



Dear Voyager Academy Families,

I am truly humbled today as I send out this letter to introduce myself as the Principal of Voyager Academy High School. I am excited for Voyager to continue its tradition of excellence at the High School level by preparing your students for college, their future careers and life. We are already receiving many questions, and I look forward to answering them Thursday January 21, 2010 during our information session. Voyager Academy High School will continue to build upon the foundations set in grades four through eight; the high school's focused mission is stated below.

The mission of Voyager Academy High School is to provide students in grades 9-12 with a wide range of rigorous course selections to meet their varied needs and give them the skills necessary for college and the real world. We will connect the students' English, Math, Social Studies, Science, Foreign Language and Fine Arts courses through a focus in business and marketing by drawing on content specific knowledge to create and produce real-world products and experiences. We believe these business applications will provide a solid foundation for our students' pursuits in their various academic studies, personal lives and careers.

I believe it is important to share information about my background as we work together to create a superior High School experience for each student. I began my education studies at North Carolina State University in the field of Business and Marketing Education. I graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business and Marketing Education and a Minor in Business Management. Upon graduation, I was fully licensed to teach business and marketing courses in grades 6-12. I took a job as a Business and Marketing teacher at Northern High School in Durham where I taught Computer Applications, Marketing Management, Sports and Entertainment Marketing to students in grades 9-12. At Northern I was an advisor for DECA (a marketing club), Habitat for Humanity, Future Business Leaders of America and Model United Nations.

An incredible opportunity to help start Voyager Academy surfaced. After receiving approval from the State Board of Education for the Voyager Charter, I began spending my nights and weekends working pro-bono for a year with the Voyager Academy Board of Directors on the logistics of opening a new school. My responsibilities ranged from completing the IRS application for tax exemption to developing budgets and managing the lottery process. When the school opened I formally served in the role of Finance Officer; developing Voyager's budget with the administration and board, managing the budget through the school year, completing state fiscal reporting, payroll, accounts payable and receivable. Along with these responsibilities I have facilitated technology, attended all board meetings, helped implement the student assessment tool NWEA, participated in Project Based Learning training, collaborated with teachers and administrators for many school-based decisions, managed student schedules, grade reporting, attendance and all other student data reporting from NCWise.



During this time I have been attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on nights and weekends working on my Master's in School Administration. As part of my coursework I had to complete an internship as an administrator. This year I have been serving as an administrative intern under the seasoned leadership of both Carl Forsyth and Ed Forsythe. During this year I have conducted staff development, participated in meetings with families and students, developed strategies to align the student discipline policy to responsive classroom practices and developed a custom teacher evaluation tool using the iPhone/iTouch. I have also worked for the past year on developing the framework for a Voyager Academy High School including the Educational Theory, integration of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Framework and Ethical Decision Making. Through many hours of hard work and collaboration with our curriculum director, administrators, board and community members, we developed the finished product which we submitted to the State Board of Education and received approval on January 7, 2010. The responsibility I will miss most is calling your students names every afternoon for 3 years rain or shine to help get them safely home.

Finally, the most important part of my background is my family. I have been married to my wonderful wife for almost 6 years now. We are extremely fortunate to have a daughter who is four and a son who is one. I could not be in the position I am today without their love and support.

I hope you will join our administrative team next Thursday January 21<sup>st</sup> at 6pm in the gym for the informational meeting about the high school. We want everyone to have as much information about our plans to make an informed decision for your student's high school career. In preparation for the meeting there are four items I would like to highlight which will be paramount at Voyager Academy High School.

Our High School will provide:

1. A Safe and Orderly Learning Environment
2. A Rigorous Academic Preparation for College and Future Careers
3. A Concentration in Business & Marketing including Service, Ethics, Entrepreneurship, Finance, Creative Thinking, Collaboration and Public Speaking which students will be able to apply in their various college and career choices.
4. Increased Student Choice with Greater Personal Responsibility

Sincerely,

Cory Draughon, Principal  
Voyager Academy High School