

THURGOOD MARSHALL ACADEMY

MASTERY FOR ALL STUDENTS.

AT A GLANCE:

Startup type:

Whole-school redesign

Start date: 2015-16

Grades served: 9-12

Operator: Thurgood
Marshall Academy Public
Charter High School

Operator type: Existing CMO

Students at start: 400

Students at capacity: 400

Thurgood Marshall Academy (TMA) launched a mastery-based learning model in the 2015-16 school year, piloting with ninth grade math and science classes. TMA's approach is based on best practices from public school districts in California, Maine, and Massachusetts, where similar models have removed time and grade constraints on learning and demanded mastery of subject-area competencies.

As a non-selective public high school, TMA accepts students who apply through D.C.'s citywide lottery system, regardless of ability. Students represent more than 60 different middle schools and have a wide range of pedagogical backgrounds; many arrive well below proficiency standards mandated by standardized exams. Given the spectrum of skills of incoming ninth graders, many students need more time than is allotted in the traditional academic calendar.

TMA's model pairs teacher-centered instruction with blended learning so that all students receive content and instruction through an online system tailored to their strengths and weaknesses. This model will ensure that all students demonstrate knowledge and retention of concepts necessary for promotion, decrease the number of non-proficient students on standardized exams, increase scores on AP and SAT exams, and ensure that students have the academic skills to succeed in college.

TMA's mastery-based model will remove time and grade constraints on learning and demand demonstrated proficiency on subject-area competencies. Through a combination of teacher-delivered instruction, personalized learning, and real-time, data-driven feedback, our students will be better prepared for college and for active engagement in our democratic society.

RICH POEHLMAN, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THURGOOD MARSHALL ACADEMY

1% Hispanic/
Latino

