only \$4,000 for ten iPads. Other Concept schools purchased property at high prices: Indiana Math and Science Academy paid \$51,418 for an unknown number of iPads, smart boards, and

school supplies; MMSA paid \$10,250 for a Ford van; and Chicago Math and Science Academy paid \$2,000 for a portable stage.²⁶ Further investigation is needed to determine if these sales were reasonable.

Financial Issues

Wisconsin requires charter schools like MMSA to undergo annual audits, but the audits are not publicly available without a records request. As of the date of this paper's publication, the audits have not yet been released. This decreases charter school transparency and increases the ability of MMSA to obscure its actions in the state.

Despite the lack of publicly available audits, the information that is available shows the same issues endemic to all Gülen charter networks.²⁷ Findings from Wisconsin Career Academy and MMSA include:

- ▶ Inappropriate Use of Funds for Immigration Fees:
 - ▷ \$24,568 in legal fees spent between July 1, 2006, and January 15, 2008, on immigration fees; and
 - ▷ \$1,390 in legal fees for immigration expenses for one person never employed by the school.
- ▶ Lack of Compliance with Charter Contract:
 - ▷ Failure to comply with charter requirements pertaining to percentage of

funds spent on instructional costs;

- ▷ Failure to comply with charter requirements pertaining to immunizations; and
- ▷ Failure to comply with charter requirements pertaining to asbestos management.

▶ Staff Concerns

- ▷ Failure to secure required licensing and permits for instructional staff;
- ▷ High principal turnover, three in three years;
- ▷ Large drops in instructional staff return rate (from 76.9% to 31.6%);

▶ Financial Concerns:

- ▷ Lack of current assets to satisfy current liabilities.

Due to these problems with the Wisconsin Career Academy and the lack of publicly available audits in Wisconsin, MMSA's audits should be disclosed and reviewed for potential conflicts of interest, related party transactions, lack of financial controls, and inappropriate use of funds due to the prevalence of these issues in Gülen charter schools nation-wide.

Bond Financing

Neither MMSA nor Wisconsin Career Academy has procured any known municipal bonds. Concept Schools and its affiliated real estate arm, however, have used bond financing

for schools in other states.

²⁶ Wisconsin Career Academy 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mm89f7c> (last checked 4/23/2017).

²⁷ Information taken from: Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017); MMSA Probation letter 2014, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kdzftyv> (last checked 4/28/2017).

Real Estate

Wisconsin Career Academy leased its building from unaffiliated third parties. MMSA leases its facility from Good Samaritan Schools, LLC, which purchased the facility in 2014. Good Samaritan Schools lacks any superficial connection to the Gülen organization, although this information is more difficult to ascertain for for-profit entities that are not required to post ownership or governance information publicly.

As renting properties owned by Gülenist companies and/or individuals who then overcharge the school in rent is a prime method for the Gülen Organization to extract public funds from its charter schools (see, e.g., Concept (OH), Dove Science (OK), and Harmony (TX)), more research is needed to rule out whether the owner of MMSA's location is unrelated to the Gülen Organization.²⁸

Excessive Use of the H-1B Visa Program

Like all Gülen Organization charter networks, the Wisconsin Gülen charter schools utilize the H-1B visa program to immigrate large numbers of Turkish Gülenists into the United States for employment in the schools and network. From 2001-2016, the Wisconsin schools have filed 59 H-1B visa applications for foreign workers.²⁹ Concept itself filed 176 H-1B applications during the same time period.³⁰ Although one MMSA official denied that any of its teachers were under a visa,³¹ MMSA filed for ten visas after opening. While Gülen charter networks claim the H-1B program is necessary to recruit math and science teachers, the applications for MMSA

and Wisconsin Career Academy were filed for positions including: assistant director, assistant principal, director of student affairs, high school teacher, network administrator, director of human resources, education administrator, ESL teacher, accountant, and director of human resources/college coordinator.

As previously mentioned, a special review of Wisconsin Career Academy by Milwaukee public schools found the school spent public funds for visa applications.³² Our interpretation of the evidence suggests that public funds were used to cover the visas Omer Yazganoglu, Tarik Celik,

²⁸ Additionally, Wisconsin's corporate documents are behind a paywall and cannot be delivered electronically.

²⁹ The sum total of all of their organizations is 49, and the numbers supporting that total are located at the following links: from 2001-2015, <http://tinyurl.com/khfno3p> (49); <http://tinyurl.com/m9297yd> (7). For 2016, refer to the 2016 data on the US DOL website, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zm5dvec> (last checked 1/30/2017).

