

U.S. Department of Education
2013 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 13DC1

	Charter	Title 1	Magnet	Choice
School Type (Public Schools):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Principal: Ms. Nicole Bryan

Official School Name: D.C. Preparatory Academy, Edgewood Elementary School Campus

School Mailing Address: 707 Edgewood Street, NE
Washington, DC 20017-3341

County: District of Columbia State School Code Number*: 130

Telephone: (202) 635-4590 E-mail: ijeppson@dcprep.org

Fax: (202) 635-4591 Web site/URL: http://www.dcprep.org/Edgewood_Elementary_Campus

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Ms. Katie Severn Superintendent e-mail: ksevern@dcprep.org

District Name: D. C. Preparatory Academy District Phone: (202) 635-4590

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. LeRoy Eakin

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools (Aba.Kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, National Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or its equivalent each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's AYP requirement or its equivalent in the 2012-2013 school year. Meeting AYP or its equivalent must be certified by the state. Any AYP status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2007 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for that period.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 or 2012.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 2 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 0 High schools
 0 K-12 schools
 3 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 9124

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2012 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	67	70	137
K	44	34	78
1	34	35	69
2	28	36	64
3	40	32	72
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:			420

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
0 % Asian
93 % Black or African American
7 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0 % White
0 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2011-2012 school year: 6%
This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Step	Description	Value
(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	0
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2011 until the end of the school year.	26
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	26
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2011	410
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.06
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 1%
Total number of ELL students in the school: 6
Number of non-English languages represented: 2
Specify non-English languages:

Spanish, Yoruba

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 81%
 Total number of students who qualify: 340

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

N/A

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 7%
 Total number of students served: 30

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>10</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>7</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>4</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>29</u>	<u>1</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>55</u>	<u>2</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1:

14:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Daily student attendance	95%	93%	91%	90%	90%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2012.

Graduating class size: _____

Enrolled in a 4-year college or university _____%

Enrolled in a community college _____%

Enrolled in vocational training _____%

Found employment _____%

Military service _____%

Other _____%

Total _____**0%**

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

No

Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

Introduction. For decades researcher and policy makers have recognized the efficacy of high-quality early childhood education, especially for children growing up in low-income households. We know that a significant portion of the achievement gap can be attributed to differences in school readiness. According to one recent study, the vocabularies of middle-class children are already more than double the size of those of low-income children by age three. A separate study, found that by the end of preschool, children from low-income families can score up to one standard deviation below national norms on measures of literacy and early mathematics. And some researchers have suggested that as much as half of the achievement gap in high school can be attributed to gaps that had already existed when children first entered Kindergarten. All of this research makes clear that high-quality preschool and pre-kindergarten education is a critical component to any plan aimed at eliminating the achievement gap.

Even with early childhood programs, however, the social and cognitive gains achieved by children often fade away as students move into elementary school. But new research is demonstrating that in schools with coherent, integrated preschool and elementary components, children continue to make academic and social gains over time and enter middle school with the foundational skills to thrive in a college-prep environment. These pre-k — 3rd grade schools hold great promise for ameliorating the achievement gap in under-served communities.

To that end, DC Prep’s Edgewood Elementary Campus (EEC), was opened in 2007 in Washington, DC’s Ward 5, in the poorest census tract west of the Anacostia River. The mission: to bridge the educational divide in the nation’s capital by increasing the number of students from underserved communities with the academic preparation and personal character for college and life success. EEC serves over 400 students, in preschool -- 3rd grade. Ninety-three percent of the students are African-American, and 7% are Hispanic; over 80% live in poverty.

Rigorous academics and character education are the twin pillars upon which our educational model is built. Engaging, challenging instruction is leavened with nurture and joy, and a sequenced set of *Prep Skills* — the habits and qualities for life success— are woven into every part of the school day resulting in ever-increasing levels of student achievement. The following beliefs and practices — components of what we call *The DC Prep Way* — distinguish EEC and contribute to its success.

Learning is sacred. Hallways are quiet, and transitions are quick and purposeful. Classrooms are lively, engaging places where students are challenged and inspired. Joy in learning is balanced with urgency and rigor; every member of the school community is committed to student success.

More time on task. Students at EEC spend 25% more time in school than their peers in other DC public schools. School begins promptly at 8AM, and students are dismissed at 4PM with optional aftercare until 6PM. Punctuality and attendance are critical elements of *The DC Prep Way*. “If it’s 8, you’re late!”

