

The WORLD PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL of Washington

Executive Summary

June 1, 1998

Friends of International Education is incubating six new charter school programs on the original pattern of the Washington International School, teaching every child through two languages at the primary/elementary level, strongly academic at all levels, and culminating in the International Baccalaureate. The curriculum will be devoted to "liberal education", demanding in breadth and depth, and encompassing the main academic disciplines. We plan to open five in the autumn of 1998. Initially, FIE will be their non-profit 501(C)(3) umbrella; the first specific goal of our 1985 articles of incorporation calls for the founding of schools. We will probably form a new non-profit corporation, World Public Charter School of Washington. Down the road we may retain the National Cathedral Foundation's structure (neither St. Albans, the National Cathedral School for Girls nor Beauvoir is a separate legal entity) or we may spin the individual sites off into independent non-profit corporations.

Four elementary schools, beginning at the four year-old nursery level with 60 children, or three classes, in each (a total of 240 in the four elementary schools), will teach half and half, for each child, through English/Arabic, English/Chinese (Mandarin), English/Japanese or English/Russian with an option at each site of either English/French or English/Spanish. The middle school/junior high will begin with 80 pupils at age eleven, twelve or even older. There will be an intensive remedial program in mathematics and English for the first several months toward the end of which everyone will begin Latin.

Each year another "cohort" of 240 four year-olds and 80 eleven to twelve year-olds will be added. The 1998-99 four year-olds, having turned five, will move in 1999-2000 to what we will call Junior A and the 1998-99 middle school pupils, having "completed" Middle 1, will move on to the twelve to thirteen year-old program called Middle 2, provided they have proved, through examinations in mathematics, English, history, geography and the sciences, that they have mastered the regular work of Middle 1, not

just the remedial introduction.

In 1999-2000 we shall begin the upper secondary with fourteen to sixteen year-olds and that will culminate, after much remedial work, in the syllabuses of the International Baccalaureate.

By Year 3, the lower secondary (middle school/junior high) will have its full complement of 240 children; by Year 4, the upper secondary (senior high) will have 240. We expect to stabilize at these numbers because we want to keep these schools small and personal. By Year 5 the primary/elementary schools will be bursting at the seams with 300 children in each, about a dozen over capacity for current zoning. Other sites will need to be acquired for the upper primary elementary, grades 4 to 6, approximate ages 8 or 9 to 11 or 12, or they will need to be split vertically so that there are only 40 children per level in each school.

We want to put the elementary bilingual immersion programs into Wormley, Jackson, Hardy and Fillmore, the middle school/junior high into Hamilton and the upper secondary/senior high into Webster* which will take at least eighteen months to renovate. We are determined that these schools, built through the decades by the tax-paying citizens of the District of Columbia, should remain in the public domain to serve our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren. They are the greatest, in fact the *only* educational asset we citizens possess. We charters have been offering at a cost of millions to ourselves and our benefactors to repair them and to bring them up to code, while “renting” symbolically for one dollar a year. This way they can never be cannibalized for commercial development. Those in comparatively secure parts of town will help keep families in DC and, as we experience our academic Renaissance and found charters all over the town, will bring other families back.

By the end of Year 5, there will be 1680 children in the World Public Charter School of Washington: 300 in each of four primary/elementary schools; 240 in the lower secondary and 240 in the upper secondary.

Thanks to the wisdom of the Congress in the DC School Reform Act of 1995 (passed in April 1996), the World School is not required to hire US certified teachers. It will recruit its teaching staffs from the pool of teaching talent, highly educated, experienced teachers resident in the Washington metropolitan area and from abroad. Its trustees will restrict themselves to matters of policy and to the appointment of head teachers for each site; these head teachers will in turn recruit the teachers.

The curriculum will follow the original pattern of the Washington International School. At the primary/elementary levels this means, in essence, the juxtaposition, each half time, of an English-speaking tradition with that of the countries to which Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese and Russian, as well as French and Spanish, are native. Each child will study all subjects half of his/her time through English, the other half through Arabic, Chinese, Japanese or Russian. Teaching texts and materials will be ordered directly from the appropriate countries with the help of the Mountbatten World Textbook Library of which Friends of International Education is the custodian. At the secondary level, at least for the first seven or eight years of the school, much remedial work will probably have to be undertaken

Revenues for Year 1 are estimated at \$4,094,532, including loans for building renovations, and expenses at \$3,866,743, giving an excess of \$227,789-for renovations.

- * This summary was originally drafted in October 1997. The Emergency Board of Trustees, currently governing the DC system schools, has not been helpful over the acquisition of old, empty public schools by new charter schools, which was mandated by the Congress. All six buildings we should like over the long run they are attempting to sell or lease to non-charter bidders.