³⁰ In another example of strategic ambiguity, Concept and its schools use several different versions of their names to make it difficult to aggregate how many H-1B applications they are filing. The sum total of all of the Concept (OH) schools from 2001-2016 is 657, and the numbers supporting that total are located at the following links: 1) HSA Toledo 79 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/h2wzgx> and <http://tinyurl.com/hvm6c3g> 2) HSA Columbus MS 88 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/hm2huqp> and <http://tinyurl.com/zwh2dm3> 3) HSA Lorain 40 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/jftczdy> 4) HSA Cincinnati 119 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/z8rh67o> 5) HSA Springfield 24 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/zcy5wbs> 6) HSA Dayton HS 44 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/jk8v67g> 7) HSA Dayton Downtown 14 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/h958de9> 8) HSA Denison MS 10 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/ztxhlca> 9) HSA Toledo Downtown (now closed) 12 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/hbfbvk85> 10) HSA Denison ES 16 <http://tinyurl.com/hh6ph6j> 11) HSA Cleveland MS 15 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/grttwzk> 12) HSA Columbus 11 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/zjkpnhh> 13) HSA Cleveland ES 1 H-1B <http://tinyurl.com/hzaj227> 14) Noble Cleveland 35 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/zvs68d3> and <http://tinyurl.com/j76pnvs> 15) Noble Columbus 25 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/zslwyng> 16) Noble Academy (general, no other info) 11 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/hegbswl> 17) HSA Cleveland HS 74 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/za497gb>; <http://tinyurl.com/jgkq4tp> and <http://tinyurl.com/jpye349> 18) HSA Columbus HS 39 H-1Bs <http://tinyurl.com/z5oyngk>. Concept filed 176 H-1B applications 2001-2016. See <http://tinyurl.com/j3whatt> for Concept Schools, Inc.; <http://tinyurl.com/zhgx3xl> for Concept Schools Nfp.

³¹ Lisa Kaiser, *Milwaukee's Charter Schools Don't Make the Grade*, Shepherd Express (Jan. 20, 2015), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mwdp8ed> (last checked 4/25/2017).

³² Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017).

Yasar Bora, Ahmet Akyol, Muhammet Yildiz, Ali Tanberk, and Rauf Faik Tanriseven. Additionally, the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals found that Wisconsin Career Academy did not appropriately consider American candidates for the position of secondary math teacher in Mr. Bora's case.³³ When Wisconsin Career Academy closed, MMSA specifically agreed to fulfill all obligations related to workers on H-1B visas.³⁴

MMSA and Wisconsin Career Academy use the same immigration attorneys to file and

process their H-1B applications as other known Gülen Organization charter networks, vendors, and cultural associations, indicating once again the existence of an overall network. For example:

- ▶ David Bloomfield: MMSA and Wisconsin Career Academy used Bloomfield, an Ohio-based attorney, to file numerous H-1B applications. Bloomfield also filed applications for:
 - ▷ Horizon (OH)
 - ▷ Math & Science Academy (IL)³⁵

Scandals, Investigations & Notable Activities

In 2015, two Arizona Members of Congress, U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva and U.S. Representative Ruben Gallego, wrote letters urging the U.S. Department of Education and the Government Accountability Office respectively to urge an investigation of charter schools affiliated with Gülen. These letters were sent in light of the recent raids of the Concept Schools network located in Ohio, Illinois, and other Midwestern states for suspected defrauding of the federal E-Rate program by Concept's Turkish administrators and vendors. Both Grijalva and Gallego were concerned about the connections between Concept and the Sonoran network in Arizona

uncovered by investigative journalism at the time and asked for a thorough investigation.³⁶

Before Wisconsin College Prep Academy (formerly Wisconsin Career Academy) closed, a student photographed Nehmet Camalan sleeping on the job. At the time, Camalan served as the school's business manager.³⁷

Both MMSA and Wisconsin Career Academy were placed on probation due to extremely poor academic performance and poor financial condition, as discussed previously.

Notable Turkish Vendors

- ▶ Concept Schools, Inc. Concept is a comprehensive services vendor that controls human resources, fiscal management, school design, curriculum, accountability, compliance, and reporting for a twelve percent fee of each school's total

revenues. Currently, Concept is the contracted nonprofit management services vendor for thirty such charter schools, with seventeen schools in Ohio, four in Illinois, three in Missouri, three in Indiana, one in Michigan, one in Wisconsin, and

³³ Matter of Wisconsin Career Acad., 2008-INA-00100, 2008 WL 4013021 (Bd. Alien Lab. Cert. App. Aug. 27, 2008).

³⁴ MMSA 2014 990, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ke62ykw> (last checked 4/26/2017).