Academic rigor. Curriculum maps and scope and sequence documents aligned with Common Core standards guide instruction at all grade levels. DC Prep’s departmentalized approach to instruction in 1st – 3rd grade allows teachers to focus their curriculum planning and lesson delivery on targeted curricular areas and provides students with expert instruction from the earliest years.

A distinctive school culture. We believe that character counts and we teach it explicitly. From the earliest years, our students are supported to develop *Prep Skills* — the essential qualities of successful students and good citizens. In preschool and pre-k, students are introduced to four principles: *Use Your Words; Be a Good Friend; Do Your Best; Be Your Best*. Written in language that the youngest students understand, these fundamentals are at the core of our philosophy of character development. As students move into the

elementary grades, these basic principles are translated into specific Prep Skills. For example, students learn to *disagree appropriately, to show sensitivity to others, to follow instructions, and to do good quality work.*

Exceptional professional development. DC Prep's teachers are smart, passionate, and uncompromising. We hire the best and provide a collegial learning environment where good teachers become great ones. Weekly professional development sessions, quarterly Data Days, and weekly departmental and grade-level meetings provide collaborative opportunities for teachers to analyze student data, share best practices, and increase instructional effectiveness.

Data, data, data. LUMOS, DC Prep's customized data system, gives teachers real-time, 360-degree information on students' academic progress and character development, enabling the analysis that leads to smart teaching.

A plan for each student. Student data informs instruction and ensures that every student is being taught at the appropriate level. A daily 45- minute Prep Session provides small group, skill-based instruction cementing mastery of grade level standards, and providing enrichment to students performing at accelerated levels.

Shared expectations and aspirations between home and school. Frequent informal and formal communication with families creates trust and parent/teacher teamwork to achieve the best outcome for every student.

Key Results. The EEC is showing what's possible and has demonstrated dramatic success in closing the achievement gap in Washington, DC. Some specifics: 1) In 2012, EEC was the highest-performing elementary school east of Rock Creek Park, the symbolic divide between middle class and low-income neighborhoods, with 76% of students proficient or advanced in Reading, and 73% achieving those levels in Math; 2) Over 90% of students who come to DC Prep as 3-year olds enter Kindergarten with literacy skills at or above grade level; 3) In 2011, EEC was named a National Title I Distinguished School for its work in closing the achievement gap; 4) Finally, and, perhaps most notable, in 2012 3rd graders who came to DC Prep as 4-year olds posted DC CAS scores equivalent to those of students attending schools located in the most affluent section of Washington, DC, with 87% proficient in Math, and 83% proficient in Reading. *This signal accomplishment is irrefutable evidence that the Edgewood Elementary Campus is closing the achievement gap in DC.*

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A. Assessment Results: The DC CAS (DC Comprehensive Assessment System), Washington DC's annual state test is administered to students in 3rd-8th grades as well as in 10th grade. The test measures Reading in grades 3rd - 8th, and 10th; Math in 3rd - 8th, and 10th, Composition in grades 4, 7, and 10; Science in grades 5 and 8, and Biology in high school; and Health in grades 5, 8, and high school. (The state education office is also piloting a 2nd grade assessment.)

Overall results for 3rd graders in the District are as follows: 38% proficient or advanced in Math and 41% proficient or advanced in Reading. In Math, 21% of students district-wide score Below Basic; 42% Basic; 28% Proficient; and 10% Advanced. In Reading, 22% of students district-wide score Below Basic; 37% Basic; 37% Proficient; and 4% Advanced.

By comparison, 73% of DC Prep 3rd graders are Proficient or Advanced in Math, and 76% are Proficient or Advanced in Reading. At DC Prep in Math: 3% of students score Below Basic; 24% Basic; 44% Proficient; and 29% Advanced. In Reading: 5% score Below Basic; 19% Basic; 76% Proficient; and 0% Advanced. These results make EEC the top performing elementary school east of Rock Creek Park (the symbolic divide between middle class and low-income neighborhoods in DC). The performance levels of the 3rd graders who entered the Edgewood Elementary Campus as 4-year olds are even more outstanding, with 87% of those students proficient or advanced in Math, and 83% proficient or advanced in Reading. The proficiency levels achieved by these "lifers" surpass their peers in DC Public Schools in Ward 3, the most affluent part of Washington, where Math proficiency in 2012 was 78% and Reading was 81%.

