

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) NAME: Maya Angelou PCS

BOARD CHAIR NAME: Alise Marshall

SUBMISSION DATE: 4/10/2024

SUBJECT (choose one):

Mission Statement Amendment Request

Mission Statement and Educational Approach Amendment Request

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Campus name(s): Maya Angelou PCS High School and Young Adult Learning Center

Year(s) opened: 1998

Grades served: 9-12 (High School), Adult (Young Adult Learning Center)

Year the school will undergo its next charter review or renewal: 2027-28

Proposal summary: Maya Angelou PCS requests to change its mission statement in line with its refreshed strategic plan and vision for the LEA, as well as larger operating organization, See Forever Foundation.

Year the school plans to adopt the proposed changes: 2024-25

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

MISSION STATEMENT

1. In the table below, write the school's current and proposed mission statements.

Current Mission Statement	Proposed Mission Statement
Our mission is to create learning communities in lower income urban areas where all students, particularly those who have not succeeded in traditional schools, can succeed academically and socially.	Maya empowers opportunity and justice- involved youth to transform the trajectory of their lives. We do this by engaging each of our scholars in a restorative, relevant school experience that prioritizes personalized academic support, well-being, and preparation for the post-Maya pathway of their choice. With an education in our

	network of schools, our scholars will do more than succeed...they will thrive.
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2. What is the school's rationale for changing its mission statement?

This school year marks our twenty-sixth year of service to opportunity and justice-involved youth here in D.C. Given this major milestone, our board and other stakeholders within our learning community believed we needed to explicitly name these two unique groups of students that we seek to serve. In addition, the revised mission we are proposing highlights our recent growth into a network of five schools - two via DCPCSB authorization, one via the See Forever Foundation's (SFF's) partnership with the D.C. Department of Corrections, and two via SFF's partnership with the D.C. Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services. This mission applies to all students across our network of schools, which the SFF operates in its role as school management organization.

3. Describe the school's philosophy for educating students. Include how the school ensures all students—including students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged and at-risk students, and students above or below grade level—benefit from the proposed mission statement and the school's educational philosophy.

One of the other primary reasons for refreshing our mission statement was to explicitly highlight the educational experience we aim to provide for all of our students, as well as the primary components of our service model. When students join our learning community, many of them have not had positive nor productive educational experiences in the past. Hence, school at Maya is restorative; our staff does not judge students for past decisions they have made, but rather welcomes and affirms them for wanting to pursue their educational and life goals. The mission clearly states how we serve our students and families, promoting: (1) academic achievement and acceleration; (2) mental, emotional, and physical wellness; and (3) preparation for and entry into both career and post-secondary pathways after graduation from our schools. The notion of a "personalized" education at Maya underscores that our model continues to be inclusive of all learners, especially those with complex needs and educational histories (i.e., systems-involved, incarcerated, disconnected, etc.).

4. Will the proposed mission statement impact curricular choices, including resources, assessments, standards, and instructional strategies?

No.

5. How did the school engage its internal community in revising the mission statement? Include evidence demonstrating student, staff, and parent support for the proposed changes.

In 2020-2021, our organization sponsored focus groups of Maya scholars, parents/families, staff, and external partners to gather their input for our current strategic plan. From those focus groups, we identified multiple themes regarding Maya's impact, organizational identity, and its educational program that formed the basis for our mission refresh. After drafting an initial updated statement in Fall 2022, we engaged our board in a review of the draft and executed another round of staff engagement in order to refine the proposed mission's language.

See next page for the virtual program amendment request application.

LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY (LEA) NAME: Maya Angelou PCS

BOARD CHAIR NAME: Alisa Marshall

SUBMISSION DATE: 4/10/2024

SUBJECT: Virtual Program Amendment Request

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Campus name(s): Maya Angelou PCS High School

Year(s) opened: 1998

Grade(s) served: 9-12

Year the school will undergo its next charter review or renewal: 2027-28

Proposal summary:

Maya Angelou PCS High School was approved to begin offering virtual learning in school year 2021-22. Based on staff, student, and parent feedback, we are requesting an expansion of the eligibility criteria to allow for additional students to take part in virtual learning.

Year the school plans to implement the proposed changes: SY 2024-25

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

VIRTUAL PROGRAM

6. How many students does the school plan to educate virtually? Are there any eligibility requirements a student must meet to participate in the virtual program? If so, describe them below.

If permitted to expand the virtual learning criteria, the school intends to allow approximately 25-30 students to participate in the virtual program per year. In the original amendment request, we received approval to offer the program to students under the following circumstances:

- 1) students who have recurring parole appointments or court sessions during the school day;
- 2) students who are expecting a child;
- 3) students who are parents and unable to secure consistent childcare;
- 4) students who are responsible for caring for their parents and/or siblings;
- 5) students who are employed full-time because they are the only

- source of income for their families;
- 6) students who are employed full-time because they are supporting themselves as unaccompanied minors;
 - 7) students who are under persistent threat of gang violence while traveling to and from school; and
 - 8) students with medical exemptions under the Office of the State Superintendent of
 - 9) Education's Medical Exemption Policy.
 - 10) The school may allow participation in the online program under other, rare circumstances as warranted on a case-by-case basis.