³⁵ Bloomfield profile listing entities represented for H-1B visa work available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k8tx62u> (last checked 4/25/2017).

³⁶ Representative Grijalva's letter is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/hnhcbq5> (last checked 3/14/2017). Representative Gallego's letter is available at: <http://tinyurl.com/zyrhf3u> (last checked 3/14/2017).

³⁷ Erin Richards, Photo Appears to Show Milwaukee Teacher at Defunct School, Milwaukee – Wisconsin Journal Sentinel (June 13, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/hh95e4d> (last checked 4/25/2017).

one in Minnesota.³⁸ The founders of the first OH charter schools in the Gülen Organization formed Concept shortly thereafter. According to MMSA's tax returns, it has paid Concept \$762,369.³⁹

- The Core Group: MMSA lists The Core Group, Inc. as an E-Rate service provider in a 2014 FCC Form 471.⁴⁰ The Core Group, owned by Ertugrul Gurbuz, is currently under federal investigation as one of the vendors Concept purportedly used to defraud the E-Rate program.⁴¹ The company and its subsidiaries have received over \$3.2 million dollars from Concept

schools.⁴² The Core Group also provided uniforms to the Fulton Science (GA) network at an excessive cost and amount, as noted by the forensic audits prior to the network's termination.⁴³

- Advanced Solutions for Education: MMSA lists the Advanced Solutions for Education as an E-Rate consultant in a 2014 FCC Form 471.⁴⁴ Advanced Solutions for Education, owned by former Concept employee Ozgur Balsoy, is also implicated in the ongoing FBI investigation regarding the alleged defrauding of the E-Rate program.⁴⁵

Gülenist Cultural Foundations

- Niagara Foundation: The Niagara Foundation is a major Turkish Gülenist cultural association based in Chicago. Gülen is its honorary president.⁴⁶ The current executive director for the Niagara Foundation Ohio taught at Wisconsin Career Academy.⁴⁷ Niagara Educational Services, Inc., oversees both the Niagara Foundation and the Science Academy of Chicago, a private Gülenist school. Several Concept employees as well

as school employees are members of the Niagara Foundation. It maintains a presence in Wisconsin. It provides free/low-cost trips to Turkey for legislators, as well as hosting dialogue dinners and fundraisers.⁴⁸

- Turkish American Federation of Midwest (TAFM): TAFM is a member of the Turkic American Alliance (TAA).⁴⁹ The TAA posts articles and op-eds written by Fethullah

³⁸ See Concept Schools network, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/z3d8qsb> (last checked 8/26/2016).

³⁹ MMSA 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kfnsfvr> and <http://tinyurl.com/mmf6dnq> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁴⁰ FCC Form 471, MMSA, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k7q62t5> (last checked 4/25/2016).

⁴¹ See Mihalopoulos, Dan. *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

⁴² Id.

⁴³ See Georgia profile; see also Georgia Forensic Audit of Gülen-affiliated Charter Schools (June 1, 2012), at 17-25, available at <http://bit.ly/1TATHiy>.

⁴⁴ FCC Form 471, MMSA, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k7q62t5> (last checked 4/25/2016).

⁴⁵ See Mihalopoulos, Dan. *Targeted Firms Still Get Tax Money After Charter Raids*, Chicago Sun-Times <http://tinyurl.com/jzmzevh> (last checked 9/8/2016).

⁴⁶ See <http://www.niagarafoundation.org/> for information about the Niagara Foundation and <http://tinyurl.com/d8tlv5c> for information about Gülen as Honorary President (last checked 9/6/2016).

⁴⁷ Employee reports for Wisconsin Career Academy (2001-02) are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lcekw7l> (last checked 4/23/2017); LinkedIn Profile available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mpuqot3> (last checked 4/19/2017).

⁴⁸ For a description of a legislator's trip to Turkey with the Niagara Foundation, see: <http://tinyurl.com/mkfando> (last checked 4/20/2017).

⁴⁹ Turkic American Alliance, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mm9ko3r> (last checked 4/21/2017).

