

Executive Summary

This is a proposal for a truly innovative alternative school. The proposed Lighthouse Academy Charter School, Inc. seeks to serve the student population of the District of Columbia by providing an alternative site for special education students who have been classified as Level 4 Emotionally Disabled. The students anticipated at Lighthouse Academy CS will be between the ages of 6 and 12 years or, alternatively in grades 1 through 6. However, Lighthouse Academy CS will have non-graded classes of elementary and intermediate groupings.

The mission of Lighthouse Academy Charter School, Inc. is to provide an educational environment in which children feel safe, can address the affective issues that interfere with learning, will acquire academic skills, and will be prepared to transition into a less restrictive environment.

Lighthouse Academy Charter School, Inc. has 5 goals. The primary goal, of course, is to ensure that all students meet the goals indicated on their individualized education plan. We also plan to teach students the skills that will lead to a decrease in the number and severity of behaviors exhibited by students that interfere with learning and to train students in the skills necessary to transition to a less restrictive environment. Student achievement and the meeting of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals will also be our focus. We will strive to create the conditions that will allow parents to become more involved in their child's education and in the school; in addition to empowering parents.

The academic focus of the Lighthouse Academy Charter School, Inc. is to provide the students of the District of Columbia with an education that is the equal to that found in private schools. It will be a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum with emphasis on creating and ensuring student literacy and mastery of basic skills. We will prepare our students for entrance into college, and to meet and exceed all state standards for education.

The special education focus will be to allow students to experience progressively more challenging opportunities to interact with their environment in less restrictive environments. A plan for each child, academic and transition, will be created. The founders of Lighthouse Academy Charter School, Inc. believe that classification in a separate placement at Level 4 does not have to be a final nor a continuing placement. We believe that students should move forward not only in academic areas, but in behavioral areas also. For that reason, during the time before school opening, Lighthouse Academy will work with experts in special education and transition issues to create and document a curriculum that will teach students the behaviors necessary to return to a less restrictive environment.

Lighthouse Academy will partner with other schools to provide graduated process where students move through a series of increasingly more challenging exposures to the less restrictive environment. The goal will be to structure the increasing exposures so that the student is able to successfully spend an entire day at the partner school without the presence of an adult from Lighthouse Academy.