

Charles H Abelmann  
2737 Devonshire Place NW, Apt. 506  
Washington, DC 20008

April 8, 2017

Dear Members of the Lab Schools Search Committee,

I had a very positive call with Sheryl Ash learning about the leadership position at Lab. I was very excited to learn about the opening and the possibility of being a part of a school with such a rich history as it charts a course forward. There are so many ways for mutual benefit between the school, the university and the broader community. I hope I can help leverage the resources of the university and the city to allow the school to continue to define innovation and best practice for your students and influencing broader discourse. As a progressive educator and Head of Barrie School, I have followed the journey of Lab from many perspectives. I am aware of university school relationships from my own professional experiences and my family. I am in fact attracted to the position because of what I see as immense opportunity in leveraging more the resources of the university and the city to benefit students and faculty across the school and university community. At a time where many new national efforts are associating personalized learning with progressive education, there is a new opportunity to help shape the national dialogue on effective learning strategies across public and private schools. The school holds a unique position to look at the intersection of practice, policy and research. I am excited by helping the school be a convener of education policy makers, researchers and practitioners to address important issues in education and allowing student voices from the school to be part of these discussions. I am excited to help Lab continue to be positioned to continue its role as one of the premiere progressive schools in the country. I value opportunities provided to students for local and global engagement, and think my experiences and leadership skills will facilitate continued growth in these areas as well.

I understand the importance of maintaining a diverse, creative, and entrepreneurial environment to remain competitive and relevant. I value how schools benefit from and contribute to the communities where they are located. In a multi site school, I recognize the importance of community relationships and fostering community embracing common values. I have worked with zoning issues and school expansion and the development requirements to sustain programs and competitive wages. I also know that importance of schools building global connections and partnerships. As the Head of Barrie, I have helped foster new programs with schools or programs in Martinique, Cameroon, China, Cuba, Oman and Thailand. I have had the privilege of visiting hundreds of schools around the world which influences my perspective on school leadership. I value being a part of a student community with all ages and helping strengthen coherence across divisions.

During my career, I have been involved in education as a teacher, researcher, policy maker, school leader and school board member. At the World Bank, I held various positions in the education sector and in the department that promoted leadership and organizational effectiveness. I managed the Bank's education projects in China and Mongolia, including designing new education projects, supervising existing projects, and leading analytical and

advisory work with clients. My team secured a grant that brought classroom libraries to 400 of the most rural schools in Mongolia and helped revitalize the publishing industry. While serving as Principal at Janney Elementary, my focus was on supporting adult development to create a stronger, more coherent academic program that fully utilized the community resources. I worked collaboratively with a very active community to develop a new vision for the school that embraced a set of core values including reflection, experimentation, collaboration, equity, inquiry and achievement. I see that Lab embraces these values. I am also familiar with collective bargaining agreements from my work in DC and work with AFT and understand the importance of collaborative work with bargaining teams. In November 2004, the school was recognized with the U.S. Department of Education's No Child Left Behind, Blue Ribbon Award.

At Barrie for the last six years, I have been responsible for the school, camp, and Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies, an accredited Montessori teacher education program. We have expanded the school to include younger students and more international students and programs. Under my leadership, the school is now a convener of other educators on important topics, a champion of project based learning, and has a competitive intern and fellows program. We have opened two award winning educational spaces that promote flexibility and agility in how we structure classes, formed partnerships in Cuba and China, and worked closely with the Future of Information Alliance which includes the University of Maryland, Google, The National Archives, and The National Park Service. We are also preparing to launch a new Middle East initiative supported by grant funding. We have created a remarkably diverse and inclusive school setting and hope you might have the chance to visit our campus as part of this process.

As a school leader, I value building and sustaining inclusive environments that inspire innovation and risk taking and am committed to child centered programs that highlight student passion and joy. In fostering communities of excellence, I understand the tension between autonomy and collegiality and also the tension associated with navigating what needs to be structured and what can be relaxed within the operation of a school. I welcome learning about the nuances of your community including the nature of the teacher contract, the multi campus operation, and the demands of your accrediting agencies. I am excited to learn about plans for managing your expansion and the development needs to make projects a reality.

