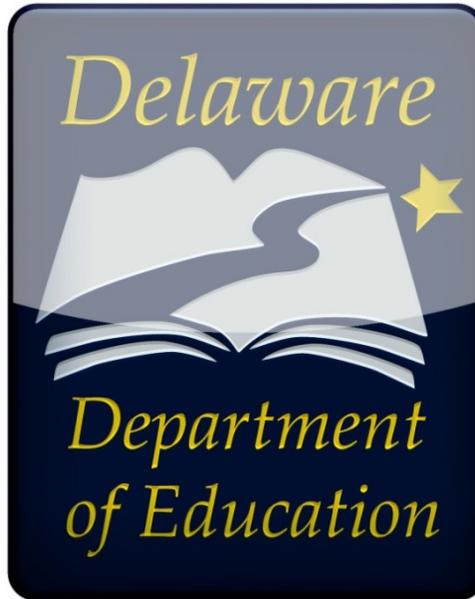


CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**ACADEMY OF DOVER CHARTER SCHOOL
INITIAL/PRELIMINARY REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN EXISTING CHARTER**

Opening Date: September 2003

Grades: K - 4

Location: Kent County

September 30, 2012 Unit Count: 282

Date of Report: 10 April 2013

Background

Name Academy of Dover Charter School

Current Enrollment 282

Projected Enrollment The modification request is to add a fifth grade, serving K-5 beginning in the 2013-14 school year, and maintain the school's authorized enrollment at 300. The proposed distribution of students per grade is:

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Kindergarten | 68 |
| Grade 1 | 66 |
| Grade 2 | 53 |
| Grade 3 | 53 |
| Grade 4 | 40 |
| Grade 5 | 20 |

Mission The mission of Academy of Dover Charter School is to open portals of opportunity for children and adults in the community through excellence in public education.

Vision The Academy of Dover Charter School will serve as a community pillar for life-long learning, pride, and self-actualization. Looking to the past to prepare students for the future, the Academy of Dover Charter School will combine the beneficial rigors of a classical education with the latest technology and the best teaching and learning practices worldwide. The Academy of Dover Charter School student will cultivate and promote multi-cultural and global awareness. Students will be prepared and encouraged to be entrepreneurs, well informed, and responsible world citizens with purpose, passion, and proficiency.

Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee (Committee) met with representatives of the Academy of Dover (AOD) on 11 March 2013 for the Initial/Preliminary Meeting.

Initial Meeting Discussion

The Committee reviewed six of the fourteen approval criteria but the Initial Meeting discussion focused on two criteria: Educational Program (6) and Economic Viability (8). The following is a summary of the discussion.

- **Educational Program.** The school's curriculum submission was incomplete and not sufficiently timely to allow a review by the Curriculum Work Group before the combined Initial and Preliminary Meetings.

***Response:** All curriculum has been submitted and reviewed by the Department of Education's Curriculum Office.*

- **Science Coalition Trainings.** The Committee wanted to know who is responsible for making certain that the teachers receive the training. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that the Curriculum Director is responsible.

- **Professional Development Plan.** The Committee wanted clarification about the professional development plan. Mr. Rodriguez indicated that there was a plan; however, its implementation depends upon available funding. Mathematics has been the primary focus during the past year.

Response: *Additional emphasis has been placed Special Needs Training to include autism, IDEA Law, and sign language. We have an increasing population of special needs students.*

- **Economic Viability.** The Committee expressed concern about student retention. Based on the modification application, the projected enrollment would decrease from 66 in first grade to 53 in both second and third grade. The projected enrollment for fourth grade would be 40 with a projection of 20 in the fifth grade. This does not indicate strong demand to support the addition of a fifth grade.

