



January 30, 2020

Dear Achievement Prep Community:

In 2008, the Washington Highlands community of SEDC opened its arms and embraced a small proposed school named Achievement Prep. Twelve years later this proposed school has become a staple in the community and is, and has always been, proud to be part of the SE DC Ward 8 community. We take our mission to prepare students to excel as high-achieving scholars and leaders in high school, college and beyond very seriously. We are committed to developing and fostering strong character in them so that they, too, can be change agents in a world often set up against them. We also want the best of ourselves, but we have faced some severe challenges in trying to provide a quality educational experience for our middle school scholars.

Families have vested in us the privilege of educating their scholars and we hold the privilege with the highest regard. We expect the best of ourselves, and we have faced some severe challenges in achieving our mission for our middle school scholars. We have not kept our promise to our middle school families and our middle school is not the school our scholars deserve.

What matters to us most is our ability to offer our families and the Ward 8 community an excellent education where scholars grow academically and socially. Right now, Achievement Prep middle school campus is not offering that. Therefore, after much deliberation, our Board of Trustees made the very difficult decision last night to close our Wahler Place Middle School campus at the end of the current school year. For those of you who attended the open meeting you know this decision was not entered in to lightly.

Because our scholars matter most and we are determined to ensure our scholars are properly educated at the level they deserve, we have proposed a plan that will ensure scholars have a seat at a higher performing school. Simultaneously the proposed plan will allow Achievement Prep to refocus its efforts and be the network that not only honors its commitment to the community, but thrives and serves as a proof point of what is possible in SE DC from prek3 through 8th grade.

How we plan to do this:

- Upon approval from the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB), we will enter into a partnership with Friendship Public Charter School (FPCS). FPCS will be the new middle school for currently enrolled middle school scholars. For the next school year (2020-21), FPCS will operate a middle school campus at our Wahler Place Middle School location, and all **3rd to 7th grade scholars** will have a guaranteed seat at that FPCS campus. So if families decide to stay at Wahler Place, the only difference is the scholars will be students of FPCS instead of Achievement Prep. This means interested families **will not** have to complete a My School DC lottery application. Starting in August 2021, the scholars will attend school at the newly constructed Friendship SE Middle School on Milwaukee Avenue SE.
- Achievement Prep will petition the PCSB to reconfigure the current elementary campus to serve grades prek3 -8 so that eventually we can slowly restart our middle school campus out of an even stronger foundation. We have made great gains at the elementary campus and we expect that to continue.
- For scholars currently enrolled in grades preK 3 through 2nd the elementary campus will remain open and thriving. Scholars will continue to attend Achievement Prep Wahler Place Elementary Campus with a strengthened elementary school.



This proposed reconfiguration of the Achievement Prep network and acquisition by FPCS was approved last night by the Achievement Prep Board of Trustees at a public board meeting and we will go before the DC PCSB in February for their approval. We will share the date of this meeting with you and hope you will attend. We have put a lot of thought into this plan, with a focus on what is best for our scholars, their families and the community.

For Achievement Prep Middle School team members:

- The campus, as you know it, will close at the end of the school year. While there will not be an Achievement Prep Middle School, FPCS is willing to provide anyone who is interested the opportunity to apply for employment with them. FPCS will be at the campus in the coming weeks to observe and talk with Achievement Prep Middle School staff.
- FPCS is holding Talent Fairs this Saturday, February 1, 2020, and again on March 21, 2020. Staff are encouraged to attend one of these Talent Fairs and explore the opportunities FPCS might have to offer. (see attached flyers)
- We are also looking to host a job fair in February inviting other schools with open positions to come and meet you all and interview on the spot. The People Team will follow up with details on that in the coming days.
- For those of you who desire to remain at Achievement Prep, we encourage you to visit the website and apply for open position at the elementary campus.

While we know that these changes will impact everyone in different ways, they are the result of the need to secure the future of Achievement Prep and the positive impact we have on scholars' lives and our city for years to come. We have always been and remain committed to serving as a proof point for what's possible. Our honor is serving our community.

We sincerely thank each and every one of you for your service and your commitment to this work. We know its not easy – because if it were, everyone would be doing it. You are vessels for 3-generational change. This work is more than a job – it's a responsibility. We will never settle for less than greatness for our scholars. We must all work together over the next few months to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can support you as you focus on our scholars. You matter – greatly.

In partnership,

Shantelle Wright
Founder and CEO