

**INITIATIVE MEASURE NO.
SHORT TITLE**

**“D.C. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
INITIATIVE OF 2014”**

SUMMARY STATEMENT

This initiative, if passed, would establish a Character Development and Citizenship Education Council (hereafter referred to as, “Council”) in the District of Columbia (DC);

This newly created Council will be tasked with:

1. Assessing the need to integrate Character Development and Citizenship Education into public and public charter schools in the District of Columbia.
2. Making recommendations on how a non-religious Character Development and Citizenship Education curriculum can be implemented in the District of Columbia Public and Charter School systems. This curriculum will focus on critical issues facing the youths of the District of Columbia including but not limited to bullying, drug use, peer pressure, life focus, ethics, respect, health, self-esteem, and the importance of positive attitudes and influences.
3. The Council shall complete its work and submit recommendations to the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, the Office of the State Superintendent for Education, the Chancellor of District of Columbia Public Schools and the Executive Director of District of Columbia Public Charter Schools within twelve (12) months following its creation.
4. The Council shall have a sunset provision that will take effect twelve (12) months following its creation.

LEGISLATIVE TEXT

There is hereby established, in the Executive Branch of the District of Columbia government, a Character Development and Citizenship Education Council.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE ELECTORS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this act may be cited as the D.C. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION INITIATIVE OF 2014.

Sec. 2 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this act, the term(s):

- (1) “Character Development and Citizenship Education” refers to education and training that focuses on topics including but not limited to bullying, drug use, peer pressure, life focus, ethics, respect, health, self-esteem, and the importance of positive attitudes and influences.
- (2) “Character Development and Citizenship Education Council” means the District of Columbia

Character Development and Citizenship Education Council.

(3) “Sunset provision” means that this measure shall cease to exist after a specific date, unless it is extended by legislative action.

(4) “Creation” means that all of the appointments by the Mayor have been fully confirmed by the Council of the District of Columbia.

Sec. 3. APPOINTMENTS AND CONFIRMATIONS

The Council shall consist of 15 members, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council of the District of Columbia, in accordance with DC Code § 1-523.01.

The Mayor shall submit to the Council of the District of Columbia, for confirmation, within 180 days after the effective date of this act a list of appointees to fill the vacancies on the Character Development and Citizenship Education Council.

Sec. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL

There is established the District of Columbia Character Development and Citizenship Education Council to assist and advise the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE), the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools in promoting the character development and citizenship education for the residents of the District of Columbia.

Sec. 5. MEMBERS

(a) The Character Development and Citizenship Education Council shall consist of 15 members, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council of the District of Columbia. The composition shall be as follows:

- (1) Five (5) members shall represent faith-based and secular organizations.
- (2) Two (2) members shall be consumer representatives.
- (3) One (1) member shall represent the law enforcement community.
- (4) One (1) member shall be an educator representing the District of Columbia Public Schools.
- (5) One (1) member shall be an educator representing the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools.
- (6) One (1) member shall represent the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE).
- (7) One (1) member shall represent the Office of the District of Columbia Public Schools.
- (8) One (1) member shall represent the Office of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board.
- (9) One (1) student representative from the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools.
- (10) One (1) student representative from the District of Columbia Public Schools.

(b) Members shall not be compensated for their service on the Council, but shall be eligible for

reimbursement of expenses as provided in DC Code § 1-611.08(d).

(c) Members shall serve for twelve (12) months following the creation of the Council.

(d) Members shall be residents of the District of Columbia who have a demonstrated background or interest in character development and citizenship education.

(e) The Mayor shall designate one member to serve, at the Mayor's pleasure, as Chairperson of the Council.

(f) Any person appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the sunset provision for which his or her predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of the imposed time limit(s).

Sec. 6. ORGANIZATION

(a) At the initial monthly meeting, the Council shall determine its organization and name its officers, other than the Chairperson.

(b) The Council shall meet at the invitation of the Chairperson or a majority of the members.

(c) The Council may establish subcommittees to review issues and make recommendations to the Council.

Sec. 7. MEETINGS

(a) The Council shall hold regular public meetings at least once every month, at such times and places as provided in the notice of the meeting.

(b) The Mayor, the Chairperson, or a majority of the current members of the Council may call a special meeting of the Council by sending notice of the special meeting not less than seven (7) days in advance. The notice shall state the matters to be considered. No other matter may be considered at a special meeting except with the consent of all members of the Council present.

(c) By affirmative vote of the majority of members present, the Council may schedule or hold a closed executive session to discuss personnel or other matters of a private or confidential nature. No action may be taken in an executive session, and no records shall be kept of the session other than a record of the vote to schedule or hold the session.

Sec. 8. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

(a) The Chairperson shall determine the order of business at meetings.

(b) The Chairperson, or the Secretary at the discretion of the Chairperson, shall prepare an agenda for each regular Council meeting. Any member of the Council or member of the public may transmit material to the Chairperson for inclusion on the agenda. This material shall be included on the agenda if it is received by the Council not later than fourteen (14) calendar days prior to the meeting.