B. Performance Trends.

As a preschool-3rd grade school, DC Prep's Edgewood Elementary Campus serves just one DC CAS testing grade. In each of the last four years, the school's overall performance on the DC CAS has not only exceeded the state average in both Reading and Math, it has also significantly improved at a time when statewide 3rd grade student achievement has regressed. Reading proficiency at the Edgewood Elementary Campus increased from 43% in 2009 to 76% in 2012, an improvement of 33 percentage points. In Math, proficiency grew by 32 points from 41% in 2009 to 72% in 2012. In comparison, statewide 3rd grade Reading proficiency fell from 47% to 41% between 2009 and 2012, while Math proficiency decreased from 44% to 37% during the same time span.

Importantly, every relevant subgroup at the Edgewood Elementary Campus (i.e., subgroups in which the school had at least 25 students) shared in this growth, including African-American students (34 point increase in Reading, 32 point jump in Math), economically disadvantaged students (35 point increase in Reading, 36 point jump in Math), male students (34 point increase in Reading, 40 point jump in Math), and female students (34 point increase in Reading, 24 point jump in Math).

On the strength of its results on the 2011 DC CAS, DC Prep's Edgewood Elementary Campus was selected by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) to be honored as a National Title I Distinguished School, one of just two schools in all of Washington, DC to receive this award. In particular, the school was recognized for its outstanding performance in significantly closing the achievement gap between student groups. Because of its outstanding performance on the 2012 DC CAS, OSSE designated the Edgewood Elementary Campus a "Reward" school, DC's highest performance tier based upon its recently approved ESEA waiver.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Data is central to everything that occurs at EEC. We have an evidence-based culture and use data to ensure that all students are taught at the appropriate level as they work toward mastery of grade-level standards; that they acquire the qualities and habits that lead to academic and life success; and that teachers receive the coaching and support they need to move their students to ever-increasing levels of achievement. We monitor student progress using a range of assessment tools, selected for their validity and developmental appropriateness, including the following: A) In preschool and pre-kindergarten, students are assessed using Junior, TEMA, STEP, and DECA (for social skills development); B) In Kindergarten and 1st grade we use STEP and NWEA MAP; and C) 2nd and 3rd grade students have quarterly interim assessments through the Achievement Network as well as STEP and NWEA MAP.

Key to our effective use of the data gathered through these assessment tools, as well as teacher-created assessments, is *LUMOS*, DC Prep's custom-built data integration tool that provides real-time information on students' academic progress on formative and summative assessments as well as character development metrics, including attendance, punctuality, homework completion, and disciplinary infractions. *LUMOS* presents *accessible, accurate, and actionable* data better equipping teachers and leaders to plan instruction in a flexible, individually-tailored way based on unique student needs and to cross-analyze trends in order to better plan for student-specific solutions. *LUMOS* data can be analyzed for individual students, subgroups, class, and grade level and informs the following:

- 1) **Leadership Team Quarterly Data Dives.** The EEC Leadership Team meets quarterly to analyze student data, including behavioral metrics such as attendance and disciplinary issues, as well as external assessment data, unit assessment data, and standard-based grading using Gradebook. Based on this information the Leadership Team plans the Professional Development calendar ensuring sessions based on demonstrated instructional needs, specific interventions for particular homerooms, groups of students, individuals, parents, and teachers, as well as programming for families.
- 2) **Quarterly Data Days.** All teachers participate in day-long sessions to analyze a cross section of academic and behavior data. Based on the data, which can be disaggregated by subgroup, subject, grade, and homeroom, as well as by question and by standard, the faculty evaluate progress toward student mastery of grade-level content, identify underlying misconceptions behind student errors, prioritize standards for re-teaching, develop action plans for student groupings, whole-class re-teaching, small group re-teaching, academic intervention class re-teaching, and individual student support. Implementation of these action plans is discussed and monitored during weekly data conferences between teachers and their instructional coaches, with classroom support and follow-up provided by the instructional leadership team on an on-going basis.
- 3) **Weekly Departmental and Grade Level Meetings.** Data informs planning and discussion in these two weekly meetings – one focused on deepening content expertise and expanding strategies to move students toward mastery of grade level content, and the second focused on school culture and student support and developing strategies (based on non-academic data) to address areas of concern.
- 4) **Mid-quarter Academic Reports and Report Cards.** Parents receive both a mid- and end of-quarter written report. The mid-quarter report includes data on formative assessments, STEP level, and standards mastery. It also includes a summary of attendance, punctuality, uniform, homework completion, disciplinary actions, and the number of parent-teacher contacts. The data in these mid-quarter reports inform Parent Teacher Conferences allowing the parent, teacher, and student to set academic and behavioral goals.
- 5) **Achievements, awards and celebrations.** Student data walls are posted in classrooms and hallways. Students “own” their performance data and track their own progress toward their individual and classroom goals. Additionally, classrooms compete for school-wide recognition based on attendance, punctuality, and homework completion data and individual students “earn” appointment to the Principal's Cabinet based on attendance, punctuality, homework completion, and character report.