Response: *In an attempt to be Fiscally Responsible, we included the 5th grade with fidelity to the 300 chartered enrollment numbers we have. We are confident that the addition of the 5th grade will be well received, but prefer to be conservative until we have actual numbers. We will not turn any students, and are prepared to ask for a 15% enrollment waiver if necessary. Once the grade addition is well established, should our numbers reflect, we will request a charter modification addressing enrollment.*

The school noted that the elementary schools in the Capital School District, in which Academy of Dover is located, have an elementary configuration that ends with the fifth grade. Therefore, AOD students must leave at the end of fourth grade, currently the highest grade at the school and attend an elementary school for one year only, the fifth grade, before moving onto a middle school. The school argued that adding a fifth grade would eliminate the transition to an elementary school for fifth grade only. This is not accurate. All of the elementary schools in Capital School District (Booker T. Washington, East Dover, Fairview, Hartley, North Dover, South Dover, and Towne Point) have PreK-4 or K-4 grade configurations.

Response: *We draw students from several school districts to include Milford, Cesar Rodney, Lake Forest, and Smyrna who run middle schools that are configured 6-8. We have a responsibility to all our families, not only those from Capital School District. The families we have that reside in Capital School District have strong feelings regarding their students' enrollment in William Henry, which is the only 5-6 school in the district. Refer to section 2 for sample of parent letters.*

Currently, eighty-four percent (84%) of students enrolled at AOD reside in the Capital School District. Unless most of AOD's rising fifth grade students typically choice to Caesar Rodney School District it is not clear how students are uniquely impacted, as the school has indicated, since surrounding schools in Capital School District have the same grade configurations as AOD. Elementary schools in neighboring Caesar Rodney School District have K-5 grade configurations but only ten percent (10%) of AOD students reside in the Caesar Rodney School District.

Response: *We also have students from Milford, Cesar Rodney, Lake Forest, and Smyrna who run middle schools that are configured 6-8.*

Committee members asked why the school did not consider an increase to the school's authorized enrollment beyond 300 students. Mr. Rodriguez responded that two years ago, the school had requested a decrease to its currently approved enrollment of 300

students and that the school building can accommodate up to 350 students. He also indicated that this modification would help determine future expansion.

The Committee noted that the budget worksheets were not included in the modification application and that technical assistance would be available if needed.

Preliminary Meeting Discussion

With the nature of the modification request, the Committee determined that the following approval criteria listed in 14 Del. C. §512 apply to this application: Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives (3), Goals for Student Performance (4), Evaluating Student Performance (5), Educational Program (6), Students with Special Needs (7), and Economic Viability (8).

Criterion Three: Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives

The school's mission statement is well articulated, convincing, and coherent. In addition, the mission reflects a strong commitment to high expectations and clearly serves the students of the school in measurable ways. However, the modification application did not include clearly defined and measurable goals and objectives for grade five that align to the school's mission.

Mission, Goals, and Educational Objectives

- Describe the purpose, mission, goals, and core philosophy of the proposed school. Indicate how the mission, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the legislative intent of 14 Delaware Code, Section 501, and the restrictions on charter schools set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Purpose:

The purpose of the Academy of Dover Charter School identified in the original 2000 application was to provide parents with an additional school option for their children that would provide all students with a mastery of the essential skills needed for a quality education in the 21st century. While the purpose has remained consistent through the years, the path to achieving the school's purpose has taken some turns.

As identified in the Gap Analysis conducted in preparation for the current renewal application, members of the staff and board discovered there is work to be done around more fully articulating the purpose and mission of the school, and then fully integrating these elements into all aspects of the schools operation. The current vision and mission statements are as follows:

Vision:

The Academy of Dover Charter School will serve as a community pillar for life-long learning, pride, and self-actualization. Looking to the past to prepare students for the future, the Academy of Dover Charter School will combine the beneficial rigors of a classical education with the latest technology and the best teaching and learning practices worldwide. The Academy of Dover Charter School student will cultivate and promote multi-cultural and global awareness. Students will be prepared and encouraged to be entrepreneurs, well informed, and responsible world citizens with purpose, passion, and proficiency.

The Mission:

The mission of the Academy of Dover Charter School is to open portals of opportunity for

children and adults in the community through excellence in public education.

The Board, in collaboration with the school's staff, is working to adjust the mission statement to reflect the school's goals, philosophy and overall purpose. A focus will be placed on making necessary changes to the mission statement, as well as analyzing the current vision statement to align it to the new school mission.

As the school's mission, goals and educational objectives are re-tooled; they will continue to align with the legislative intent of the Charter School law with a focus on improved student learning, improved measures of school and student performance, and greater opportunities for public school choice in Delaware.