I believe my experience working with diverse communities related to instructional leadership and my understanding of the relationship between policy, research and practice combined with strong financial and people management skills can serve the Lab community. I hope the search process will allow us to ascertain whether my knowledge, experience, passion and skills are a fit for Lab and if earlier consideration might be possible. I wish you the best with this important and exciting search.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles H. Abelmann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Charles Abelmann

**Charles H. Abelmann**  
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Silver Spring Maryland 20906  
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## EDUCATION

### **Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA**

Ed.D., Administration, Planning, and Social Policy, June 1996

Dissertation: "Workplace Education: Understanding Plant Responses to State Policy"  
(Richard Elmore, Chair)

Negotiation Project, Harvard Law School, January 1995

Ed.M., Administration, Planning, and Social Policy, June 1993

### **Duke University, Durham, NC**

A.B., *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa (English, Religion), December 1987

### **University of Oxford, St. Peter's College, Oxford England**

Visiting Student, 1986-87

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Barrie School, Silver Spring Maryland**

*Head of School*, June 2010 – Present

- Lead school and grew enrollment for students 18 months to grade 12
- Managed new branding effort and improvements in teaching and learning
- Oversee extensive summer camp and teacher training program
- Established leadership position in project based learning for Barrie Prep
- Positioned Montessori program as innovative leader in technology and research supported practices
- Developed strategic partnerships with local, national and international organizations
- Positioned school as convener on selected topics and hosting international delegations
- Added a global focus and increased international enrollment
- Secured new endowment and investments in facilities including 11 campus homes for staff
- Oversaw facilities improvements including turf field and award winning learning studio
- Established teaching highly competitive intern and fellows program

### **The World Bank, Washington, D.C.**

*Acting Manager* for Human Resource Services Leadership and Organizational Effectiveness Unit, February 2009-April 2010

- Developed vision for staff learning for World Bank staff in country offices and at headquarters
- Managed all management learning and organizational effectiveness practice
- Reviewed and manage program spending
- Managed performance for 130 staff, consultants and vendors

*Lead Program Coordinator* for Client Engagement and Teams Strategic Learning Center, January 2006 – April 2010

- Oversaw all courses for staff on leadership, team work, client engagement, language and culture and writing and speaking
- Oversaw orientation for new staff
- Oversaw budget for staff and management learning
- Oversaw knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation function in unit
- Provided cross support to East Asia Human Development Department to support Mongolia

*Senior Education Specialist* in East Asia and the Pacific, June 1999 – January 2006

- Managed education lending program in Indonesia, China and Mongolia
- Developed and supervised education investments ranging in size to 100 million
- Conducted policy analysis and policy dialogue with Ministries of Education and local Governments across East Asia and selected other countries (Latvia, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Brazil, Guatemala, and Columbia)
- Worked with other donors and non government organizations related to education reforms
- Delivered training on education reform to client country member

*Young Professional*, World Bank Young Professionals Program, September 1997 – September 1998

- Education Specialist responsible for operations in Uganda, Tanzania, Latvia
- Conducted education sector analysis in Uganda and Zimbabwe

### **District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington D.C**

*School Principal* at Janney Elementary School, August 2001 - June 2004  
(on external service from the World Bank)

- Lead a school community with 480 students and 60 staff
- Built new community partnerships with US Park Service and the Smithsonian and expanded parent role
- Fostered a strong professional community and instituted peer coaching
- Introduced new math curriculum and new approach to reading and writing
- Expanded school as a training site for local universities
- Improved student learning outcomes and worked with community to secure Blue Ribbon Award from USDOE
- Fostered strong inclusive community

*Special Assistant* to the Superintendent, School Year 98-99 (on loan from the World Bank)

- Advised on policy issues related to accountability, governance and school finance
- Led team to implement school profiles and student weighted finance formula

### **Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA**

*Lecturer*, Administration, Planning, and Social Policy (APSP), 1996-97

- Member of APSP faculty, taught a course on accountability in education

*Instructor*, Administration, Planning, and Social Policy, 1995-96

- Taught graduate seminar on state policy and accountability

**Institutions of Higher Learning, State of Mississippi, Jackson, MS**

*Special Projects Consultant*, 1991-1992

- Developed Higher Education Goals Study
- Coordinated Mississippi Teacher Corps
- Developed math and science summer program for disadvantaged youth

