

DC CENTER FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP (CGEL)
Proposed High School for Global Citizenship and Diplomacy

Overview

Summary

The DC Center for Global Education and Leadership (CGEL) is a nonprofit organization which promotes high quality, systemic global education in DC Public Schools (DCPS) to ensure that all students, regardless of income or social circumstance, are prepared for responsible global citizenship in the 21st century. CGEL is currently working with its partner organizations and interested individuals to develop plans for a new internationally themed DC public high school, tentatively named the *High School for Global Citizenship and Diplomacy*. The school would be designed to provide students with strong academic preparation for college and for global career opportunities in the DC area and elsewhere. The proposed school would capitalize on the unique identity of the city as a world capital, and would benefit from the involvement of a wide array of government, embassy, multilateral, NGO, academic, business, cultural, and other locally available resources.

Background

The idea for the *High School for Global Citizenship and Diplomacy* grew organically out of the global education work of DCPS and its partner organizations. During the summer 2003 the DCPS Office of International Programs sponsored a Ralph Bunche Scholars Summer Institute in connection with the centenary of the birth of Ralph Bunche. This 3-week summer program, which exposed 18 DCPS high school students to international diplomacy through the life of Bunche, created an opportunity to partner with academics, government officials, retired diplomats, and business people who were extremely interested in the idea of bringing international education to high school students in the District of Columbia. The program was so successful that many expressed interest in continuing the program on a more sustained basis, and the idea of a high school of diplomacy emerged. CGEL is continuing the work of the Office of International Programs to develop a high school proposal.

Rationale

Increasingly, leaders in the government, business, and education sectors are making the case that K-12 schools must equip students with the global knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences that will prepare them for careers in our rapidly globalizing economy and for the demands of life in a diverse global society. Washington, DC is uniquely positioned, with its concentration of internationally oriented organizations and resources (federal agencies, embassies, museums and cultural institutions, business, multilateral organizations, think tanks, NGOs, universities), to provide students with rich opportunities to learn about and engage in the wider world. In addition, the city offers a unique range of exciting and important global careers, including those related to foreign policy, diplomacy, national security, economic development, and other specialized international fields. Given these advantages, Washington, DC should be a national leader in the increasingly important field of K-12 global education, and creation of a specialized *High School for Global Citizenship and Diplomacy* would be an important element of that work.

The Franklin School

Because of the school's mission and the unique nature of its academic program, it will be essential that it be located proximate to the concentration of international resources in the downtown area. The beautiful, historic Franklin School would be a dream location. In addition to its downtown setting, the school offers much in the way of symbolic value:

- The building was designed by a German architect and represents the value of international connection and exchange.
- The school was built as an exemplar of socially progressive education reform.
- Ben Franklin, for whom the building was named, is widely considered to be the nation's first citizen diplomat.

Description

The proposed *High School for Global Citizenship and Diplomacy* would provide the core curriculum with the full complement of courses required for graduation in DCPS. Global content would be infused across the curriculum. Because of the extra courses and enrichment activities required, the school would have an extended school day, Saturday courses, and a summer program. The school program would include:

- Advanced and intensive language instruction leading to AP exams
- Extra social studies classes in such subjects as international affairs, US diplomatic history, area studies, human rights/international law, peace studies
- An economics requirement
- Opportunity for an area studies or topical focus
- Strong emphasis on reading, written and oral communication
- Technology and multimedia training
- International videoconferencing and global school linkages
- Cross cultural competencies
- 21st century skills, including problem solving, collaboration, critical thinking, media literacy
- Training in conflict resolution and diplomacy, including use of simulations
- Model UN and other international simulations
- Internships, summer jobs in government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, embassies, etc.
- International service learning and strong commitment to global engagement
- Collaboration with area universities to allow students to take college classes for credit and to create pathways for students to enter into area international studies undergraduate programs
- International travel
- Mentoring through partner organizations
- Frequent guest speakers and visiting international teachers
- Community events, field trips
- Exchange students from other countries

We envision the school as a magnet program, drawing students from across the city, reflecting the diversity of the city's student population. Admissions would not be based on academics; instead, the school would seek students interested in the school's program, and committed to fulfilling the school's more rigorous requirements. We will consider the feasibility of also creating a middle school feeder program, either as part of a 6-12 school, or as a separate school or schools.

Staffing

The teaching staff would consist of educators from DCPS with strong interest and background in international education. In addition, teachers for specialized courses could be recruited from the ranks of current and retired diplomats and other experienced professionals. International guest or exchange teachers can also be hired for language instruction or other purposes. Strong linkages with universities would allow access to university courses, and open opportunities for graduate student placements at the school for purposes of teaching specific modules and mentoring. The school would have a very strong program of professional development, which would augment the standard DCPS requirements. This would include externships, international travel, and invitations to events and programs offered through partner organizations.

Partners/Advisory Board

The *High School of Global Citizenship and Diplomacy* will put together a stellar advisory board, to include current and former diplomats, as well as a roster of committed partner organizations which we expect would include government agencies, such as the US State Department, Department of Defense, Department of Education, US Institute of Peace, and Peace Corps; United Nations; World Bank; area universities, such as Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, George Washington, American University, University of Maryland, George Mason, UDC; embassies; international businesses; think tanks, research institutes, and nongovernmental organizations.

Funding

Significant private funding and donated services will need to be identified to supplement local school funds. We hope that this new school will be part of the Asia Society's International Studies Schools Network, which provides some supports to its network schools across the US. Funds will be raised from foundations, individuals, and government grants.

For further information or to get involved, contact Sally Schwartz at dc.cgel@gmail.com.