- **Describe methods of internal evaluation will be used by the board of directors to ensure that the school is meeting its stated educational mission and objectives? (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)**

There has been a great deal of transition and transformation with AOD's Board of Directors since its inception in 2000, and its renewal in 2007. As a result, there is urgency and commitment among the board members and school leadership to re-tool the school's educational mission and objectives and ensure all aspects of the school are aligned.

To that end, the board is committed to participating in Board training workshops available through Innovative Schools and through the DE Department of Education that will improve their capacity for governance and oversight, and will help them to more fully understand and embrace the financial, operational and accountability responsibilities they assume as board members.

The Board will meet in regularly scheduled open meetings and workshops to review and discuss reports on school operations, finances and academic performance. Through the Board Development Program, opportunities will be provided for both formal and informal review of these critical operations. The principal will be expected to report monthly on student performance in areas such as attendance, academic achievement, and family engagement. In addition, monthly financial reports will be presented to the Board. Board minutes of monthly meetings, along with those of workshop sessions, will be posted on the school's website and shared with staff and parents.

The Board will continue to oversee academic performance, school operations, fiscal viability and sustainability. In accordance with the Charter Performance Agreement, academic and other performance benchmarks will be monitored and reviewed quarterly and financial reports reviewed monthly. The Board will develop annual plans and goals relative to academic performance, school operations, and finances; or, more often, as needed.

Annually, the Board will conduct a formal review of goals for student performance, inclusive of all data relative to the goals and achievement targets. In accordance with the Charter Performance Agreement, an Annual Report shall be provided to the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) in accordance with required procedures and timeframes.

As an additional component, through participation in the Board Development Program, the board will evaluate their own internal operations in terms of their governance and oversight effectiveness and practices through an annual gap analysis.

- **Describe the procedures the school will use to ensure compliance with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Section 506, related to enrollment. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)**

The Academy of Dover Charter School will clearly communicate information about the application process, the selection and preference criteria, and the registration and admissions procedures.

In accordance with the requirements of 14 Del. C., §506, Academy of Dover Charter School will ensure that it has enrolled at least 80% of its authorized enrollment by April 1 of each year by conducting an application process within the timeframes, as established in **Section 9: Administrative and Financial Operations** of this charter application. The following activities will be conducted:

- November and December will be the open application period for enrollment each year. The school will advertise and publicly identify the application period, accept applications, and define the admissions requirements and criteria.
- As a requirement for new students to be eligible for the lottery, parents must sign a Letter of Intent with the school stating their intention to accept the enrollment invitation. The letter will also stipulate the requirements for continuing enrollment at the school, as if necessary, a lottery will be held in January, following the application deadline. An objective community member having no ties to AOD Charter School or a representative from DDOE, along with attending members of the school's Board shall conduct a public lottery drawing.
- Parents of all applicants will be sent letters of acceptance or non-acceptance following the date of the lottery. Guidelines for registration and enrollment will be included with the acceptance letter.
- On or before April 1, in accordance with 14 Del. C., §506(c), a roster of those students enrolled at AOD, including each student's home address and district of residence, will be sent to DDOE, and to the superintendents of the districts in which AOD students reside. A letter signed by AOD's principal, along with the student roster, shall serve as the written certification required by this section.
- On or before May 1, AOD will verify data from the April 1 report, make corrections as necessary, and will follow with a second notification to the school district superintendents.

The modification application also addresses the issue of exiting fourth grade students having to attend grade five at another school that would have a different curriculum and instructional practices. Also, the school cited parent requests to add a fifth grade.

Response: *Feedback from parents over the last five years has been one of frustration. One of the issues that continuously arises is that their students are receiving instruction in their new school(s) that was already covered at the Academy of Dover. The parents request for 5th grade is reflected in letters submitted by current 4th grade student's parents. Refer to section 2*

Criterion Four: Goals for Student Performance

The Committee noted that the Applicant did not include student performance goals. The school indicated that as a charter school, the goals for student performance are dictated and that the charter was recently renewed; thus, there was no need to include the goals that were in the charter renewal application submitted last year. However, the approved charter renewal did not include fifth grade.