6) **Student Support Process.** The Student Support Process results in strategies for interventions and determines whether or not a child should be referred for further evaluation based on the following data gathered throughout the process: observations of the student in a variety of classroom settings; parent, family, and teacher interviews; educational records including previous evaluations, results from both formal and informal assessments, attendance, and behavior and disciplinary tracking logs; and progress monitoring data of tailored academic and behavioral interventions delivered by qualified personnel.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

As part of DC Prep’s commitment to improving education for all public school students, we have hosted hundreds of visitors to observe classroom instruction and/or our Data Day work. Visitors include teachers and leaders from other schools in Washington and beyond; school district leaders; staff from education reform organizations including Teach For America, New Leaders, Building Excellent Schools (BES), and Future Leaders (a British organizations that trains school leaders). In Fall 2011, staff from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Charter Schools Programs (CSP) visited EEC to offer the CSP staff, who have infrequent opportunities to visit schools, an opportunity to observe an effective urban school in action.

In SY 2011-12, DC Prep’s Edgewood Elementary Campus was selected as the location for production of a series of videos on classroom instruction and instructional coaching. The project was an initiative of the Denver Public Schools and funded by the Gates Foundation. The tapes include lessons taught by a pre-k, kindergarten, 2nd grade, and special education teacher at EEC followed by a one-on-one debrief and feedback session with one of our instructional coaches. The tapes have been widely used for training in Denver, with plans to disseminate them nationally through TNTTP.

Additionally, as a 2012 Fight For Children “Champion of Quality Award” winner, the Edgewood Elementary Campus was profiled in a white paper developed and disseminated by Fight For Children on “best practices in instructional coaching”. Additionally, two EEC instructional coaches presented a workshop on DC Prep’s coaching model for other award-winners in the 2012 Fight For Children cohort. Also in 2012, DC Prep received the first-ever Education Impact Award from the Achievement Network (ANet) for its contributions to the other 75 schools that participate in the Network in DC as well as for implementation of data-driven practices, and outstanding student achievement growth.

Edgewood Elementary teachers and leaders also share lessons learned and best practices through formal presentations at conferences including the Office of the State Superintendent of Education’s annual Data Summit. In 2011 DC Prep’s Assessment Associate presented a workshop entitled *Diving into the Data Dashboard: DC Prep’s Use of Weekly Data to Drive Instructional Decision-Making*, and in 2012 the EEC 3rd grade Math teacher presented *DC Prep Departmentalization: How Elementary-Level Departmentalization Drives Data Analysis and Targeted, Innovative Teaching Methods*.

Finally, teachers from the EEC collaborate and share best practices through their participation in activities with other urban educators, including: the Common Core Collaborative (a citywide working group preparing for the transition to Common Core standards); Weekend Warriors (an initiative of BES for school principals); and the CityBridge-NewSchools Innovation Fellowship.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

The Edgewood Elementary Campus takes the partnership between home and school seriously. We invest vigorously in those relationships in order to ensure shared aspirations for our Preppies and we approach that objective by fostering frequent communication and developing multiple opportunities for parents to engage in the life of the school.

First, is the Prep Note, a daily communication tool that includes each child's character report for the day and provides a two-way communication tool between the classroom teacher and home. Students take their Prep Note home each day, parents review and sign it, and it comes back to the school the following morning. Parents and teachers can write notes to each other on the Prep Note. Additionally, all EEC teachers share their cell phone numbers with parents and are available to talk and answer questions until 8PM each evening.

