

**SCHOOL NAME:** Digital Pioneers Academy

**SUBMITTER:** Mary Wells, Board Chair

**SUBMISSION DATE:** March 25, 2022; updated April 28, 2022

## **SCHOOL BACKGROUND**

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Campus name(s): Digital Pioneers Academy

Year(s) opened: 2018

Grades served (currently and at maturation of charter agreement, if applicable):

Currently 6-8, eventually 6-12 by 2025

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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1. Summarize the school's proposed changes. (Provide details in the following subsections.)

2021-22:

- 1) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Capitol Hill Campus  
709 12th St SE, Washington, DC 20003 - Grades 7-9
- 2) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Johenning Campus  
4025 9th St SE, Washington, DC 20032 - Grade 6

2022-23:

- 1) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Capitol Hill Campus  
709 12th St SE, Washington, DC 20003 - Grades 8-10
- 2) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Johenning Campus  
908 Wahler Place SE, Washington, DC 20032 - Grades 6-7

2023-24:

- 1) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Capitol Hill Campus  
709 12th St SE, Washington, DC 20003 - Grades 9-11
- 2) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Johenning Campus  
908 Wahler Place SE, Washington, DC 20032 - Grades 6-8

2. How will the proposed changes support the school's mission?

DPA's Mission is to develop the next generation of innovators. We prepare scholars to meet or exceed the highest academic standards while cultivating the strength of character necessary to both graduate from four-year colleges and thrive in 21st-century careers. This proposed change will allow for DPA to eventually serve 360 6th - 8th-grade students in one building. This change will allow us to serve students more effectively and centrally. It will allow students to thrive under one roof and

receive the education to fulfill our mission. We also aim to serve all students and this means serving students in all neighborhoods of DC regardless of zip code.

3. When did the school's board approve the proposed changes? Please attach minutes from the meeting and vote results.

April 14, 2022

## **FACILITY/LOCATION**

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1. Please check the reason below that best describes your proposed change.
  - An entire campus or school seeks to relocate from its current location to a new location.
  - A single campus seeks to remain in its current location *and* expand into an additional location.
  - A school seeks a new campus to be housed in a new facility.
2. List all the facilities and addresses the school currently operates, along with the new facility(ies) the LEA plans to operate. Include the campus(es) located in each facility, highlighting any changes from what is currently written in the school's charter agreement.

2021-22:

- 1) Digital Pioneers Academy -- Capitol Hill Campus  
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3. What's the rationale for relocating, expanding, or dividing into a new location? Why did the school choose this particular location?

This campus will allow our middle school to be centralized in one building. This campus was specifically chosen due to its proximity to our current campus at 4025 9th street SE. This transition will be less disruptive for our families than a further campus. Additionally, many of our students currently reside in district 8 or 7.

4. Is the proposed facility a property the school plans to purchase or lease? If the school has already purchased or leased the property, when did it acquire the property?

The building will be leased.

5. If the school plans to move a current campus into a new location, please answer the following:

- a. How will the new location impact students who currently attend this campus? How will the school ensure students re-enroll?

The new campus is about a 5min walk from the old campus which will ensure that students are still able to easily access the new campus and ensure their enrollment for next year.

- b. How will the school support families who need transportation to access the new location?

We will be providing a bus to and from 709 12th St SE for families that need to drop their students off on this side of the river and or have siblings who attend our high school.

6. Describe the proposed location's neighborhood (e.g., residential, commercial, metro-accessibility). What value will the school bring to this community? In the response, list traditional and public charter schools in close proximity to the new location, identifying schools that serve the same grade span the school will serve at full capacity at this location. Describe how the school's academic performance, demographics, and mission compare to these schools.

The proposed location is in Ward 8. Ward 8 a historically unserved neighborhood with a majority of black and brown residents. Therefore, a strong educational charter school will provide resources and education to the neighborhood. Additionally, DPA serves primarily black and brown students in this ward

We will be partnering with achievement prep elementary school who will have a building on the same campus. Achievement prep mission is to prepare students to excel as high-achieving scholars and leaders in high

school, college, and beyond. Critical to Achievement Prep's mission is a commitment to developing and fostering strong character in its scholars. Daily, scholars focus on the development and practice of Achievement Prep's DREAM values (Determination, Respect, Enthusiasm, Accountability, and Mastery). This very similarly align with our mission statement which aims to achieve a similar goal.

Other charter schools nearby include KIPP DC Wheeler Campus. While these charter school serve middle and high students, they are not computer science focused like DPA.

- 7.** Describe how the school has engaged its internal community (e.g., staff, families, students) in its decision to relocate, expand, or divide into this new location. Submit documentation of the school's communications with its staff and families regarding the proposed location. Explain any concerns the school's internal community raised. How did the school respond? How will it engage these stakeholders moving forward?

When making this decision DPA highly considered the families that this would affect. DPA has held a formal community meeting regarding this change. The most affected families would be our 7th grade families as the original proposal was to have 6th - 8th grade at 908 Wahler place in 2022-2023. However, our current 7th grade families did not support this change and consequently 7th grade families will be allowed to remain at 709 12th street.

- 8.** Describe how the school has engaged the community surrounding the proposed location. Submit documentation of communications with nearby principals, neighbors, ANC representatives, Councilmembers, and others, notifying them of the school's plans. Explain any concerns the surrounding community raised. How did the school respond? How will it engage these stakeholders moving forward?

