

Walter L. Cohen High School's namesake was born a free man of color in New Orleans. He was educated at St. Louis Catholic School and Straight College. He was an active member of the Reconstruction politics. He was one of the few African Americans to hold political office after Reconstruction. President McKinley appointed him to the Office of Customs Inspector, to the position of Registrar of the U.S. Land Office by President Theodore Roosevelt, and to the office of Comptroller of Customs by President Harding. Successful businessman Cohen was founder and president of people's Life Insurance. A proud beginning for a proud school

The alumni and community of Walter L. Cohen High School (Cohen) are very proud of the students and graduates of the school. This is what they want for future generations that will walk the halls of Cohen. The alumni Association and community members formed Friends of Walter L. Cohen/Uptown Education Advocates, Inc. (FOC/UEA) to continue the Cohen tradition of excellence. Many of the members are well known professionals in New Orleans and in other parts of the United States. After a conversation with members of FOC/UEA one understands their passion to continue this tradition. Most importantly, many of the members are professions in the medical and technological fields, and in the field of Science.

Cohen's mission statement says that the school in partnership with all stakeholders (teachers, staff, students, parents, and community), will improve student achievement by restructuring curriculum, instruction, and learning to meet the needs of all students. The selection of Health Careers and Technology, supplemented by Liberal Arts is appropriate because of Cohen's proximity to many hospitals and clinics. Also, many of the community members work in these professions, allowing for many opportunities to observe practitioners.

Cohen will offer students a College Preparatory Curriculum. Course offerings under the general curriculum will be varied with the addition of honors and Advanced Placement classes in all subject areas. Equally important, Cohen will offer a credit recovery program. Students who fail core subjects will have opportunities to retake courses after school and during the summer. Block scheduling makes this strategy easier to fulfill.

In addition, Cohen plans to offer dual enrollment programs through local colleges and university. Students will have the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit for taking courses outside Cohen's curriculum offerings. This allows students to take a wide variety of classes that could not be offered in one school. These partnerships will also allow students to experience the college environment, thus ensuring a better chance for success at the universities of their choice. The DeVry model in Chicago will also be investigated. Here students attend DeVry for college classes and high school teachers teach some of the classes. Each class is awarded high school and college credit. When the student graduates, they will have a high school diploma and an Associate's degree.

Students will also have the opportunity for internships in their field of study. Students will have observation and work experience in their chosen field while earning high school credit. These programs will be monitored by school staff. Rubrics will be utilized for assessing student performance.

Business partners are being established and will continue to be established based on their ability to offer internships, knowledge of their field of study, and their ability to bring a valued resource to help Cohen see its vision grown and become a reality.

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1. **Mission and Vision**
 - a. **A clear statement of the mission, academic philosophy and values;**
 - b. **An overview of the school structure, leadership team and governance;**
 - c. **A description of the school's short- and long-term goals (academic and operational);**
 - d. **An explanation of the research-base that demonstrates the school model will be effective in improving student achievement;**
 - e. **An explanation of how this model is appropriate for all students and will lead to higher levels of academic achievement for the target population; and**
 - f. **An explanation of the school's core values about teaching and learning.**
2. **Describe the community and students you wish to serve.**
3. **Complete the enrollment projection chart in *Appendix E*, providing enrollment for each grade level for years one through five. Provide an enrollment projection**

Our Quest for Excellence

Our mission is to create a charter high school with a focus on health careers, science and technology, and liberal arts that is in accordance with the Louisiana Department of Education and the Recovery School District's ongoing effort to reorganize the delivery of educational opportunities under the framework of High School Redesign. Furthermore, Cohen will work to establish itself as a center for community-based programs. Within this framework, the outcome of Cohen and its community programs will focus on building self-respect, self-reliance, and empowerment through practical, educationally sound and culturally relevant curricula and services. The partners and beneficiaries of a Cohen education and related services will be the students, their families, teachers and the entire New Orleans community especially those in the Uptown New Orleans area that borders the school campus.

FOC/UEA is applying to charter Cohen because we believe this will provide increased opportunities for instructional innovation to improve the educational performance of this school and its students. Additionally, FOC/UEA keenly understands the immediate need for additional high school seats in New Orleans. However, more importantly, this high school will create an environment with a focus that engages students and provides a logical progression to both post-secondary institutions and the workplace.

