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Charter School Educational Sample Proposal

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Christine Lee
D.C. Public Charter School Board
9991 High Ridge Road
Washington D.C. 20001

Ms. Lee,

Please find enclosed our concepts for our new charter school, Future Wave High School. We plan to occupy the currently vacant building at 1900 Old Brick Road.

What will make Future Wave High School different? First of all, student motivation—only those students who have received the recommendations of five former teachers and who sign the student agreement and whose parent(s) sign the parent agreement will be allowed to enroll. Per D.C. rules, we cannot exclude students based on prior academic scores, but we believe the recommendation requirement will send the most motivated students our way.

Our emphasis will be on math, science, technology, and social equality. To this end, we will have a no-tolerance program for racial, religious, or political activities on our campus and for non-educational activities in classrooms. To promote our goals of equality and emphasis on education, our students and staff will wear uniforms, and students will carry identical computers and backpacks. All Future Wave High School students will receive laptop computers, which they will surrender at the end of each school year. All students will have equal access to all course offerings and activities.

We look forward to your approval of our charter.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Joseph
Central Coordinator
Advisory Committee for Future Wave High School
555-555-4765
rebjo@FutureWaveHigh.org
www.FutureWaveHigh.org



Proposal

New Charter School – Future Wave High School

Prepared for: Christine Lee
D.C. Public Charter School Board

Prepared by: Rebecca Joseph
Central Coordinator





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Accountability

Our pledge to the community is to offer an outstanding education to high school age children. To meet that pledge, our outcomes must be measurable and accountable. Here is our plan for accountability within Future Wave High School.

Measuring Student Performance

Measuring student performance is always a tricky issue, as any student can have a bad day or experience a poor relationship with a teacher. To eliminate those problems, we propose to use the following standards.

To eliminate teacher bias, all students will be measured and graded numerically by percentage of correct responses. In subjects in which responses are not multiple choice or true/false, such as essay/creative writing, scores will begin at 100 percent and deductions will be made for measurable mistakes—errors in critical thinking, grammar, punctuation, etc. There will be no grading on the curve—if all students achieve excellent results, all students will receive high grades.

Rather than focus on one or two giant tests, teachers will test their students every week or nearly every week (to be specified in each class schedule at the beginning of the year) and all these scores will then be averaged for a quarterly grade. Poor scores will be reported to mentors as well as parents so that students can get the help they need to do better.

We must of course obey any national or district regulations that specify standardized testing and comparisons with other schools, and these results will be made public. In addition, our students will take the SAT at the end of each school year to determine how well they are doing in general. SAT results will not be publicized but will be given to the individual student and her/his parents.

Measuring Teacher Performance

Teachers at Future Wave High School must have a bachelor's or master's degree in the field in which they are teaching as well as at least five years of teaching experience. Certification is desirable, but not required. In addition, teachers must pass a thorough background check in which investigators will interview former colleagues and students to form a 'real world' analysis of their teaching and social skills.

All teachers will be evaluated by principals in terms of student grades and improvements in poor student grades. They will also receive anonymous evaluations from all their students, their students' parents, and their teaching colleagues. Based on a numerical score achieved from averaging these results, teachers will be retained or dismissed for the following year. Teachers that rank above the dismissal score but below a desirable score will be paired with a high-ranking mentor on staff for advice on how to improve their results during the next year.





Culture

Many charter schools have been developed to serve only a specific group or to exclude certain groups from the student population. We intend to foster an atmosphere of unity and common aspiration for educational excellence at Future Wave High School. To that end, we will use the following policies at our school to create a culture of acceptance and a focus on education instead of social differences.

Acceptance of All Races, Political Persuasions, and Cultural Groups

There will be no racial, political, or cultural criteria for entry into the school and no space for indicating these on our application forms. After admission, however, we reserve the right to count and publish statistics on our student population. Respect and tolerance for all races and cultures will be paramount at our school. No hate speech or action against any group or recruiting activities for specific political or cultural groups will be tolerated among students or staff.

Tolerance for All Religions

At Future Wave High School, we believe that religion is a strictly private, personal issue. No hate speech or action against any religious group (including atheists) or recruiting (evangelical) activities for specific religious groups will be tolerated among students or staff.

Acceptance of All Socioeconomic Levels

We expect to have students from all economic levels of society at our school and have taken the following steps to ensure that poor students are not considered inferior to rich ones.

- ① **Mandatory Study Hall** - So that our working students will not have to stay up all night to complete their homework to compete with their peers, each student will have a mandatory study hour in each school day. If a student is diligent, that student should be able to finish most homework assignments during this hour.
- ① **Scheduled Recreation Activities During School Hours** - So that our students who need to work after school will not be excluded from extracurricular social activities, we will periodically schedule social events such as football and basketball games and school dances and concerts during the school day. This way all students can feel included and enjoy these activities with their peers.



- ① **Dress Code for Students** - We recognize that clothing and jewelry and other possessions often become reasons for people to judge and criticize each other. For this reason, all students will wear uniforms consisting of readily available black leather shoes, khaki trousers, button-down shirts and pullover or cardigan sweaters; a list of acceptable brands and styles will be given to each student and parent on acceptance. Jewelry other than modest earrings will not be permitted in the school. All students will be issued the same laptop computer. No cell phones or PDAs will be allowed during school hours.

- ① **Dress Code for Staff** - All staff members will also wear uniforms of a sort, consisting of black trousers and shirts, blazers and sweaters of approved types and colors; a list of acceptable brands and styles will be given to each staff member on hiring. Jewelry other than wedding bands and modest earrings will not be permitted in the school.

Mentor Program

To foster a spirit of unity and cooperation among students and staff, we will institute a mentor program in which each student will be assigned a mentor for each school year. See the Mentoring page for more information.

Focus on Education

We want our students and staff to focus on education. For this reason, we will allow no devices or items not needed for class or study in the classrooms or study halls. This means no sporting equipment, no music devices or radios, no animals or plants, no artwork or comic books, and especially, no cell phones or PDAs or unapproved computers in classrooms or study halls. Students must leave all such materials in their lockers, with all electronic devices turned off. Teachers and other staff may keep devices turned off in their desk drawers during class time. Punishment for violations of these rules will be explained in student and staff handbooks.

Focus on Technology

We do want to be a school that is preparing our students for the 21st Century. To that end, each student will have a laptop computer, and many school assignments will involve using software and the internet (or our intranet) over our secure wireless network. However, as we want to reserve school time for education, we will prohibit access to social sites, email, and instant messaging during school hours.



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