The Committee stated that fifth grade target goals for the school's unique student population would have been very helpful and that having these goals would allow the school to identify growth in student performance between the fourth and the fifth grades.

- **List the specific student performance goals in math and reading by grade for students disaggregated by grade and ethnicity for the initial four years of operation and describe the assessment instruments that will be used to measure whether students meet or exceed those goals. (Renewals/Modifications – show and discuss the results during the current period as necessary)**

Response:

During the term of the most recent charter agreement (2008-2011), AOD committed to demonstrate that its students would increase in academic achievement as measured by the state assessment (DCAS) and other standardized assessments as designated by school; students would exhibit positive behaviors as members of the AOD community; and the school would maintain strong market accountability as articulated in the achievement targets listed in their 2008 performance agreement. The performance goals listed below outline in detail the progress towards these goals during the charter period.

Performance Goal

During the term of this agreement, the school will demonstrate that its students are increasing in academic achievement as measured by the state assessment (DCAS), Moby Math, DIBELS and other standardized assessments through the achievement targets listed below.

The school will participate in the state assessment (DCAS) in each subject area at each grade required by the Department of Education. In addition, the school will administer, to all grades, a standardized assessment, Moby Math placement test, and DIBELS to measure achievement and tailor interventions for those students not performing to grade level.

Achievement Target

On the DCAS the percentage of students meeting, exceeding the standard or showing significant growth will increase to meet State requirements. If a student is performing below the standard the school will follow all Delaware required policies in addition to providing AOD interventions to maximize student potential. For those students that do not fall under Delaware Code, an Individual Learning Plan will be established.

Result

Under new leadership, appointed during the 2008 school year, Academy of Dover focused intently on increasing their reading and math scores specifically on the DCAS. With a renewed focus on student achievement, Academy of Dover has made significant increases on the DCAS over the course of the charter period and on the DCAS during current charter period.

As demonstrated by the data below, Academy of Dover students have shown significant growth from 2008-2011 in third and fourth grades in both reading and math. On average, proficiency has increased more than 20 percentage points during this time period in these grades. This increase in proficiency is expected through 5th grade.

Additionally, proficiency in second grade reading increased during the 2008-09 to 2009-10 by 44 percentage points. Furthermore, in 2009-2010, Academy of Dover made AYP for the first time and was among only 22 schools who reached this goal. Therefore, this target has been

met.

| <i>Grade</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>READING</i> | | <i>MATH</i> | | <i>WRITING</i> | | <i>SCIENCE</i> | | <i>SOCIAL STUDIES</i> | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> |
| <i>2</i> | <i>2007-08</i> | <i>72.22</i> | <i>84.33</i> | <i>31.95</i> | <i>86.54</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>2</i> | <i>2008-09</i> | <i>55.56</i> | <i>84.86</i> | <i>53.33</i> | <i>87.50</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>2</i> | <i>2009-10</i> | <i>79.25</i> | <i>82.30</i> | <i>33.58</i> | <i>87.74</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>3</i> | <i>2007-08</i> | <i>36.86</i> | <i>81.69</i> | <i>31.95</i> | <i>77.42</i> | <i>33.33</i> | <i>67.03</i> | | | | |
| <i>3</i> | <i>2008-09</i> | <i>66.67</i> | <i>81.42</i> | <i>58.82</i> | <i>78.48</i> | <i>40.63</i> | <i>45.21</i> | | | | |
| <i>3</i> | <i>2009-10</i> | <i>74.51</i> | <i>76.99</i> | <i>56.86</i> | <i>77.94</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>4</i> | <i>2007-08</i> | <i>28.57</i> | <i>81.42</i> | <i>28.83</i> | <i>77.15</i> | <i>58.33</i> | <i>52.11</i> | <i>73.68</i> | <i>92.91</i> | <i>15.79</i> | <i>68.45</i> |
| <i>4</i> | <i>2008-09</i> | <i>42.42</i> | <i>81.70</i> | <i>37.14</i> | <i>76.93</i> | <i>70.59</i> | <i>66.20</i> | <i>78.38</i> | <i>91.69</i> | <i>32.43</i> | <i>69.73</i> |
| <i>4</i> | <i>2009-10</i> | <i>73.91</i> | <i>76.20</i> | <i>65.22</i> | <i>78.02</i> | -- | -- | <i>83.33</i> | <i>92.66</i> | <i>45.83</i> | <i>65.50</i> |