Gülen.⁵⁰ TAFM has four member organizations in Wisconsin, two of which overlap with the Niagara Foundation: Niagara Foundation Madison, Niagara Foundation Milwaukee, Madison Turkish American Culture Center (a unit of the Turkish-American Cultural Foundation of Wisconsin Inc.), and Turkish American

Society of Wisconsin (a unit of Harmony Foundation, Inc.).⁵¹ TAFM provides year-round informational bulletins to members of Congress, sponsors congressional trips to Turkey, and provides a platform for Turkish American activism and advocacy.⁵²

Individuals Caught in the Gülen Organization Web

Our research shows that it is quite common for the charter networks within a region to shuffle their Turkish H-1B visa teachers from school to school, as well as between education management vendors such as Concept. This is just a small number of individuals with these overlapping ties throughout the region, which further demonstrates the region's interconnections. Notably, this shuffling only occurs with these schools' Turkish employees.⁵³

the Southeast US (GA) – Gülenist business association; President/CEO, Texas Turkish American Chamber of Commerce; Member, Alief District of Innovation Committee; CEO Star Learning, LLC – Gülenist vendor; Chairman for Turkey World Chamber of Commerce; Founder/Chairman World Chamber of Commerce of Texas; currently President/CEO Celik Enterprises, LLC.⁵⁴

- Tarik Celik: Wisconsin Career Academy sponsored H-1B visa; Proposed Executive Director for Academy of Milwaukee – failed application; Executive Director, Wisconsin Career Academy; Executive Director, American Turkic Business Council; Executive Director, Istanbul Center (GA) – Gülenist cultural association affiliated with Fulton Science (GA); Chairman of Advisory Board, Turkish American Chamber of Commerce of

- Engin Karatas, a.k.a. Engin Blackstone: Co-founded Chicago Math and Science Academy; Assistant Principal HSA Denison Middle; Principal HSA Toledo; Principal Quest Charter Academy; Assistant Principal Wisconsin Career Academy;⁵⁵ visited Fethullah Gülen at the Golden Generation Retreat Center with Concept whistleblower Mustafa Emanet;⁵⁶ Superintendent Gateway Science Academy (MO).⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Turkic American Alliance, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ll5x8rd> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁵¹ Turkic American Federation of Midwest, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lgz6odt> (last checked 4/21/2017); see also Turkish American Cultural Center of Madison, About Us, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n6vey2z> (last checked 4/26/2017); Turkish American Society of Wisconsin, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kzym3kb> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁵² Turkic American Federation of Midwest, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k7occf5> (last checked 4/21/2017).

⁵³ Tim Steller, *Foreigners Fill Ranks of Local Charter-School Chain*, Arizona Daily Star (Apr. 25, 2010) available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jlpgo4a> (last checked 2/2/2017).

⁵⁴ Information taken from: Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017); April 2006 Agenda, Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, at 175, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mmpfvxc> (last checked 4/23/2017); Wisconsin Charter Schools Yearbook 2008-2009 at 64, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mo446u5> (last checked 4/24/2017); American Turkic Business Council 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mhe32cp> (last checked 4/23/2017); LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/k9f2xrm> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵⁵ Interview with Engin Blackstone, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mw9bey6> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵⁶ 2015 Letter from Mary Addi and Mustafa Emanet to OH legislature, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mezzupx> (last checked 4/20/2017).

⁵⁷ LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lylm33o> (last checked 4/25/2017).

- ▶ Cafer Cengiz: Employee, Wisconsin Career Academy; Principal, Michigan Math and Science Academy (MI); Principal, Horizon (OH); Principal, Horizon (IL).⁵⁸
- ▶ Gultekin "John" Aytekin: Teacher, Wisconsin Career Academy (WI); Teacher/Director, HSA Columbus (OH); Principal, Indiana Math and Science Academy (IN); Superintendent for Concept (IN); Implicated in the alleged de-frauding of the E-Rate program and currently under investigation by the FBI; Director of Accountability for Concept.⁵⁹
- ▶ Serkan Aykan: Employee, Wisconsin Career Academy; Organized political trips for Ohio political and community leaders; Executive Director, Niagara Foundation Ohio.⁶⁰
- ▶ Musa Ayar: Secretary/Director, Wisconsin College Prep Academy; President/Executive Director Turkish American Cultural Foundation of Wisconsin, Inc., which runs the Turkish American Cultural Center of Madison; currently Chairman of the Department of Business and Economics University of Wisconsin Colleges.⁶¹
- ▶ Ergun Sevilmis: Teacher/Assistant Principal, Horizon (OH); Principal, MMSA; currently Principal Horizon (OH); implicated in cheating scandal at Horizon Science Academy – Dayton prior to moving to MMSA; organizer of Mesale Educational Services, LLC (OH).⁶²
- ▶ Yasar Bora: Wisconsin Career Academy sponsored H-1B visa; Founding Principal, Wisconsin Career Academy; Superintendent, Minnesota School of Science (Concept, Midwest Region); currently Superintendent, Horizon/Noble (OH).⁶³
- ▶ Ahmet Akyol: Wisconsin Career Academy sponsored H-1B visa; Executive Director, Northern Lights Society/Turkish American Society of Minnesota; Founder, School of Science/Math and Science Academy (MN).⁶⁴
- ▶ Huseyin Akyurek: Executive Director,

⁵⁸ Information taken from: Employee reports for Wisconsin Career Academy (2001-02) are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lcekw7l> (last checked 4/23/2017); Linkedin profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l7al9rw> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁵⁹ Information taken from: Resume available pg 99 at: <http://tinyurl.com/mytqkaj> (last checked 4/19/2017); Linkedin Profile available at: <http://tinyurl.com/my9p3y2> (last checked 4/19/2017); Search Warrant application, pg 40, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/jt9j4ed> (last checked 9/8/2016).