Parent Teacher Conferences are held three times a year with the first one, mid-quarter in the fall, providing parents with academic information (based on data) early in the year so that there is plenty of time to intervene to ensure that the student is successful. There are also ad hoc parent/teacher/school leader meetings as needed – especially if a child is frequently tardy or absent. We stress the importance of daily attendance and work closely with families to address any challenges that make it hard for them to get their children to school on time, each day.

EEC hosts frequent events for families including those that are purely social (e.g. Family Bingo Night, Father Figure Dinner), those that have an academic focus (e.g. Family Math & Reading Night), and those that celebrate students' achievements (e.g. Quarterly Award Ceremonies). Over the course of the school year there are more than a dozen events for families, several of which are sponsored by EEC's active Parent Association.

Finally, as referenced earlier, student achievements and successes are displayed throughout the school building, both in classrooms and in the halls and main atrium. Data walls display student progress in Reading and Math; photos of each month's "Most Valuable Preppies" are on display in the main atrium; and banners showing DC CAS results hang in the entryway to the school. These visuals make clear that the EEC's #1 goal is results for students, first and foremost and show the school community's pride in our students' accomplishments.

While we cannot draw exact correlations between these beliefs and approaches to ensuring home/school alignment on academic and character goals and student achievement, we believe that the frequency of parent/teacher communications and the high percentage of family participation in school activities, especially those with an academic focus, contribute significantly to our students' outstanding academic performance.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

Common Core (CC) standards are the centerpiece of instruction at the Edgewood Elementary Campus. In 2011, we convened a group of our highest performing teachers – *Common Core Comrades* – to develop a strategic plan to guide the transition from DC’s existing state standards to the Common Core. This team was charged with developing a deep understanding of the content and instructional shifts at the heart of the new standards, how these changes overlap with currently existing best practices, and how we could systematically build upon our success to meet the demands of the new standards in a bold, responsible, and effective way.

Development of our curriculum began by grouping the CC standards for each grade’s core subjects (English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science) into units of study. Standards for English Language Arts are organized into domain based units to ensure a balance between literary and informational text, the chance to learn, practice, and apply key critical thinking standards such as determining central theme, and the intentional building of background knowledge. Math, Science, and Social Studies units are content based to ensure thorough student mastery of key topics. Additionally, the rigor within the Common Core Standards, along with the focus on literacy in all content areas supports our students in developing higher-level thinking and problem solving skills as they develop strong reading and writing skills. Specials — art, music, Spanish, and physical education — use national standards to ensure rigorous, enriching, vertically aligned instruction. Students take one special per quarter across the year. Technology is integrated in each subject area so students learn key skills such as typing, in addition to how to use the computer as a resource for learning.

DC Prep teachers apply a three-step process to their ongoing curriculum work: 1) reviewing the standards outlined on the school's curriculum unit maps for an upcoming unit of instruction; 2) looking at internal and external assessment items linked to these standards to task out the discrete skills and sub-skills embedded in the larger standard; and 3) "backward planning" daily objective calendars and assessments, thereby ensuring instruction is designed to build mastery of the standards to be assessed at the end of the unit. The breakdown of the standard into discrete skills also helps teachers to develop measurable and specific daily objectives for lesson plans.

Each standard referenced on a curriculum unit map is “unpacked” into procedural skills essential for mastery of the standard along with conceptual understandings that are essential for transference and application of the standard to other disciplines and everyday experiences. Additionally, each map references the academic vocabulary students need in order to communicate their knowledge and thinking. To ensure instruction is connected to previous learning and that students have multiple opportunities to deepen their understanding of grade level content, spiraling standards are included on all math and reading maps.

A scope and sequence for each subject and grade provides a “road map” for teachers to appropriately sequence and segment their instruction across the school year. The scope and sequence ensures adequate time is provided for instruction of all standards and that teachers and administrators have regular “checkpoints” during the year to assess students’ progress towards mastery of the standards.

Using released items from PARCC – the Common Core assessment consortium to which DC belongs – assessments were created for each unit (“checkpoints”). These assessments ensure our teachers accurately measure mastery of the standards in ways that are consistent with the rigor and format of PARCC expectations. DC Prep’s work in this area has been nationally recognized by Building Excellent Schools for its rigor, depth, and ability to drive instruction towards deeper understanding for students.