With the transition to a new state testing system (DCAS) in 2010, Academy of Dover demonstrated strong baseline scores that have denoted them as a superior rated school. This performance demonstrates a continued focus on student achievement across grade levels and content areas.

| <i>Grade</i> | <i>READING</i> | | <i>MATH</i> | | <i>SS</i> | |
|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> | <i>AOD</i> | <i>State</i> |
| <i>2</i> | <i>57.5</i> | <i>65.5</i> | <i>76.2</i> | <i>79.2</i> | | |
| <i>3</i> | <i>51.5</i> | <i>62.8</i> | <i>37.8</i> | <i>67.1</i> | | |
| <i>4</i> | <i>53.8</i> | <i>60.5</i> | <i>52.5</i> | <i>65.2</i> | <i>50.0</i> | <i>64.4</i> |

Achievement Target

Each year, average performance on Moby Math and DIBELS assessments taken at the end of the year will increase by at least 5% in Reading, Language Arts and Mathematics over the average performance of students in the same grades at the beginning of the school year.

Result

Academy of Dover has consistently shown at least a 5% increase on its assessment for each child; therefore, this target has been met.

Performance Goal

During the term of this agreement, the school will demonstrate that its student's exhibit Positive behavior related to academic success through the following:

Achievement Target

Each year average daily attendance will be at least 93% of the average daily enrollment.

Result

During the previous charter period, AOD's target was set at 90% of the daily average attendance. In their most current performance agreement (2007-2010) they increased this target to 93% of the average daily enrollment. This target was met. Average daily attendance during the entirety of the charter period was 93.17% of the average daily enrollment as reported in the Delaware School Profiles. Below you will also see the average daily attendance by year. In both the 2007-08 and the 2010-11 school year, Academy of Dover met the target of 93%. This target was marginally missed during the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school years. During the 2011-2012 school year the school exceeded the target with 94%.

| | <i>2007-08</i> | <i>2008-09</i> | <i>2009-10</i> | <i>2010-11</i> | <i>2011-2012</i> |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| <i>Average Daily Attendance by Year</i> | <i>93.79%</i> | <i>92.82%</i> | <i>92.26%</i> | <i>93.81%</i> | <i>94%</i> |

Achievement Target

Each year of school operation, the school will have fewer reportable incidents than the average for all schools with similar grade configuration throughout the state.

Result:

As reported in the Delaware School Profiles, the Academy of Dover had 62 of its students suspended for reportable incidents during the 2010-11 school year or 15% of its students. This was below the state average by 1%, therefore this target was met. With the ongoing implementation of Positive Behavior Support, the Academy of Dover continues to reduce its suspensions for reportable incidents each year.

| | <i>2007-08</i> | <i>2008-09</i> | <i>2009-10</i> | <i>2010-11</i> |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Average Referrals by Year in Comparison to State Averages</i> | <i>.63%</i> | <i>.93%</i> | <i>.42%</i> | <i>.68%</i> |

Achievement Target

Each year, except for students presented with extenuating circumstances (i.e. moving out of Kent County or becoming homeless) at least 80% of the students on September 30 enrollment roster will complete the school year at the school.

Result:

This target was met. On average, each of the years of the charter agreement, 85% of students who are on the September 30th enrollment roster complete the school year at Academy of Dover. Prior to the change in leadership approximately 75% of students were lost in kindergarten and first grade each year.

Achievement Target

100% of students will receive and participate in Bullying prevention, good citizen lessons and 100% of 4th grade students will participate in Pre-DARE Program. 70% of students end of year behavior records will be reviewed and compared to previous year. For Kindergarten students where no previous record exists, teacher interviews will be conducted comparing students behaviors.

Result:

This target has been met. 100% of students have received and continue to participate in Bullying prevention and good citizen lessons at Academy of Dover. Additionally, 100% of 4th grade students participated in the Pre-DARE Program during the charter period.

