



Executive Summary

Based on current education and social conditions, the fate of boys of color is uncertain.

Black boys are grossly over-represented among youth failing to achieve academic success, are at grave risk of dropping out of school before they reach 10th grade, are disproportionately represented among adjudicated and incarcerated youth, and are far less likely than their peers in other subgroups to achieve to their dreams and aspirations.

Research indicates that although black boys have high aspirations for academic and career success, their underperformance in school and lack of educational attainment undermine their career pursuits and the success they desire. This misalignment of aspirations and achievement is fueled by and perpetuates a set of social conditions wherein black males find themselves disproportionately represented among the unemployed and incarcerated. Without meaningful, targeted, and sustainable interventions and support systems, hundreds of thousands of young Black men will never realize their true potential and the cycle of high unemployment, fatherless homes, overcrowded jails, incarcerated talent, deferred dreams, and high rates of school failure will continue.



Madison Preparatory Academy for Young Men (aka Madison Prep) will be established to serve as a catalyst for change and opportunity among young men of color. Its founders understand that poverty, isolation, structural discrimination, lack of access to positive male role models and achievement-oriented peer groups, limited exposure to opportunity and culture outside their neighborhood or city, and a general lack of understanding – and in some cases fear – of black boys among adults are major contributing factors to why so many young men are failing to achieve to their full potential. However, the Urban League of Greater Madison – the “founders” of **Madison Prep** – also understand that these issues can be addressed by directly countering each issue with a positive, exciting, engaging, enriching, challenging, affirming and structured learning community designed to exclusively benefit boys.

Madison Prep will be a public charter school that serves an all-male student body in grades 6-12 in Madison, Wisconsin. It will be open to all males residing in Dane County who apply, regardless of previous academic performance. The school will ***provide a world class secondary education for young men that prepares them to think critically, communicate effectively, identify their purpose, and succeed in college, twenty-first century careers, leadership, and life.*** Young men will receive an education that:

- Challenges them to develop mastery of basic and advanced knowledge, concepts and skills;
- Enables them to explore and engage more deeply in their interests;
- Deepens their understanding of and competence in science, technology, communications, and social innovation;
- Builds their cultural competence – developing their ability to participate effectively and with significant awareness and understanding in their culture and the culture of others in the U.S. and abroad;
- Engages them in discourse and learning opportunities with key decision makers and influential men and women who are setting trends and shaping and impacting local, national, and world affairs;
- Provides them with a supportive peer group that values their abilities and desire to succeed in school and life;
- Matches them with mentors who provide guidance, coaching, support and examples of success;
- Connects them with college and career opportunities before they leave school; and
- Extends their network of support in school and in the communities where they live.

Madison Prep will offer a strong liberal studies program that places a special emphasis on the study of science, technology, communications, and related social sector issues and innovation. The school will implement the highly regarded, college preparatory Middle Years (grades 6-10) and Diploma Programme (grades 11-12) curricula offered by the International Baccalaureate Organization. Students will complete courses in math, science, English/language arts, humanities, civics, foreign language, health & lifestyles, physical education, and the arts. They will also complete one semester of study in rhetoric, one semester of Home Economics, and an annual seminar series in Etiquette, Ethics, & Personal-Professional Standards.



Madison Prep's academic year will be divided into three 13-week sessions, beginning the 3rd week of August and ending the 3rd week of June. School will start at 8:00am and end at 4:30pm each day. Courses will last from 50 to 60 minutes, with a 90 minute study period built in each day for students to study as teams and receive assistance from teachers and tutors. Additionally, peer team meetings will take place every Monday and Thursday and Mentor Statuses between teachers, students and volunteers will occur every Wednesday.

Instruction in all courses will take place around the Harkness Table, a seminar-style discussion-based teaching methodology founded at Philips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire where all students are deeply engaged in learning as a team around an oval table in every classroom. In Harkness classrooms, teachers demonstrate, facilitate, and participate in the learning experience with their students. Teachers introduce new concepts, ideas, issues and skills and students discuss, debate, practice, and demonstrate them together and individually around an oval table rather than from individual desks situated theatre-style in a classroom.

As an annual promotion and graduation standard, each **Madison Prep** student will be required to complete a minimum of 160 hours of community service (minimum of 25 hours per year). They will also be required to successfully present and defend their final class project and thesis in front of a 4-person committee comprised of two teachers, an external subject area expert, and a representative of the broader community. Students' parents (or caregiver) will be required to attend all promotion and graduation reviews.

Madison Prep will offer athletics and clubs as co-curricular requirements for its students. Students will be required to participate in at least one club and two sports each year. They will also participate in a year-round strength and conditioning program lead by a certified trainer/physical education teacher, complete quarterly health and fitness evaluations, and participate in the school's end-of-year Sports & Fitness Competition as part of the school's physical education program. All of **Madison Prep's** physical education and athletic staff will be certified fitness instructors.

Madison Prep's educational program will be bolstered by partnerships with businesses, government agencies, professional and membership associations, colleges and universities, and scholarship providing organizations that have the capacity to bring talent, expertise and resources into the school community to benefit **Madison Prep** students, faculty, staff, and parents. **Madison Prep** will also host special activities to engage parents, fathers, and the community in the education of their young men. Invitations will be extended to parents, community leaders, and experts to join young men at the Harkness Table to add to their learning and to learn with them.

Where possible, **Madison Prep** will establish partnerships with other quality public, charter and independent elementary schools, offering these schools' male students continuous immersion in a great school with a rigorous secondary academic program that meets their educational needs and aspirations.

Seed funding for the establishment of **Madison Prep** will come from public and private sources, including planning and implementation grants from charter school investment funds, charitable foundations, government agencies, and individuals. Ideally, **Madison Prep** will be located in a business or higher education environment with access to quality classroom, athletic and laboratory facilities or the ability to create such facilities.

The Urban League will submit their charter application to the appropriate school authorizer in 2011 to receive approval to open its school in 2012. If approved, the school will open in August 2012 serving 80 boys in grades 6 and 7. The school will grow by one grade level each year until it offers a full complement of secondary grades (6-12). At maturity, **Madison Prep** will serve 280 students and graduate its first class of seniors in 2017-18.

The business plan for **Madison Prep** outlines the core elements of the school, and discusses its goals and objectives, target population, desired location, recruitment plans, staffing, and budget. Moreover, it demonstrates the Urban League of Greater Madison's commitment to provide a high quality learning community for young men and to do what it takes to ensure they are successful.

If you are interested in reviewing a copy of **Madison Prep's** business plan, would like to get involved or speak with an Urban League representative, or have ascertained that there may be partnership or grant opportunities with your organization, please contact Kaleem Caire at kcaire@ulgm.org or 608-729-1249. To the future!