



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Townsend Building
401 Federal Street Suite 2
Dover, Delaware 19901-3639
DOE WEBSITE: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us>

Mark T. Murphy
Secretary of Education
Voice: (302) 735-4000
FAX: (302) 739-4654

January 27, 2015

Via Mail & E-Mail

Ms. Patsy Pipken-Perry
Board Chair, LEAN Tech Academy
P.O. Box 5962
Newark, DE 19714

Dear Ms. Pipken-Perry:

Thank you for submitting an application for a new charter school.

Pursuant to 14 Del. C. §511(d), the Delaware Department of Education (“DDOE”) has completed an “an initial review of all new charter school applications it receive[d] in order to assess the completeness and quality of each such application based on the application submission criteria established in this title.”

Based upon this review, the DDOE has determined that the charter application for LEAN Tech Academy (“LTA”) does not meet the submission criteria for completeness and quality to merit a full review.

The deficiencies determined through the initial review are as follows:

Section 1.3: Education Plan

- Special Populations and At-Risk Students:
 - Page 1 of this section states that “...8-10% of enrolled students will be within the high incidence disabilities including but not limited to those with IEPs and/or an Emotional Disturbance. Other disabled students not fitting the two aforementioned categories will be considered for admission on an individual basis as the school evaluates their ability to accommodate individual needs in a safe and supportive environment.” This statement demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding regarding public schools’ obligation to provide services to all students, regardless of need. (Pursuant to 14 Del. C. § 512 (7)).
 - The description of IST team members (page 5) is not in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 923.11.9. The applicant states (page 3) that “Students who are receiving special education services and not meeting IEP goals toward mastery will most likely be identified as Tier 3 ...” The quality of the response does not demonstrate an understanding that RTI is a regular education initiative. Students who receive special education services would follow the same decision making process, based on RTI data for placement within tiers, as non-special education students.

- Student Recruitment and Enrollment: The open enrollment period outlined in the Enrollment and Withdrawal Policy (page 2) does not align to the School Choice period pursuant to 14 Del. C. § 403 (a).

Section 1.4: Performance Management

- Page 9 of this section indicates that the Smarter Balanced assessment will be used to assess science. The Smarter Balanced assessment does not assess science and social studies. These subjects are assessed using the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS).

Section 1.5: Staffing

- Staff Structure: The organizational charts provided do not align with the budget. The total FTEs and the detailed FTEs do not align. For example, in Year 1 the organizational chart indicates 8 regular classroom teachers (2 math, 2 social studies, 2 English, 2 science). However, the budget reflects 7.5 classroom teachers (5.5 on 80% budget). Overall, the organizational chart for Year 1 shows 24 FTEs (not including contracted services), but the budget only reflects 16.5 FTEs (13.5 on 80% budget). If the organizational chart is accurate, the budget is not correct.

Section 1.6: Governance and Management

- Board Roles: The response on page 3 states, “see Appendix 3 for BOD roles” but the document does not describe how LTA’s Board will interact with the Principal/School Leader and any advisory bodies. The response also states that “LTA will adopt Board roles from the NYC Guidebook” and a link is provided to this 105-page document. A link to an external document is an incomplete response.
- Board Member Information Forms: The application did not include forms for Founding Board Members Patsy Pipken-Perry, Robert Anderson and Elijah Wilson.
- Charter School Board Member Disclosures: The application did not include disclosures for Founding Board Members Patsy Pipken-Perry, Robert Anderson and Elijah Wilson.

Section 1.8: Start-up and Operations

- Student Food Services: The “*Nemours 5-2-1 Almost None Formula for Healthy Living*” referenced on page 1 of this section was missing. Additionally, this campaign does not meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s regulations for the National School Lunch/School Breakfast program.

Section 1.10: Budget and Finance

- There is no substantiation provided for revenue identified on the “Other Funds” sheet.
- The applicant’s submission for this section was not complete as it did not include a narrative for both the 80% and 100% budgets. Without a narrative for the 80% contingency budget, the application lacks sufficient details to determine economic viability.
- The first year lease costs (Line 34) on the 80% budget is different than the 100% budget. There is no explanation.
- The revenue estimates and budgets are based on different enrollment figures than what is identified on the School Proposal Overview (page 3). The figures should align.

- Supplemental Programming: Page 6 of the application indicates that summer school will be provided during LTA's second year of operation, but enrollment projections are not included. The budget does not include projected revenue or expenses.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information. You can reach me at (302) 735-4020 or jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us.

Sincerely,



Jennifer M. Nagourney
Executive Director, Charter School Office
Delaware Department of Education

C: Mark Murphy, Secretary of Education
David Blowman, Deputy Secretary of Education
Mary Kate McLaughlin, Chief of Staff