Due to the small size of the school, Academy of Dover teachers and administration review 100% of students' end of year behavior records and compare them to the previous year, as well as implementing teacher interviews for Kindergarten students who were not present the previous year.

Performance

Goal

During the term of this agreement, the school will demonstrate that it has strong market accountability through the following:

Achievement Target

Each year, the school will have at least enough students seek admission to the school to increase enrollment by at least 10% from the previous year.

Result:

Under the school's current leadership, enrollment has increased each year since 2008 by 10% or more, therefore this target has been met.

Achievement Target

Each year at least 80% of the non-graduating student body will return to the school the following September.

Result:

This target was met. Each year during the charter period, an average of 85% of the non-graduating student body has returned to the school the following September.

Achievement Target

Of all students entering the school at any grade 50% will continue at the school through the end of the educational program and graduate.

Result:

Under the current leadership, more than 50% of all students entering the school at any grade continue through the end of the educational program and graduate, therefore this target was met during the charter period.

- **List the specific measurable performance targets on each student performance goal for each year of the Delaware Performance Testing Program (DCAS) for the initial four years of the charter on the Delaware Student Testing Program. (Renewals/Modifications – Update this section to make it current)**

Response:

With AOD's focus on academic excellence and the ongoing growth and development of its students it continues to set high standards for student achievement. Utilizing baseline data from the first year of Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) Academy of

Dover will seek to meet the standards set forth by the Department of Education in the growth model currently being used.

- **List the assessment tools that will be used including the DCAS, standardized, formative, benchmarks, or performance assessments. Describe why these particular assessment instruments have been selected and provide the timetable indicating when those instruments will be used. (Renewals/Modifications – Provide original documentation, the results of these assessment tools and discuss the results)**

Response:

The Academy of Dover will continue to use three core assessment tools: the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), Moby Math and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). These assessment instruments will continue to be used because they provide the data both the school leader and teachers will need to determine if students are meeting or exceeding state's content standards and, most importantly, because they provide data that can be used to inform where students need additional instruction in order to achieve proficiency. Each of these assessments has been aligned to the common core standards. The DCAS will be administered as directed by the state Department of Education. Moby Math will be administered in grades K-5.

DIBELS will continue to be used as a tool to place students along the RTI continuum. This assessment data utilizes both a beginning of year and end of year assessment to compare student growth and integrate areas of student need into each child's individualized learning plan. Therefore, the success of each student is dependent upon their baseline score and the goals outlined in their individual plan. This has proven to be a critical tool in supporting and placing students along the continuum.

- **Renewals/Modifications Only - Include a copy of the current signed Performance Agreement between the school and the Secretary of Education. Describe in detail the performance of the school on each of the objectives in the Performance Agreement. Place particular focus on the school's academic performance, including evaluation results from the DCAS and other measures. Discuss highlights and concerns.**

Response:

Refer to section 3.

- **Renewals/Modifications Only - Provide the charter Performance Agreement for the renewal period. Include a list of proposed measurable performance objectives with specific measurable targets for each year of the charter renewal period.**

Response:

The Academy of Dover believes that the social and academic needs of a child are interlinked. Therefore, the school's goals set forth in the performance agreement not only focus on academic performance, but include social development goals as well. These goals are designed to ensure that all students are able to meet or exceed the State's baseline standards of achievement, while also serving as a guide for teachers in supporting the growth and development of their students. Emphasis is placed on independent thinking, while also strengthening student knowledge and understanding of mathematics and literacy.

With the transition to the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), The Academy of Dover understands that the school will need to base their performance targets on this assessment system, therefore the following set of performance targets are based on the growth model set by the Department of Education and Academy of Dover's first year's DCAS scores.

Proposed Performance Agreement

Performance Goal

The Academy of Dover Charter School will demonstrate that its students are increasing in academic achievement, as measured by the state assessment (Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System-DCAS) and other assessment tools as follows:

Achievement Target

Students assessed at each grade level on the DCAS will attain an average performance that meets or exceeds state standards for that respective grade and/or demonstrates growth as determined by the Department of Education's use of a growth model. If this model changes, Academy of Dover will continue to meet or exceed the standards set by the Department of Education.