⁶⁰ Information taken from: Employee reports for Wisconsin Career Academy (2001-02) are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lcekw7l> (last checked 4/23/2017); Serkan Aykan Honored by the State House of Ohio, Niagara Foundation (Apr. 1, 2012), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lh22uov> (last checked 4/23/2017); Linkedin Profile available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mpuqot3> (last checked 4/19/2017).

⁶¹ Information taken from: Turkish American Cultural Center of Madison, About Us, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/n6vey2z> (last checked 4/26/2017); Linkedin profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/la7p7dc> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶² Information taken from: Linkedin profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mgbca6> (last checked 4/23/2017); Corporation Details, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mpmkq84> (last checked 4/26/2017); Josh Sweigart, Allegations Mount at Area Charter: Teachers Say School Tampered with Tests, Attendance Records, Dayton Daily News (July 27, 2014), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l4lwvd5> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶³ Information taken from: Milwaukee Public Schools, School Selections, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/koa4k6b> (last checked 4/26/2017); Minnesota School of Science FCC Form 471 (Mar. 14, 2013), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l8egh2h> (last checked 4/26/2017); Linkedin profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mky7cp8> (last checked 4/23/2017); Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶⁴ Information taken from: Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017); Minnesota School of Science Charter Application, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kqowjgm> (last checked 4/26/2017).

MMSA; Vice President, Advanced Solutions for Education.⁶⁵

- Omer Yazganoglu: Wisconsin Career Academy sponsored H-1B visa; Board Member, MMSA.⁶⁶

- Ali Yilmaz: Teacher/Administrator, Horizon (OH); Executive Director/Teacher, Chicago Math and Science Academy (IL); Executive Director/Teacher, Wisconsin College Prep Academy; currently Director of Human Resource Management Concept (Midwestern Region).⁶⁷

Notable Articles regarding the Arizona Network

Lisa Kaiser, *Two City Charter Schools Will End Their Contracts at the End of the Academic Year*, Shepherd Express (Feb. 23, 2016) (discussing academic difficulties at MMSA).⁶⁸

Lisa Kaiser, *Milwaukee's Charter Schools Don't Make the Grade*, Shepherd Express (Jan. 20, 2015) (discussing difficulties at MMSA, including the investigation in Concept's alleged E-Rate fraud, and citing an MMSA official as representing that no MMSA teachers were there on H-1B visas).⁶⁹

Meghan Dwyer, *College Applicant Told Charter School Diploma is Worthless*, Fox6 (Aug. 18, 2013) (discussing name change of Wisconsin Career Academy and difficulties it caused former students).⁷⁰

Erin Richards, *Photo Appears to Show Milwaukee Teacher Sleeping at Defunct School*, Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel (June 13, 2013) (discussing the history of Wisconsin Career Academy, pictures of a teacher sleeping on the job, and citing the executive director as denying any links to Gülen).⁷¹

⁶⁵ Information taken from: MMSA 2011 990-EZ available at: <http://tinyurl.com/lyuqakj> (last checked 4/26/2017); Advanced Solutions for Education, Inc. corporate documents available at: <http://tinyurl.com/mv7qmro> (last checked 4/27/2017).

⁶⁶ Information taken from: Wisconsin Career Academy, Special Review 2008-19 (Feb. 2008), available at: <http://tinyurl.com/l74v4vt> (last checked 4/23/2017); MMSA 990s available at: <http://tinyurl.com/kfnsfvr> (last checked 4/26/2017).

⁶⁷ LinkedIn profile, available at: <http://tinyurl.com/khuam2q> (last checked 4/23/2017).

⁶⁸ <http://tinyurl.com/jyj7epq> (last checked 3/7/ 2017).

⁶⁹ <http://tinyurl.com/jq6q67l> (last checked 3/7/ 2017).

⁷⁰ <http://tinyurl.com/h99uwvj> (last checked 3/7/ 2017).

⁷¹ <http://tinyurl.com/hh95e4d> (last checked 3/7/ 2017).

