



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Charter and/or Charter Agreement Amendment Application

Part I: General Information

All applicants must complete this section

SUBMITTED BY: Current Board Chair, Eagle Academy PCS

SUBJECT: Charter Amendment Request for: (Mark all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment Ceiling Increase | <input type="checkbox"/> Name Change – Campus or Facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Replication of Grades Served | <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Reconfiguration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade Level Expansion (Single Grade) | <input type="checkbox"/> LEA Status for Special Education |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade Level Expansion (Grade Band) | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education Enrollment Preference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Facility or New Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Governance Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goals and Achievement Expectations | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation Requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mission or Education Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Competency-Based Learning Application |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum, Standards or Assessments | |

SUBMISSION DATE: June 6, 2022

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Please address the following questions in their entirety. This information provides helpful background to the DC PCSB Board as it reviews these requests.

Overview of School Performance

1. Provide the following information about your Local Educational Agency (LEA) by campus:
 - a) Campus name(s) and location(s): **Eagle Academy PCS at Congress Heights, 3400 Wheeler Road SE; and Eagle Academy PCS at Capitol Riverfront, 1900 Half Street SW.**
 - b) Year opened: **2003**
 - c) Grade levels served (Currently and at maturation of charter agreement, if applicable): **PreK3 – 3rd Grade**
 - d) Date that charter will be eligible for possible renewal: **20-Year Charter Renewal in 2023.**
2. Please select the performance indicators below that describe the school’s current performance*: (Mark all that apply)

Current rated Tier 1, or met at least 2/3 of targets on the most recent PK-only PMF or Alternative Accountability Framework.

School is not currently under corrective action.

X Has historically met enrollment projections w/in 80% of target.

X School has been in operation for 3+ years.

X School is currently accredited. **By the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools through December 2024.**

*If the school has multiple campuses or varying PMFs, please describe the academic performance of each campus here: **Both campuses were rated Tier 1 during the last comprehensive review process by the DC PCSB, prior to school closings due to COVID-19.**

PROPOSAL

Eagle Academy Public Charter School submits to the DC Public Charter School Board this application to amend its charter agreement by changing the item(s) selected above. If approved, this amendment will be effective on **August 1, 2023.**

1. Please provide details on the selected amendment(s) above and describe the requested change(s), including the school's rationale for the proposed changes. Describe any planning that is already underway to prepare for the proposed amendment.

Eagle Academy PCS hereby requests approval for a grade band expansion to include 4th and 5th grade. In its February 2022 meeting, Eagle Academy's Board of Trustees unanimously voted to expand the grade band offered by the LEA to include 4th and 5th grade to better serve our community. Over the years, many parents have requested that we expand to all the elementary school grades, to include 4th and 5th grade. Former DC PCSB leadership staff recommended that Eagle Academy becomes an elementary school (rather than an early childhood school offering PreK3 – 3rd grade) to improve our retention rates. Thus, Eagle Academy is proposing to expand one grade per school year as follows. In the first year, for the 2023-2024 school year, Eagle Academy will only enroll current Eagle Academy 3rd grade students who are being promoted to the 4th grade. Eagle Academy will survey current 3rd grade parents to determine the number of available seats based on the number of students planning on staying. We will follow this same process for expanding to the 5th grade in the 2024-2025 school year. However, 4th grade seats will be open to any eligible applicant through my school DC in 2024-2025SY. Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, both 4th and 5th grade seats will be open to any eligible applicant through My School DC.

2. How will the proposed amendment(s) support or enhance the school's mission?

Eagle Academy Public Charter School's mission is to build the foundation for a promising future for all students in a rich, robust learning environment that fosters creativity, problem-solving abilities, emphasizing cognitive, social, and emotional growth by engaging children as active learners, in an inclusive learning environment. Since its establishment in 2003, Eagle Academy PCS has kept true to its mission, as outlined in its charter application, to serve students during their early childhood years (PreK3 – Grade 3), and to

serve the communities where it was first established as well as those from where many of its students come from. Consequently, Eagle Academy continues to have a presence in both Ward 6 and Ward 8. Now, in response to parents' requests and to better serve our communities, Eagle Academy will expand its grade bands to include 4th and 5th grade so that all elementary grades are included. We believe that becoming an elementary school will support and enhance the school's mission since we will continue to implement a program focused not only on the academics, but also on the social-emotional and cognitive skills that develop in children from age 3 through the pre-teen years, as well as on providing high-quality, trauma-informed programming in special education and out-of-school time. We do not foresee a change in curricula since the curricula we currently use has modules specific to 4th and 5th grade. Finally, we will not be requesting an enrollment increase. Eagle will maintain its current capacity limit of 920 students spanning PreK-3 through 5th grade.

3. While considering this amendment request, DC PCSB staff may review the school's history of board actions, DC PCSB audits, community complaints, enrollment trends, and any relevant data used by DC PCSB to monitor equity in schools. Please describe any DC PCSB audits, notices of concern or other board actions issued against your school in the past 3 years. What was the outcome? Please explain what steps, if any, you've taken to address the concerns that prompted a DC PCSB audit, board action, or community complaint.

In 2019, the DC PCSB approved Eagle Academy's charter amendment requesting to relocate its existing Ward 6 campus to 1900 Half Street SW, while continuing to operate its programs for grades PreK3 through grade three at two campuses and maintaining an enrollment cap of 920 students. We currently do not have any pending DC PCSB audit, nor any notices of concern or other board actions issued against Eagle Academy in the past three years.