Finally, teachers integrate the results of classroom assessments, school-wide interim assessments, and standardized tests into their instructional plans. Data — collected by class, grade-level, and school-wide — guides teachers in individual lesson planning. Our holistic and rigorous assessment program is reflected in our elementary model through standards-based grading. This system, developed through Gradebook and aligned to Common Core and DC Academic and Early Learning standards, gives teachers, parents, and students specific information on individual progress, areas of strength, and target areas for improvement.

2. Reading/English:

DC Prep’s Edgewood Elementary Campus uses a balanced literacy approach grounded in Common Core standards. Based on the literature and on the needs of our students, we selected a workshop approach allowing students to have small group time with their teacher, sufficient time for independent reading, and access to above grade level texts to build knowledge and to challenge them. Small, guided reading groups are formed (and re-formed) based on STEP data, and teachers use this time to teach foundational reading skills.

All students have a daily two hour and fifteen minute literacy block that reflects our belief in the balanced literacy approach where students read, write, speak, listen, and learn foundational skills on a daily basis. In addition, students are exposed to grade-level text as well as text at their independent and instructional reading levels strategically throughout the block to build their skills as readers and ensure mastery of grade-level standards. We know that students get better at Reading by reading, so we hold sacred independent reading time for all students beginning with 10 minutes in 1st grade and growing to 30 minutes in 3rd grade. We employ a co-teacher model in our ELA classes, ensuring that every student has guided reading on a daily basis. Additionally, every student participates in a 45-minute Prep Session — small group instruction in Reading that is tailored to individual needs based on STEP data. Prep Session classes, all of which are led by a content expert, can be geared towards providing remedial instruction or enrichment, depending on student need.

In addition to Prep Session, students who are significantly below grade level in reading receive intervention. Intervention classes occur throughout the regular school day and consist of small group sessions that provide extra support to students who are below grade level. Intervention classes are taught by classroom teachers, special education teachers, and/or leadership team members. Finally, while DC Prep uses an inclusion model with special education teachers “pushing in” to work alongside the general education teacher, students requiring extra help or specific strategies to address their disabilities that cannot be provided in the general education classroom also receive small group and individualized support in a resource setting.

3. Mathematics:

The Math curriculum is also based on the Common Core content standards and standards for mathematical practice. The curriculum is teacher-created with an emphasis on connecting various mathematical representations: symbolic, verbal, and concrete. The structure of our 90-minute math block supports student development of procedural fluency through the use of a skills-based Do Now, Math Meeting, and daily computation practice. The block also supports conceptual understanding and application of standards through the use of an interactive focus lesson where students have the opportunity to discuss mathematical ideas, critique one another’s work, and explore various solutions to high-level tasks.

We have identified key Common Core standards at each grade level that we call “Finish Lines” – or standards that terminate at a given grade level. These are the fundamental math skills that students must master in order to have the foundation required for higher levels of math comprehension. For example, counting and cardinality standards are only present in Kindergarten, but mastering these concepts is foundational to accessing all other standards. Because of this, our Kindergarten team is relentless in

teaching counting not only as a procedure but also as a concept, and practice application of counting skills in diverse scenarios throughout the academic year. The “Finish Lines” standards spiral throughout the year and are taught through a combination of Math Meeting, small group work, and intervention. Small groups meet during the daily 90-minute math block, while intervention groups are held outside of the regular class time, most often during specials. Through a combination of “Finish Line” data, unit assessment results, and external assessment data (ANet and NWEA), our teachers are able to tailor instruction to meet the varied needs of each student. Our weekly Math department meeting provides collaborative planning time to specifically address the needs of below-grade level students.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Character development is an essential part of DC Prep’s mission and, as such, is fully integrated into the curriculum. Prep Ed, our character education program, aims to teach students a specific set of critical life skills and help them, over time, to take responsibility for monitoring themselves. The goal is for our students to develop *the habits and personal qualities of successful students and good citizens*.