Digital Pioneers Academy has partnered with Achievement Prep who currently resides in the building and will continue to reside in another building located on the campus. Achievement Prep has served as a hub since 2007 for friendship and community in the Anacostia neighborhood. The facility previously served at a middle public charter school and has served as a community center for games, crafts, and cookouts over the years. Digital Pioneers Academy has conducted a range of internal and external engagement activities related to the new location, despite challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We have continued to survey current parents, hosted several information sessions with prospective 6th grade parents, reached out to all elementary feeder schools with information on the new location, and organized existing parents to support outreach activities. We have notified Advisory Neighborhood

Commissioners and invited them to “have a conversation with DPA about programming.” We have reached out to several charter schools in the area as well to gauge any potential challenges and concerns. We have not received any concerns; however, we will continue to engage key stakeholders this Spring.

9. Will there be newly created seats for additional students? If so, discuss student recruitment efforts in the new school community.

We are planning to have 120 new 6th grade students in the fall of 2022. We have actively recruited in this neighborhood and held an open house to invite families into DPA and understand what resources are available.

10. How many square feet is the proposed space? What is the maximum occupancy at the new location? If the maximum occupancy load for staff and students is less than the total number of staff and students who will occupy the facility at any point in the future, please explain how the school will address this issue.

Square Feet: \$46,00

The maximum number of occupancy will not exceed the amount of staff and students we have within the building.

11. Does the proposed space require renovations either to serve as a school or to be accessible for students with disabilities?

The building does not require renovations to serve disabled students.

12. In addition to providing a 5-year Operating Budget, please answer the following questions regarding the financial impact of the proposed location:

- a. For each of the five budget years, how much does the proposed new facility cost, and how many students will be served at the new site?

Year	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Facility Cost (rent and operating expenses)	\$1,292,741	\$1,332,816	\$1,374,134	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000

# of Students	360	360	360	360	360
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- b. What is the school's per-pupil facilities cost, and how does this compare with its per-pupil facilities allowance?

Year	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Facility Cost (rent and operating expenses)	\$1,292,741	\$1,332,816	\$1,374,134	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
# of Students	360	360	360	360	360

- c. If the school plans to operate multiple facilities, in addition to the proposed new location, what is the LEA's total facilities cost (e.g., rent expense, property taxes, property insurance, amortization of leasehold improvements (LHI) and furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE), depreciation of building, debt service for building, LHI and FFE, utilities, repairs, maintenance, etc.)? How does this expense compare with the school's per-pupil allowance?

Our expenses do not exceed our per-pupil allowance.

- d. What additional sources of funding does the school plan to use to pay for this new facility during each of the five budget years?

The facilities expenses in excess of DPA's facilities revenue are covered through its other revenue sources - including the per-pupil allocation, federal grants, and private fundraising. Given the fungibility of the money, no one funding source is predetermined to "cover" the loss in facilities.

- e. If applicable, what contingencies does the school have in case it enrolls fewer students than anticipated?

There are three contingencies in place. In the budget, there is a 3% revenue contingency (equivalent to about \$355K in Y1), and there's also

a 1% enrollment contingency. The enrollment contingency means that we're effectively budgeting for four fewer students than our target enrollment. The final contingency is built into the lease agreement itself. Our annual facility cost is determined by our final certified enrollment.

# DIGITAL PIONEERS

ACADEMY

**Minutes April 14, 2022**  
**Board Meeting (via conference call)**  
**4:00pm**

## **Attendance**

Board Present: Sara Batterton, Henry Hipps, Orlena Nwokah Blanchard, Mashea Ashton, Chase Glass, and Paul O'Neill

Board Absent: Mary Wells, Legand Burge, Kevjorik Jones,

### **Action items**

- (Sara Batterton motion, Henry Hipps second) The Board voted unanimously to approve the Achievement Prep lease as presented.

### **Discussion**

Ms. Ashton reviewed the mission and some high level highlights. She discussed that we are now 50 days away from Parcc and how we are working hard to ensure we are ready for all ways. She also discussed some of our biggest wins among scholars and families, emphasizing our empathy value and all the positive momentum at DPA.

Next Ms. Ashton discussed our current lease with Wahler Place. Ms. Ashton stated that our lease is currently a 3 year lease with a 2 year optional renewal. Ms. Ashton then continued to discuss the remaining updates from our last call with the lease lawyers.

### Five-Year Estimated Budget Worksheet

DESCRIPTION	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
REVENUES	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27
Per Pupil Charter Payments	12,966,191	16,011,089	19,189,730	19,607,732	20,035,138
Federal Entitlements	2,391,412	1,677,801	1,004,146	1,020,057	1,036,286
Income from Grants and Donations	777,492	951,650	1,132,463	1,155,112	1,178,215
Activity Fees					
Other Income	38,418	47,024	55,958	57,078	58,219
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$16,173,513</b>	<b>\$18,687,564</b>	<b>\$21,382,298</b>	<b>\$21,839,979</b>	<b>\$22,307,857</b>
EXPENSES					
Personnel Salaries and Benefits	7,801,205	8,997,643	10,094,159	10,561,861	10,965,702
Direct Student Costs	2,109,659	2,416,576	2,875,726	2,933,240	2,991,905
Occupancy	3,732,835	3,846,474	4,140,072	4,129,317	4,196,544
Office Expenses	385,704	472,102	561,801	573,037	584,498
General Expenses	1,773,362	2,382,828	3,037,019	3,228,603	3,392,113
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$15,802,765</b>	<b>\$18,115,623</b>	<b>\$20,708,776</b>	<b>\$21,426,059</b>	<b>\$22,130,763</b>
	<b>\$370,748</b>	<b>\$571,940</b>	<b>\$673,521</b>	<b>\$413,920</b>	<b>\$177,095</b>