Since receiving approval to offer this program starting in 2021-22, we gathered feedback from students, staff, and families and identified further needs for virtual learning in the school community. With this in mind, we are requesting the addition of the following criteria:

- 11) students who believe they are under persistent threat of violence from classmates while attending school
- 12) students who commit an offense that would normally result in an expulsion, but for whom, the school believes virtual learning is a better alternative to expulsion
- 13) students who have threatened violence toward classmates, school staff, or the school building and for whom the school is investigating and attempting to mediate these threats
- 14) students who are 18 years or older or families of students who are under 18 who request virtual learning.

7. Describe the expectations the school will set for parents/guardians of participating students. What trainings and resources will the school offer?

Prior to students joining the virtual program, the student and his/her parents/guardians are asked to join a meeting with the student's academic counselor and a team of school administrators, which often includes members of the leadership team, a social worker, and a virtual teacher. In addition, if the student receives special education services, a member of the special education team will join the meeting.

During the meeting, school staff review the design of the program, expectations for participation and parental supervision, the necessary technology, and requirements for attendance. Students and parents/guardians are expected to sign a virtual contract that details these expectations, which has been approved

by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) as part of their annual distance learning review process.

Throughout the time of the student's participation in virtual learning, staff members provide multiple in-person touchpoints via students' participation in campus activities, including on-site testing, or via home visits or meetings out in the community. In addition, dedicated staff members offer support virtually and via phone to students and families in response to requests, as well as if the staff members notice a lack of participation or progress. The aim is for every student to fully participate each day and our staff works to ensure that students and their families feel supported.

8. How did the school engage its internal community in developing the proposed virtual program? Include evidence demonstrating staff and family support for the proposed changes.

The school has gathered a wide range of feedback from its community of students, staff, and families regarding virtual programming. Given the safety issues in the Ward 7 and 8 neighborhoods and throughout the District of Columbia, students and their families have expressed concern about threats of violence and voiced the desire to participate in virtual programming. In addition, staff have shared their perspectives and concerns regarding school safety through formal staff meetings and private conversations with school leadership.

Beyond the safety concerns, the school has received other requests from students and their families who wish to participate in virtual learning for a wide variety of reasons, including because they feel the students will have better attention and focus in a virtual learning environment. Teachers have elevated these requests and feel that in certain circumstances, they believe students will thrive and progress better through virtual learning.

Maya Angelou PCS High School wants to be responsive to these requests and to be able to expand the criteria in order to better serve our students. We believe that this will lead to increased engagement and better outcomes for our students.

MINUTES

MAYA ANGELOU PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MARCH 26, 2023

The Board of the Maya Angelou Public Charter School (“MAPCS”) held a meeting on March 26, 2024, under notice duly given. The members present via Zoom were Alise Marshall (Board Chair), James Forman, Jr., David Domenici, Julie Johnson, Cheryl Chun, Lewis Goss II, Michael Stratton (Vice Chair, Financer), Darren Cambridge, Cheryl Mills, Thomas White (Board Secretary), Cheryl Holcomb McCoy and Michelle Brown. Absent board members: Reginald Belle and Melanee Gragg. Clarisse Mendoza Davis introduced Maya staff: Leah Lamb, Azalia Speight, Kamal Wright-Cunningham, Aaron Cannon, Felecia Hayward, Reginald Galloway, Elise Seth, L’Tanya Holley, Sheryl Eastman, Allan Clyde, Jasmine Groce, Micah Stewart, Anteria Gross, and Vicky Mitchell. Absent staff: Nora Shetty.

Ms. Marshall called the meeting to order at 11:06 am and began by welcoming the board members and the Maya staff to the meeting. She also acknowledged that this is her last meeting as Board chair. Ms. Marshall opened by stating that the objective of the Board’s guest series is to provide a more comprehensive perspective of Maya’s role in the various systems and advocacy coalitions as well as provide direction with respect to strategy and broader support for Maya and the leadership team.

Dr. Mendoza Davis acknowledged and thanked Ms. Marshall for her service and leadership to the board. In honor of Maya Angelou’s birthday, each board member will receive a “Good Disruption” sweatshirt signaling the direction Maya is headed. Dr. Mendoza Davis introduced the guest speakers Gene Downing and James Carpenter, Co-Chairs with Thrive Under 25 Coalition, highlighting Maya’s role, and partnership with the coalition and how the members are not education organizations, but how their work touches and influences Maya’s work. Gene Downing was arrested at 19 and sentenced to 82 years to life. However, through a DC Local Law, the Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act, Gene received a second chance at life and decided to join the fight to help those still incarcerated. James Carpenter, arrested at 17, served 24 years, and released 4 years ago, is an Incredible messenger and collaborates with justice-involved youth. He also works with the youth at two of Maya’s secured sites, New Beginnings, and the Youth Service Center. It was incumbent upon him to fight and advocate on behalf of justice-involved youth. In addition to advocacy, legislation, and public education, Thrive Under 25’s mission and vision is to be a transformative coalition to end racial bias, create housing opportunities for returning citizens, and expand educational opportunities within the workforce: access to programs.