Prep Skills, a set of developmentally-sequenced observable behaviors that reflect DC Prep’s mission is linked to the school motto, Do the RIGHT Thing! the centerpiece of the program. RIGHT Respectful, Intelligent, Genuine, Hardworking, and Team-oriented is taught as part of the daily academic lesson and fully integrated into each teacher’s daily lesson plans. In the early childhood and elementary years, students master the foundational social and school-readiness Prep Skills. For example, for preschool and pre-k students: *Use Your Words; Try Your Best; Be a Good Friend*. For K-3rd: *Follow Instructions; Do Good-Quality Work; Accept “No”; Communicate Honestly; Show Sensitivity to Others*.

Prep Skills are most effectively taught as part of the daily academic lesson – not as something separate and apart from what happens in class every day. For example, when students are working in their reading groups the teacher is also teaching the Prep Skills *Talk with Others Respectfully, and Wait Your Turn*. Students can apply the skill immediately in a real life situation and it has great power. A teacher can say to her students, “*that was a good example of Getting my Attention,*” in the middle of her Math lesson and an important Prep Skill is reinforced right along with the classroom learning.

Beginning in 1st grade, students are given responsibility for monitoring themselves and are rewarded with lots of incentives for living up to the schools’ high expectations. They keep real-time track of their own behavior with a Prep Note, a tally sheet on which they record their positive demonstrations of Prep Skills. At the end of the day, students’ Prep Note points are entered into LUMOS, providing important behavioral data for each child. Additionally, data collected via the Prep Note enables teachers and school leaders to see which Prep Skills are most challenging for which students and at which grade levels – and to use that data to do planned teaching to support students in mastering the skill. Teachers, students, and parents embrace Prep Ed. The program has an immediate impact on academics and students can immediately apply these positive behaviors in their lives.

5. Instructional Methods:

We are committed to the success of every child and have built a program that is informed by data, designed to maximize every minute of learning time, and includes multiple time across the day to ensure that every child – regardless of their level of need – masters grade level content. Our staffing model and daily schedule reflect the EEC’s commitment to differentiated instruction. Some examples:

Departmentalization. Instruction in the core subjects is departmentalized beginning in 1st grade. This structure allows teachers to focus their curriculum planning and lesson delivery on targeted curricular areas and provides students with expert instruction from the earliest years.

Co-Literacy Teachers at Each Grade Level. Our data show that small group work with a teacher is the best way to help students advance. Therefore, we have modified our academic model to include a second teacher in the ELA classrooms so that every student has small group guided reading every day.

Prep Session. Students in 1st-3rd grade participate in daily 45-minute Prep Sessions — small, leveled groupings that allow teachers to make optimal use of assessment data and deliver tailored instruction to ensure that all DC Prep students achieve mastery. Prep Session groupings are flexible and reformed frequently based on STEP data, classroom performance, and teacher observations and recommendations.

Inclusion model. An integral part of DC Prep’s mission is to promote integration of students with special needs in regular classrooms and activities. To that end, our Instructional Coaches and Special Education Coordinator assist teachers with designing effective approaches for all learners through weekly classroom observations and reviews of daily lesson plans. In addition to the co-teachers in literacy described above, special education teachers work alongside the general education teacher in the other core subjects to provide individual and small group support.

Instructional coaches. Teachers receive ongoing feedback about their practice through short, weekly, informal classroom observations by members of the Instructional Leadership Team. The coach meets with the teacher to debrief the observation, review student data, set goals for future instruction, and provides assistance with planning.

Longer school day. DC Prep students spend 25% more time in school than their peers in regular public school. This longer school day allows for extended daily instructional blocks including more than two hours of ELA, 90-minutes of Math, and a 45-minute Prep Session.

LUMOS data portal. As described in detail earlier in this application the *LUMOS* data tool ensures that teachers have access to real-time data to closely monitor student progress on a daily basis and plan re-teaching and intervention.

Technology. In SY 2013-14, we will pilot a program in 2nd grade to allow students to independently practice skills at their own level using netbooks. Based on the outcome, we will take the program to scale the following year.

6. Professional Development:

At DC Prep we believe in job-embedded professional development, and that approach has had a profound impact on our ability to grow and retain our teachers and school leaders. One of our core values is *Reflection and refinement – every day*, and we have intentionally created a reflective environment where, through frequent observation, coaching, and collaboration with colleagues our teachers continuously improve and refine their craft, enabling our good educators to become great ones. By aligning their individual work with larger school goals and priorities, our teachers push the achievement of students across the school.

Professional development for a teacher takes a variety of forms. First, all teachers participate in two-weeks of professional development before school opens in August. New teachers attend an additional three days.