Should this application be approved, the short-term operational goal for Cohen will be to ensure that the facility is fully prepared both operationally and academically to open per the enclosed schedule. Long-term operational goals will be to fully assess the facility and complete a detailed needs assessment that outlines what is required to move the facility into the 21st century with regard to technology and infrastructure.

The core values about teaching and learning for Cohen High School are rooted in the FOC/UEA Building Blocks: Building High Expectations; Building Community through Open Access; Building Adult Capacity; Building leadership; and Building with the End in Mind.

Building High Expectations

The FOC/UEA is committed to creating world class schools. FOC/UEA schools have clearly defined and measurable high expectations for academic achievement and conduct that make no excuses based on the background of students. The FOC/UEA is committed to the implementation of pre and post tests that quantify the students' academic standing and measures their growth over time. Students, parents,

teachers, and staff create and reinforce a culture of achievement and support, through a range of formal and informal rewards and consequences for academic performance and behavior. Rewards range from praise and recognition for student achievement to financial incentives for teachers who produce results. Logical consequences for disruptive student behavior are maintained and supported via Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). High quality teaching is supported by one year contracts for all employees in the FOC/UEA.

Building Community through Open Access

Students, their parents, and the faculty of Cohen *choose* to participate in the program. Cohen will maintain an open access policy and all stakeholders must make and uphold a commitment to the school and to each other to put in the time and effort required to achieve success. The core of school is centered around community building and staff commitment.

Building Adult Capacity

FOC/UEA knows there are no shortcuts when it comes to success in academics and life. Implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) and a job-imbedded professional development plan that helps teachers to be better practitioners will assist Cohen professionals to become the most effective instructional strategists and ensure that they are results oriented.

Building Leadership

Cohen's principal will be an effective instructional and organizational leader who understands that great schools require great school leaders. The principal will be required to have a complex understanding of school budgeting and personnel, and will engage in professional development with teachers and with the school's leadership team on a regular basis.

Building with the End in Mind

Cohen will begin with the end in mind by focusing on high student performance on standardized tests and other objective measures. Cohen's leaders and teachers will work to align daily teaching with the Louisiana Department of Education's Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum (LCC). Since the GLEs serve as the building blocks for statewide assessments in Louisiana (GEE, LEAP, and iLEAP), active engagement creates ownership and understanding of curriculum and assessment by Cohen teachers.

FOC/UEA proposes to open and operate this high school as a college preparatory high school with a health careers and technology focus. For the first school year, Cohen will follow a traditional Program of Study that ensures that all students are TOPS eligible with future plans to follow the recommendations made by the Louisiana High School Redesign Commission. The plan for this high school will be for freshman to follow a typical college prep high school curriculum (English, Social Studies, Math, Science, Physical Education, etc.) with an exploratory elective that will help students decide on a health careers or technological 'focus' for the remainder of their career at the high school. The technology-based elective course will allow students to experience technology-based strands that are outlined later in this application.

In the last fifty years, the average size of high schools has changed from having fewer than 1,000 students to now having over 1,500 students. Research overwhelmingly supports the notion that students in kindergarten through high school are more successful when they attend small schools. In fact, smaller learning environments positively affect grades, test scores, attendance rates, graduation rates, drug and alcohol use, and school safety. Moreover, smaller, more personalized learning structures seem to provide the setting for other high school reforms, perhaps because change is easier to implement in a smaller setting. In *Schools that Work: America's Most Innovative Public Education Programs*, George H. Wood suggests that making schools smaller is the first step toward enhancing school conditions and improving student outcomes (1992). Analysis of various high school reform efforts also underscores "scaling down" as a common contributor for success. Smaller schools can more readily

provide students with mentors, tutors and advisors; make learning more meaningful by linking it to life-experiences and community; and provide adequate time and support for mastery of knowledge and skills. The health careers and technology-based strands at Cohen provide a framework congruent with high school reform models.

Our Community of Students

Quite simply, Cohen will serve the students and families of New Orleans. Demographic projections indicate almost 100% of our students will be African-American and will meet the federal guidelines qualifying them as low-income. Most of the students will enter far below grade level, and 10 to 12 percent will qualify for special education services. FOC/UEA is absolutely committed to serving students who have been traditionally underserved by public education systems.

Regardless of students' demographic profiles or academic histories, Cohen will prepare all students for success in challenging high school, college, and life.

Our Projected Enrollment

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Grade 9	100	100	100	100	100
Grade 10	100	100	100	100	100
Grade 11	100	100	100	100	100
Grade 12	100	100	100	100	100