Achievement Target

Students administered the DIBELS literacy assessments at the end of the year will demonstrate academic growth (based on their individual learning plans and baseline scores) when compared to the beginning of the year assessment.

Achievement Target

Each year, average performance on the Moby Math assessments taken at the end of the year will increase by at least 5% over the average performance of students in the same grades at the beginning of the school year.

Performance Goal

The Academy of Dover Charter School students will exhibit positive behaviors related to academic success through:

Achievement Target

Each year average daily attendance will meet or exceed the State average.

Achievement Target

Each year the school will have fewer reportable incidents pursuant to Delaware Code, Title 14, Section 4112, than the average for public schools in Kent County with a similar grade configuration.

Performance Goal

The Academy of Dover Charter School will demonstrate that it has strong market accountability by:

Achievement Target

Enroll the projected number of students allowed by the charter no later than September 30th.

Achievement Target

Re-enroll each consecutive year at least 80% of the non-graduating student body from the previous year who have not moved out of the Kent County area.

Criterion Five: Evaluating Student Performance

The Committee noted that no information was presented in the modification application relative to this criterion.

The Committee also stated that the new Charter School Performance Framework would be an important component in reviewing the school's academic performance relative to State benchmarks as well as identifying steps to assure student attainment of the benchmarks. The school's academic performance is clearly important to the Board.

Response:

The following are the results of the performance Frameworks for the 2011-2012 School Years. The Academy of Dover continues to progress and increase in scores. The school will strive to continue its trajectory of increased student performance for its students K-5.

1. STUDENT PROGRESS OVER TIME (GROWTH)

Measure 1a. Are students meeting their fall to spring instructional scale score growth targets?

Percentage of Students Meeting Growth Targets.

| Subject | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| Math | 26.7% | 57.1% |
| ELA | 34.3% | 63.9% |

Measure 1b. Are lowest-performing students in the school meeting their fall to spring instructional scale score growth targets?

Percentage of Students in the Lowest Quartile Meeting Growth Targets.

| Subject | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| Math | 45.0% | 58.8% |
| ELA | 36.8% | 62.5% |

Measure 1c. Are students making enough annual growth to maintain or achieve proficiency status within 3 years or by 10th grade?

Percentage of Students Making Sufficient Growth.

| Subject | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------|---------|---------|
| Math | 68.0% | 74.6% |
| ELA | 60.0% | 85.2% |

2. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (STATUS)

Measure 2a. Are students achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?

School Proficiency Scores, State Averages and Percentiles

| Subject and Year | School Prof % | State Average | State 90th Percentile | State 20th Percentile |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Math, 2010-11 | 45.5% | 66.1% | 86.3% | 47.8% |
| Math, 2011-12 | 66.7% | 77.2% | 94.1% | 61.8% |
| ELA, 2010-11 | 52.8% | 61.6% | 82.7% | 45.6% |
| ELA, 2011-12 | 68.9% | 75.4% | 92.9% | 58.5% |

Measure 2b. Are students in demographic subgroups achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?

NOTE: If a total subgroup population at a school was below 30, results are not reported and are presented as a ***.

Low Socio-Economic Status

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | 47.6% | 55.8% | 79.7% | 39.8% |
| Math, 2011-12 | 67.2% | 69.7% | 90.9% | 53.4% |
| ELA, 2010-11 | 52.5% | 50.3% | 74.2% | 35.9% |
| ELA, 2011-12 | 67.9% | 67.0% | 89.8% | 51.3% |

Students with Disabilities

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

English Language Learners

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

African-American

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | 45.3% | 48.5% | 74.5% | 32.8% |
| Math, 2011-12 | 66.0% | 64.6% | 94.1% | 49.1% |
| ELA, 2010-11 | 50.8% | 46.5% | 75.7% | 33.1% |
| ELA, 2011-12 | 65.3% | 63.8% | 92.0% | 45.1% |

Asian-American

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

Hispanic

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

Multiracial

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

Other Minorities

| Subject and Year* | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

*Other Minorities was first reported in 2011-12.