The speakers said that Maya is the end all, be all and the work is paramount inside and outside. They encouraged Maya to continue advocating for the youth concerning equitable education change and to keep pushing for the implementation of life skills as they re-enter society. They

also suggested that we stop making assessments with the youth without interacting with them and engage them on a deeper and more critical level.

Dr. Mendoza Davis presented one resolution for Board approval: An Amendment to the Charter Agreement with District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (DCPCSB): Update Mission Statement & Expand Virtual Instruction Criteria at High School Campus. The purpose of this is to update the mission statement. Maya is one of the few schools in DC that offers virtual instruction for medical or other health reasons, safety reasons, court, and probation reasons. The proposed amendment will provide safe passage and avoid fear within the school setting. There was a motion proposed, it was seconded. There was no opposition, and the resolution was passed unanimously.

The meeting continued with the financial report. A new EdOps colleague, Kiril Johnson, was introduced. Mr. Johnson has been assisting Reginald Galloway, Director of Finance, with planning the 2024-2025 School year budget. Highlights presented are through January 2024. Overall, Maya continues to be in good financial standing

Dr. Kamal Wright-Cunningham, Deputy Chief of Student Support Services shared that after the recent suicide of a fellow employee, there was a spike in the Employee Assistance Program and how the staff is pulling together and holding each other accountable. There will be another Health Fair in May. There is a teacher crisis not just locally but nationally.

Dr. Mendoza Davis shared about the revitalization of Maya's partnership with Teach For America and the Petey Greene Project to help address the staff shortage. Maya is formalizing the agreements with both organizations. Per the Mayor's office, it has been a tough fiscal climate.

Azalia Speight, Chief of Schools, shared that the South African experience was a transformative trip. They learned so much about SA and their educational system. They had the opportunity to visit the Hope School and were amazed at how engaged the scholars were and their excitement about learning. The experience with Hope School was like the start of Maya: Unconventional, alternative, and grassroots.

Aaron Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer, provided an update on the construction Phase 10 project. Senior leaders and the operations team are looking to have a Project Manager, Building Hope, onsite for Phase 10. They have over 30 years of experience working with charter schools in the DC area and will assist with identifying a construction company. A cost estimate is forthcoming.

Leah Lamb, Chief of Institutional Development, reminded the Board to RSVP for the April 5th Funder's Breakfast. She also spoke about upcoming activities – The Virtual 5K, May 19th and 20th, and the "From Silos to Solutions" Convening, April 25-27, 2024.

Dr. Kamal Wright-Cunningham, Deputy Chief of Student Support Services, mentioned the Young Adult Learning Center's new pilot CTE Track and its progress, the upcoming graduations, and the end-of-year testing. He also mentioned that he is collaborating with Dr. Cheryl Holcomb McCoy on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) measurement, and they have found that there are gaps as it relates to young, adults, adults and those who are incarcerated. The research team, Dr. Cyril Pickering, our school psychologist,

and Ms. Shamette Franklin, Resident Clinical Expert from the YALC, will be working with Dr. Holcomb McCoy and her team.

Dr. Felecia Hayward, Deputy Chief of Secured Sites, shared a story about a young scholar at DOC @ DC Jail with 3 charges for a total of 6 years. He has been enrolled since October 2022 and has an IEP. Updates have been sent to his education attorney and they have been meeting regarding his progress. At his sentencing, the judge commented on his status, and because of his growth and motivation to succeed, the judge reduced his sentence from 6 years to four months and time served. He will be released in May. This is a great testament to the Maya team and what they are doing.

Ms. Marshall opened the meeting up for public comments and there were no responses from the public in attendance. She officially adjourned the meeting at 2:02 pm.

BOARD RESOLUTION

APPLICATION TO AMEND CHARTER AGREEMENT WITH D.C. PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD (DCPCSB)

The Maya Angelou Public Charter Schools (MAPCS) Board of Directors approves application to amend its charter agreement with DCPCSB for the following reasons:

- To update the MAPCS mission statement:
- To update the criteria to offer/place a student on virtual instruction at the MAPCS High School campus to include the following:
 - To address specific safety concerns (i.e., a student fears for their safety in the community to/from school and/or within the school setting due to conflict with and/or threats from other students; a student continues to demonstrate a pattern of violent behavior towards students and staff within the school, etc.):
 - To provide an alternative to expulsion for serious offenses (i.e., bringing a firearm into the school, etc.):
 - To respond to parent/guardian requests for virtual instruction



Approved by Maya Board of Directors Chair

3/27/2024

Date



Approved by Maya Board of Directors Secretary

3/27/2024

Date