

CHARTER AGREEMENT AMENDMENT APPLICATION

Submitter: Donald L. Hense, Board Chair – Friendship Public Charter School

Approval/Amendment Request: Graduation Requirements

Submission Date: 4/1/2021

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

- Campus name(s) and location(s):

Campus Name	Campus Address
Armstrong Elementary Campus	111 O Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001
Armstrong Middle School Campus	111 O Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001
Blow Pierce Elementary Campus	725 19th St. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002
Blow Pierce Middle School Campus	725 19th St. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002
Chamberlain Elementary Campus	1345 Potomac Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003
Chamberlain Middle School Campus	1345 Potomac Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003
Ideal Elementary Campus	6130 N. Capitol St., NW, Washington, DC 20011
Ideal Middle School Campus	6130 N. Capitol St., NW, Washington, DC 20011
K - 8 Online Campus	1351 Nicholson St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20011
Southeast Elementary Campus	645 Milwaukee Pl., SE, Washington, D.C. 20032

Southeast Middle School Campus	645 Milwaukee Pl., SE, Washington, D.C. 20032
Woodridge Elementary Campus	2959 Carlton Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20018
Woodridge Middle School Campus	2959 Carlton Ave. NE, Washington, D.C. 20018
Collegiate High School	4095 Minnesota Ave NE, Washington, DC 20019
Technology Prep High School	2705 Martin Luther King Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20032

- Year(s) opened: **1998**
- Grade levels served: **PK3 – 12th Grade**
- Date the charter will be eligible for renewal: **June 30, 2028**

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Summarize the school’s proposed changes. (Provide details in the following subsection.)

Friendship proposes to allow participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities to meet the physical education (PE) requirements for high school graduation.

To earn high school PE credit through participation in sports and/or extracurricular athletic programs at Friendship or a reputable external organization, students must:

Required Activity	Credit Amount Earned
Participate in a sport for one season/semester	.5 credit of PE
Participate in sports for two season/semesters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the same sport for two seasons • two different sports for one season each 	1.0 credit of PE

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

Friendship Public Charter School’s mission is to provide a world-class education that motivates students to achieve high academic standards, enjoy learning and develop as ethical, literate, well-

rounded and self-sufficient citizens who contribute actively to their communities. Participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities instill in our students, the mission beliefs and core values of Friendship, the desire to serve as well as develop the behaviors and skills such as leadership, teamwork, and lifelong fitness habits. All of these aspects combined produce students who embody Friendship's mission. Moreover, allowing participation in sports and extra-curricular activities to meet PE requirements, gives students the option to enroll in an elective course that aligns with their career interests and/or take advanced courses.

3. Describe any DC PCSB audits, notices of concern, or other board actions issued against your school in the past three years. What was the outcome?

There have been no DC PCSB audits, notices of concern or other board actions issued against Friendship PCS in the last three years.

4. How has the school informed its stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, staff, ANC commissioners, neighbors) of the proposed change(s)? Describe any notable support for or opposition to the proposal. How is the school addressing stakeholders' concerns?

Over the years, Community Office and Campus-based staff have discussed the possibility of allowing participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities to satisfy the PE requirement for high school graduation. More recently, staff began researching what was happening in other school districts in DC and nationally, and found a variety of models and ways in which PE requirements are met. What appealed to Friendship most is the model in which participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic programs satisfy the requirement. This approach aligns with our mission and core values and instills in students the self-discipline and leadership skills that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Students have questioned the need for a PE course when they participate in a sport or extracurricular activity; it did not make sense to them. Their parents support this line of thinking. So, with this information and additional research, the Friendship PCS Board of Trustees voted to approve this change to our high school graduation requirements and for staff to submit this charter amendment to the DC PCSB.

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

On March 18, 2021, the Friendship PCS Board of Trustees approved a resolution to amend the high school graduation requirements to allow participation in sports and extra-curricular activities to meet PE requirements.

Graduation Requirements Different from DCMR

Each school’s charter agreement outlines its approved graduation requirements, which DC PCSB uses when determining 9th grade on track and reviewing student transcripts for graduation. Per DC PCSB’s [High School Graduation Approval Process Requirements](#) policy, an approved public charter school has exclusive control over its instructional methods. However, as specified in a school’s charter agreement, changes to a school’s curriculum that impact the school’s mission require a charter agreement amendment, which includes changes to a charter high school’s approved graduation requirements. DC PCSB will approve graduation requirements and changes thereto provided those requirements are equivalent to or surpass the requirements outlined in Section 2203 of the D.C. Municipal Regulations (DCMR) Title 5-A, Chapter 22, which are listed below:

A total of twenty-four (24) Carnegie Units in corresponding subjects and required volunteer community service hours shall have been satisfactorily completed for graduation.