**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Philadelphia, MS**

*Program Development Specialist*, Department of Education, January 1991 - August 1991

- Developed grant programs and conducted program evaluations
- Implemented K-12 program improvements
- Supported grant writing planning for a new middle school program

**Yayasan Sabah, Institute for People Development, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia**

*Luce Scholars Program*, The Henry Luce Foundation, 1989-90

- Facilitator for rural development program
- Developed curriculum for unemployed youth
- Developed systems for monitoring and evaluation

**Carolina Friends School, Durham, NC**

*Middle School Language Arts and Elective Teacher, as well as Student Advisor*, 1988-89

*Full Time Paid Intern*, January 1988 - June 1988

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**Consortium for Policy Research in Education, Cambridge, MA**

*Research Manager*, June 1996 – September 1997

- Managed multi-state project related to accountability and capacity in education

*Research Associate*, September 1993 – June 1996

- Conducted field work in Kentucky and Mississippi examining how schools and school districts respond to performance-based systems of accountability

**Colloquium on System-Wide Higher Education Desegregation Member, 1994-1996**

- Worked to develop a research agenda with subsequent projects to address issues of de-segregation among public university systems

**Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development, Jackson, MS**

*Consultant*, June 1993-November 1995

- Evaluated the state's efforts to assist industry with training

**Economic Development Assistance Consortium, Cambridge, MA**

*Associate*, September 1994 – October 1995

- Conducted research on how community-based organizations are involved with employment-training networks; field work in Alabama

**Foundation for the Mid South, Jackson, MS**

*Summer Intern*, June 1993 – August 1993

- Conducted program evaluation of a workforce development initiative in four Delta communities in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi
- Conducted comparative policy analyses of workforce development programs and school-to-work programs in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi
- Supported state policy work related to middle schools

**ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Barrie School – Taught Electives as Head of School**

*Teacher*, 2015-16

- China’s Place in the World Elective – Upper School course exploring whether and if American high school students should be required to learn about China.
- Understanding our Place in the World – Grades 4-5
- Author Studies - Grades 1-3

*Teacher*, 2014-15

- Grade 9 – Emotional Intelligence, History of Educational Space and Current Maker Spaces

*Teacher*, 2013-14

- Student Voice Elective – Encouraged high school students to be partners in decision making within the school community

**Harvard METCO Fellows Program**

*Co-Director*, January 1997 – June 1997

- Directed a Saturday program for high school students to develop research and writing skills

**Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Providence, RI**

*Senior Policy Associate*, July 1996 – August 1997 (25% time)

- Worked on a project involving rethinking accountability in Boston Public Schools

**Harvard University, Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA**

*Teaching Fellow*, Administration, Planning, and Social Policy, 1994-95

- Assisted Professor Richard Murnane in “Education and the Economy”
- Assisted Professor Richard Elmore in “Politics, Policy Making, and Political Action”

**Cambridge Public Schools, Cambridge, MA**

*Substitute Teacher*, August 1990 – December 1990

**CONFERENCE PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS**

Workshops for teachers, school heads, local education authorities and parents about early childhood education, school quality standards, and leadership. Demay School, Nanjing China, July 2016

“Barrie and Use of Personalisis.” The Greater Washington Montessori Conference, November 2015

“Creating a Culture of Leadership.” American Montessori Society Annual Conference, March 2015