Every teacher who is new to DC Prep (regardless of his/her previous experience) has a dedicated coach who provides weekly observations and feedback to ensure the teacher’s ability to implement The DC Prep Way and provide outstanding instruction for students. In addition, all teachers receive at least 20 brief, informal observations and feedback from a member of the Instructional Leadership Team across the year.

Teachers meet weekly by department to build content knowledge, share teaching strategies, and ensure vertical alignment of the curriculum. They also participate in a weekly Grade Level Team meeting that focuses on school culture, student support, and grade-specific activities.

And finally, on Friday afternoons, all teachers participate in two-hour professional development sessions that are aligned with school-wide goals and based on the demonstrated needs of teachers and students. Friday PD is planned and led by the school Leadership Team using multiple sets of data to craft plans and test their effectiveness to ensure relevance and urgency. The focus of Friday professional development sessions cycles through four thematic areas: school culture; data reviews of student performance and intervention planning; lesson planning and student work analysis; and planning for school-wide events.

Overall, teachers at the Edgewood Elementary Campus participate in more than 300 hours of professional development each year.

7. School Leadership:

The EEC leadership structure is designed to deliver results for students and to ensure that the twin elements of DC Prep’s model – rigorous academics and character development – are implemented with fidelity and success. The Leadership Team includes ten people: the Principal who is the overall instructional leader of the school; two Assistant Principals (one for early childhood and one for the elementary grades); three Instructional Coaches who are experts in core content areas; the Dean of Student Support who is responsible for school culture and for supporting students in crisis; the Early Childhood Support Coordinator who provides support to the youngest students and their parents; a Special Education Coordinator who supervises the special education teachers and ensures full compliance with IDEA; and an Operations Manager with responsibility for non-academic, logistical issues including vendors, building maintenance, and security. While our Leadership Team is large, it has proven to be highly effective and enabled the Edgewood Elementary Campus to quickly increase teacher effectiveness, improve student achievement, and contribute to principal retention in a very demanding role.

DC Prep is also committed to cultivating school leaders from within and has developed a career ladder that supports the professional growth of teachers and school leaders. We have developed a leadership training initiative to ensure that as high-performing teachers move into school leadership positions such as Grade Level Lead, Instructional Coach, Dean, or Assistant Principal they receive the support and coaching necessary to ensure success in their current roles while also developing expertise needed for future leadership opportunities. They gain on-the-ground experience through participation in cohort professional development and customized coaching. School leadership team members also participate in external school visits, vision and goal-setting sessions, retreats, and professional development sessions led by experts from other respected education organizations such as Uncommon Schools, Achievement First, and Building Excellent Schools. Each aspiring or emerging leader receives 360-feedback from their principal, peers, and faculty members as part of the mid-year evaluation process with particular emphasis on setting goals for their leadership/professional development in the second part of the year and beyond.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: DC CAS

Edition/Publication Year: N/A

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient	73	60	54	41	21
Advanced	29	20	13	8	0
Number of students tested	63	65	56	63	38
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient	72	56	48	37	15
Advanced	28	20	9	4	0
Number of students tested	58	55	44	49	27
2. African American Students					
Proficient	75	60	54	43	19
Advanced	30	19	13	8	0
Number of students tested	60	62	56	61	36
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3		2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked	20	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	0	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	6	10	6	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked			
Advanced	Masked	Masked			
Number of students tested	4	2			
6.					
Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

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STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: DC CAS

Edition/Publication Year: N/A

Publisher: CTB/McGraw-Hill

	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient	76	65	57	43	45
Advanced	0	3	4	0	0
Number of students tested	63	65	56	63	38
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient	76	62	57	41	33
Advanced	0	2	2	0	0
Number of students tested	58	55	44	49	27
2. African American Students					
Proficient	77	68	57	43	42
Advanced	0	3	4	0	0
Number of students tested	60	62	56	61	36
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked		Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	3	3		2	2
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked	30	Masked	Masked
Advanced	Masked	Masked	0	Masked	Masked
Number of students tested	5	6	10	6	4
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient	Masked	Masked			
Advanced	Masked	Masked			
Number of students tested	4	2			
6.					
Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
NOTES: Masked indicates data were not made public because fewer than 10 students were tested.					

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