(c) The Chairperson, or the Secretary at the discretion of the Chairperson, shall distribute the proposed agenda to the Members no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the date of the meeting.

(d) Additional items may be placed on the agenda of a regular meeting by majority vote of members present, and if applicable notice requirement have been met.

(e) If neither the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, or the Secretary is present at the time Designated for any Council meeting, any other Member shall call the roll and, if a quorum has

been met, shall call the meeting to order, and preside over the election of a Chairperson *pro tempore* who shall preside until the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, or the Secretary arrives.

(f) The Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson or Secretary serving in the capacity of the Chairperson, or Chairperson *pro tempore* shall decide all questions of order at said meeting, subject to an appeal to the Council.

(g) Matters not covered by this section or other District of Columbia laws or regulations shall be decided in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Sec. 9. DUTIES

The Council shall:

(1) Meet monthly;

(2) Operate and conduct meetings using administrative rules of order;

(3) Select a Vice-Chair and Recording Secretary

(4) Perform an assessment and develop a plan, to be submitted to the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, the Office of the State Superintendent for Education, the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools within six (6) months after the effective date of the Council's creation, to identify issues impacting on the social and emotional outcomes of youth;

(5) Submit a final report and recommendations on how to implement the Character Development and Citizenship Education within the District of Columbia Public and Charter Schools, within twelve (12) months of the creation of this Council.

(6) In the first report, the Council shall endeavor to address, among other issues, matters related to the high rate of disciplinary problems exhibited by the youth in the District of Columbia. The United States Department of Education recognize that character education is society's shared responsibility.¹ Horace Mann, a 19th century education reformer, believed that character development was essential to the success of moral development.² More than a century later, Martin Luther King Jr. stated that "intelligence plus character-that is true goal of education." Consequently, the Congress of the United States authorized the Partnership in Character Education Program in 1994 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and subsequent initiatives "to promote strong character and citizenship among our nation's youth."³ The Character Development and Citizenship Education Initiative of 2014 shall:

(a) Provide a shared responsibility between teachers, parents and members of the community.

(b) Create a learning process that uses repetition to internalize core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others.

(c) Promote community involvement in designing and implementing character education in the District of Columbia Public and Charter Schools.

(7) Submit to the Mayor and the Council of the District of Columbia, the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE), the Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools

¹ *Character Education-Our Shared Responsibility*

View the brochure online at: www.ed.gov/admins/lead/character/brochure.html

² Thomas C. Hunt, *Moral Education in America's Schools*, 2005) pp 31-48

³ *Character Education-Our Shared Responsibility*

View the brochure online at: www.ed.gov/admins/lead/character/brochure.html

and the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Public Charter Schools other reports and recommendations as it considers useful for the promotion of Character Development and Citizenship Education in the District.

Sec. 10. QUORUM

(a) A majority of the sitting membership of the Council, but not less than four (4) Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the Council.

Sec. 11. VOTES

(a) Action shall be taken by majority vote of the Members present and voting unless provided in this act or in other District of Columbia laws or regulations.

(b) No person may vote on Council matters unless that person is a current member of the Council.

(c) A motion to reconsider a vote may be made at the same meeting at which the vote was taken or, if otherwise in order, at the next meeting, by any Member who voted with the prevailing side of a question.

Sec. 12. DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE(S)

(a) When designating the resolution of a matter to a Committee, the Council shall designate a chairperson of the Committee. The chairperson shall preside over meetings of the committee.

(b) A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings of the committee.

(c) Action shall be taken by the committee by a majority vote of the committee members present and voting.

Sec. 13. RECORDS OF MEETINGS

(a) The Secretary shall cause the proceedings of meetings to be recorded in written minutes.

(b) The minutes shall record all actions and any statements made for the record. Otherwise there shall be no verbatim written record of discussion and debate unless so ordered by the Council.

(c) Copies of the minutes shall be distributed to each Member at the next regular meeting of the Council.

(d) Upon approval by the Council, the minutes shall become the record of the proceedings.

Sec. 14. NOTICES AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairperson shall sign or designate a person to sign the following:

(a) All notices to Members of regular and special meetings, except for special meetings called by a majority of the Commissioners or by the Mayor; and

(b) All notices and correspondence signifying proposed and final actions of the Council.

This act shall take effect after a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Self-government and Government Reorganization

Act (Home Rule Act), approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; Official D.C. Code § 1-206.02(c) (1)).

References

1. Character Education and Civic Engagement Technical Assistance Center
www.cetac.org
2. *Character Education-Our Shared Responsibility*
View the brochure online at: www.ed.gov/admins/lead/character/brochure.html
3. *Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen*
View the booklet online at: www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/citizen/index.html
4. Thomas C. Hunt, *Moral Education in America's Schools*, 2005) pp 31–48
5. What Works Clearinghouse—Character Education
www.whatworks.ed.gov