COURSES	UNIT(S)
English	4.0
Mathematics; must include Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra II at a minimum	4.0
Science; must include three (3) lab sciences	4.0
Social Studies; must include World History 1 and 2, United States History; United States Government, and District of Columbia History	4.0
World Language	2.0
Art	0.5
Music	0.5
Physical Education/Health	1.5
Electives	3.5
Total	24.0

Graduation Requirements (continued)

1. Please describe in detail the proposed changes to the school’s graduation requirements.

Friendship proposes to allow participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities to meet the physical education (PE) requirements for high school graduation. Friendship PCS offers a robust athletic program in which our students devote hours of training to compete at the local, regional and in some cases, national levels. Also, Friendship students participate in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities through reputable organizations that allow them to train and compete locally, nationally, and internationally. Participation in these activities instill in our students, the mission beliefs and core values of Friendship, the desire to serve as well as the behaviors and skills embedded in the state PE standards that include leadership, teamwork, and lifelong fitness habits.

Students have a daily training schedule in addition to games and/or competitions that require up to eight to 10 hours per week. Participation in these activities occur most often after school and,

if our request is approved, allows students the option to enroll in an elective course that aligns with their career interests and advance their career and college preparedness.

To earn high school PE credit through participation in sports and/or extracurricular athletic programs at Friendship or a reputable external organization, students must:

Required Activity	Credit Amount Earned
Participate in a sport for one season/semester	.5 credit of PE
Participate in sports for two season/semesters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the same sport for two seasons • two different sports for one season each 	1.0 credit of PE

2. What is the school’s rationale for proposing these changes?

The proposed change to Friendship’s high school graduation PE requirement is not so different. The credit amount remains unchanged; however, the manner in which the credit is earned has changed. We believe that participation in team and individual sports and extra-curricular activities meet the PE requirement in ways that have a lifelong impact on a student’s character development and health habits. We also believe this option provides students with an opportunity to take other academic and/or elective courses of interest as time is now available in their schedule.

3. How will you ensure you maintain fidelity to your academic model/program if these proposed changes are approved?

The proposed change has a minimal impact on the fidelity of Friendship’s academic program, instead, it may enhance the fidelity. Allowing a student’s participation in sports or extra-curricular athletic activity to meet the PE requirements means that a period in a student’s daily schedule is free to take an elective course that aligns with their career interest or an advanced course that furthers their college readiness. Most activity related to sports and extra-curricular activities occurs after the school day. Participation will be monitored to ensure fidelity to the alternative pathway in which a PE credit is earned.

4. How will these proposed changes impact current students? How will you ensure current students remain on track to graduate?

If approved, this change would go into effect for the SY 2021-22 school year. Student records are reviewed annually to ensure each student is on track to graduate. If a student has not earned the required PE credit, there are two options. The student can enroll in a PE

course or if they participate in sports or an extra-curricular athletic activity for a season/semester, they can earn .5 PE credit.

5. If the school is proposing changes that differ significantly from DCMR, how will it ensure students transferring **into** or **exiting** the school will be able to carryover credits from or to other schools that follow DCMR?

Friendship is proposing to amend one component of its high school graduation requirements, which is to allow participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities to meet the PE requirement. Each student who transfers to a Friendship high school will receive a transcript audit to ensure the student is placed in the correct grade and is enrolled in the correct courses. If there is evidence in the student's transcript that a PE credit has been earned (whether through a course or participation in sports/extra-curricular athletic activity, if this is the previous school's policy), then the student will not have to enroll in a PE course. If there is no evidence of a PE course on the transcript, the student has the opportunity to take a PE course or participate in sports and/or extra-curricular athletic activities if they have a particular interest; either would satisfy the graduation requirement.

6. Per DC PCSB's [High School Graduation Requirements Approval Process Policy](#), if a school grants students waivers from a school-specific graduation requirement, then the criteria to receive a waiver must be included in the school's graduation requirements (or other policy formally approved by the school's board) and the school's Board of Trustees must approve each student waiver. If your school grants waivers, please describe the process by which the school's Board will approve each student waiver. If your school does not grant individual student waivers, please write N/A.

N/A

7. Describe the involvement the greater community (e.g., teachers, parents) had in this decision, including parents and staff.

Over the years, Community Office and Campus-based staff have discussed the possibility of allowing participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic activities to satisfy the PE requirement for high school graduation. More recently, staff began researching what was happening in other school districts in DC and nationally, and found a variety of models and ways in which PE requirements are met. What appealed to Friendship most is the model in which participation in sports and extra-curricular athletic programs satisfy the requirement. This approach aligns with our mission and core values and instills in students the self-discipline and leadership skills that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

Moreover, students have questioned the need for a PE course when they participate in a sport or extracurricular athletic activity. Their parents support this line of thinking. So, with this information and additional research, the Friendship PCS Board of Trustees voted to approve this change to our high school graduation requirements and for staff to submit this charter amendment to the DC PCSB.

8. Please provide a crosswalk demonstrating how your proposed graduation requirements align with the graduation requirements in the DCMR.

The DCMR requires 1.5 credits of Health and PE combined. At Friendship, students can earn .5 or 1.0 credit in Health and PE combined. Below is an outline of how a student can earn credit in PE to meet the high school graduation requirement.

To earn high school PE credit through participation in sports and/or extracurricular athletic programs at Friendship or a reputable external organization, students must:

Required Activity	Credit Amount Earned
Participate in a sport or extra-curricular activity for one season/semester	.5 credit of PE
Participate in sports or extra-curricular activity for two season/semesters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the same sport for two seasons • two different sports for one season each 	1.0 credit of PE