4. DC PCSB will review the school's Financial Audit Reviews (FAR) and current financials to determine the fiscal health of the organization. If applicable, describe how the proposed amendment will impact the school's finances. Explain any anticipated expenses for the proposed changes and how the school will finance them. *[EXCLUDES the following amendments: Governance, Goals, Mission, Curriculum, Name Changes and Graduation Requirements. If not applicable, write N/A.]* **Note:** *If applicable, in addition to your narrative please attach a proposed [5-year Operating Budget](#).*

Eagle Academy's proposal to expand its grade bands to include 4th and 5th grade would allow Eagle Academy to maintain or improve its current level of finances since (1) our enrollment numbers should go up, closer to the 920-enrollment cap; and (2) we will be able to keep approximately ninety percent of our current student enrollment at both campuses.

Eagle Academy PCS is very strong financially with approximately \$5 million in reserve funds. If approved, this expansion to fourth and fifth grade would continue to strengthen Eagle Academy's financial position. Eagle Academy would be able to compete on an equal footing with other public and public charter schools

There are three major expenses that Eagle Academy would incur in implementing a 4th grade and 5th grade program: curriculum, staffing, and furniture. Eagle will continue with its current curriculum and add the appropriate materials from all the sources for 4th grade in '23-'24, and 5th grade in '24-'25. The cost of the curriculum is within the same cost parameters as though Eagle were to add students in grade K-3.

The cost of the additional teachers is not significantly different than the cost of adding on additional teachers for the lower grades. (See attached five-year budget.) In terms of recruitment, Eagle has been able to recruit qualified teachers and expects that Eagle will continue to find and hire highly qualified 4th and 5th grade teachers.

The cost of furnishing students' desks and related furniture and equipment is already built into Eagle's budget. If there were an additional cost as part of the start-up process, Eagle Academy's reserves of \$5,000,000 are more than adequate. The additional cost would be covered by the interest Eagle receives on its reserves.

Eagle Academy has worked hard to attain top tier ratings. The larger Eagle grew, the more difficult it became. Eagle Academy and its Board decided that it was very important to obtain Tier 1 ratings at both campuses. Eagle did this in trial runs with DC PCSB's testing system. The smaller campus continued as a Tier 1 and the larger campus missed by 2.5 to 5 points each year. Eagle then experienced a down year in testing. By dropping our enrollment with 825 to 850, Eagle was still able to serve many students in Wards 8, 7, and 6 while attaining top tier status.

In 2019, Eagle Academy's Special Education program experienced a significant drop in performance. In reviewing previous years, Eagle's Special Education program received high marks and good test scores. An analysis of the special needs program for that year identified three changes that negatively affected the test scores. First, Eagle experimented with more "push-in" programs in SY2019. Eagle has reverted to more pull-out support which has proven effective. Second, Eagle introduced a new reading program which takes approximately two years to be successful, Lindamood-Bell. Special needs students did well with Lindamood-Bell, but it takes at least two years before that shows in the test scores. Finally, Eagle Academy introduced a new literacy program in special needs education, Houghton Mifflin Journeys. Again, teachers need time to learn, adjust, modify instruction while trying to support students through the new program. Students also need time to adjust, learn, etc. This program also demonstrated its value in its second year.

5. How has the school informed its external stakeholders (e.g. local ANC commissioners, neighbors) and internal stakeholders (e.g. staff, parents) of the proposed amendment(s)? Please attach any written communication (e.g., meeting minutes). Describe any notable support for or opposition to the proposed amendment(s). If concerns have been brought to your attention, how do you plan to address them? *[EXCLUDES the following amendments: Governance, Goals, Mission, Curriculum, Graduation Requirements and Competency-Based Learning Credits. If not applicable, write N/A.]*

For years, parents have been asking, and we recently surveyed them, about their interest in keeping their children enrolled at Eagle Academy for 4th and 5th grade. They have overwhelmingly expressed their support for such action and their plans to keep their children at Eagle Academy.

Eagle Academy conducted five outreach meetings to parents and the community. The meetings were announced on Eagle's website. Parents were encouraged to invite people in the community. In all six meetings at both campuses, whether a ZOOM meeting or in-person (both were held), parents adamantly wanted Eagle to grow to grade 4 and grade 5. (Attached is the attendance list for each meeting.) Community meetings where Eagle Academy's growth to 4th and 5th grade were discussed and the number of people in attendance are listed in the attachment. The sign-up sheets are attached for each meeting. It should be noted that people can join a meeting or attend a meeting and decide not to sign in.

ANC commissioners for each school area have changed in the last two years. Eagle Academy has sent a letter to each current commissioner informing them that Eagle is applying to grow to grade 4 and grade 5 at each school site. Eagle staff will reach out to meet with each of them and solicit their support.

6. When did your school's board approve the proposed amendment(s)? Please attach minutes from the meeting and vote results.

In its February 2022 meeting, Eagle Academy's Board of Trustees unanimously voted to expand the grade band offered by the LEA to include 4th and 5th grade to better serve our community (see attached Board meeting minutes).

Eagle Academy's Board of Trustees first decided to expand to 4th grade and 5th grade at its January 2021 meeting. The Chief Executive Officer and Deputy CEO for Education were instructed to prepare everything necessary to submit for expansion. When the Board and staff prepared to submit for expansion in August 2021, DC PCSB was not accepting applications to expand.