- “Defining the Future of Montessori Education.” The Greater Washington Montessori Conference, March 2014
- Leadership Workshop for Barrie Teaching Fellows, December 2014 and September 2013
- “Creative Learning Environments: Rethinking the Classroom.” National Association of Independent Schools, February 2013
- Workshops for teachers, school heads and parents about early childhood education, school governance, and parent engagement. Demay School, Nanjing China, December 2013 and March 2015
- “Skill Competitiveness: Lessons For Education From High Performing Work Organizations.” The Higher Education Institution of Peking University, November, 1999.
- “Looking into the Black Box of Classrooms: What Do We Look For and What Do We See?” Panel organizer and presenter of a session at the Human Development Week, World Bank, March 1999.
- “Rewarding Success and The Use of Performance Incentives.” Presenter at the Human Development Week, World Bank, March 1998.
- “Charter Schools: Lessons for Developing Countries.” Panel organizer and presenter at the Human Development Week, World Bank, March 1998.
- “Expectations and Accountability Across Sectors: What Do Teachers at a Catholic, A Charter, and a Pilot School Expect of Their Students, and How are They Held Accountable?” Paper Presented at APPAM Conference in Washington DC, October 1997.
- “State Accountability Systems: Oversight or Improvement.” Featured Speaker at the 1997 Annual Conference of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, Roanoke, VA, April 22nd, 1997.
- “Accountability. A Problem of Expectations and Responsibility -- Building an Understanding From the School House Out. Presentation at the 1997 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Ill., March 24th, 1997.
- With Susan Kenyon. “The Influence of Community on School’s Conception of Accountability.” Presentation at the 1997 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Ill., March 24th, 1997.
- With Susan Lusi. “Plane Crashes, Failing School and the Dangers of Not Looking Inside the ‘Black Box’.” Presentation at the 1997 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Ill., March 24th, 1997.
- “An Overview of State Accountability Issues.” Presentation to National Association of State Boards of Education Study Group on Funding Education, Washington, D.C., March 15th, 1997.
- “Policy Off Center: Lessons From Mississippi’s Effort to Offer State Incentives to Promote Workplace Education.” Presentation at the 1996 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA., April 12, 1996.

- “Distractions From Teaching and Learning: Lessons From Kentucky’s Use of Rewards.” Presentation at the 1996 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA., April 12, 1996.
- Charter Schools: Implications for Teacher Education. Presentation at the Invisible College, San Francisco, CA., April 7, 1996.
- “Focused Dialogue on System Wide Desegregation of Public Higher Education.” Panel Discussant at the 1995 annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Orlando, FL, November 4th, 1995.
- “Holding Schools Accountable: Issues and Problems.” Presentation at American Federation of Teachers Quality Educational Standards in Teaching (QuEST) Conference, Washington, D.C., July 28-29, 1995.
- Kentucky’s Performance-Based Assessment System: A Round Table Discussion. Panel Member. The Prichard Committee, Lexington, Kentucky, June 21-22, 1995.
- “The New Accountability in State Education Reform: From Process to Performance.” Presenter at The Brookings Institution, Conference on Performance-Based Approaches to School Reform, Washington, D.C., April 6-7, 1995.
- “The Jobs Continuum.” Presenter at US Department of Housing and Urban Development (conference to provide technical assistance to “Empowerment Zone” communities), Washington, D.C., March 11-12, March 24-25, 1995.

## **PUBLICATIONS & TECHNICAL REPORTS**

- (with Richard Elmore) “When Accountability Knocks. Will Anyone Answer?” CPRE Research Report Series RR-42, 1999.
- (with Richard Elmore and Susan Fuhrman) “The New Accountability in State Education Reform: From Process to Performance.” In H.Ladd (Ed.), Holding Schools Accountable, Washington: Brookings Institution.
- “State Supported Workplace Education: A Report to the Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development,” October 1995.
- “An Evaluation of the Planning Stage of the Workforce Alliance: A Report for the Foundation for the Mid South,” Jackson: Mississippi, January 1995.
- “Accountability in Mississippi,” Research Report Prepared for Consortium for Policy Research in Education, February, 1995.
- “Accountability in Kentucky,” Research Report Prepared for Consortium for Policy Research in Education, February, 1995.
- “Wandering with the Spirits in Sabah,” The Chaplain’s Craft, Washington: The Council for Religion in Independent Schools, Winter 1991.



“The People Development Movement: The Challenge of Replication, The First Four Months.” Kota Kinabalu: Sabah, 1990.

“Rambling and Writing Class.” The League Journal. Raleigh: North Carolina League of Middle Level Schools, 1989.

### **HONORS & FELLOWSHIPS**

Mongolian Ministry of Education, Distinguished Educator Award, June 2007

No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School Award, US Department of Education, Fall 2004

Harvard Graduate School of Education, Entering Award, 1992-93

Luce Scholar, Henry Luce Foundation, 1989-90