White

| Subject and Year | School Proficiency Rate | State Average Proficiency Rate | State Proficiency Rate at 90th Percentile | State Proficiency Rate at 20th Percentile |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Math, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| Math, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2010-11 | *** | NA | NA | NA |
| ELA, 2011-12 | *** | NA | NA | NA |

Criterion Six: Educational Program

The Committee noted the following for the Scope and Sequence, curriculum basis, and memoranda of understanding relative to Criterion Six (sub-criteria a, b, c).

Mathematics

- The school has prioritized the amount of time spent on certain domains, clusters, and standards as set forth in the CCSS (Common Core State Standards). The majority of the instructional time is spent on number and fraction concepts.
- Essential questions are included and are appropriate for the content being taught.
- Formative assessments are included that should be able to gauge student learning.
- The school intends to utilize Go Math as an instructional resource.

English Language Arts

- Scope and sequence documents were submitted that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

Science

- The school is a Science Coalition member. The reviewer requested the name and contact information for the staff member who will coordinate professional development and training for school personnel. See Section 5.

Social Studies

- The school is a Social Studies Coalition member. The reviewer requested a written assurance that the school intends to use the Delaware Recommended Curriculum. See Section 5.

Health

- The application did not contain a submission for this section.

Physical Education

- The application did not contain a submission for this section.

World Languages

- The application did not contain a submission for this section.

Visual and Performing Arts

- The application did not contain a submission for this section.

Technology

- For over a year, the Academy of Dover has been non-compliant with Federal eRATE requirements, Internet Safety Policy, and Internet Safety Curriculum.

For the following applicable sub-criteria in the Educational Plan, no responses were submitted in the modification application request.

- Plans for at-risk students (d)
- Student-teacher ratio (f)
- Unique features of the school (g)
- High quality professional development (h)
- Three units of instruction (i)
- Curricular resource adoptions (j)
- Alignment of curriculum to instruction (k)
- School calendar, master instructional schedule (n).

Response: Criterion Six: Educational Program

All curriculums have been turned in and approved by the Department of Education's Curriculum Department.

Technology:

The internet safety curriculum (i-safe) will be implemented in grades K-5.

Plans for at-risk students

Process for Data Collection

Teachers refer students to the Special Education Coordinator or parents may request testing for their child. Parents sign off on agreement for their child to be tested. Once referred, the WRAT

testing will be completed. This determines where the student is academically. Other tests that may be included in testing are psychological evaluation, behavior evaluation, and speech evaluation. The teacher and paraprofessional will complete observation forms based on the behavior and academics. The special education coordinator will also complete observations in the classroom. The parent(s) will then be contacted as to whether their child will require services. If the parent agrees they will sign an initial placement consent. The IEP will then be created with any parent or teacher input, and an IEP meeting will take place.

Early intervention documentation for students who may need an evaluation for Special Education

DIBELS assessment, DCAS, and curriculum assessments are used to determine if intervention is needed. Extra support is provided by the Reading Specialist, Special Education teacher, and the classroom teacher. If additional interventions are not working to excel students, a consent to evaluate students for special education services is sent home.

Positive Behavior Support Planning

The IEP team comes together to discuss a child's behavior and an action plan. Any teacher that regularly sees students, parent(s), and the behavior interventionist all meet to discuss plans. A functional behavior assessment is completed. The team then creates attainable goals and objectives that are needed for the child that will have an impact on the child's ability to participate in the community and school activities.

Student-teacher ratio

Response: The fifth grade ratio will be 25:1

Unique features of the school

The Academy of Dover features several unique programs that promote academic achievement and cultural awareness. During the course of the school year at risk students participate in a, "DCAS Boot camp, "which focuses on academic skills necessary to be successful on the DCAS. The Academy of Dover has the only Elementary Marching Band, a consistent foreign language program in which all student study Spanish. The Academy of Dover offers violin, piano and guitar lessons to interested students. The Academy of Dover's comprehensive Art Program exposes students to Art History, and many of the traditional mediums of art to include pottery.

High quality professional development

Response: At the Academy of Dover, Lead Teachers and Specialist meet quarterly to discuss professional development needs for the school. Once identified, the administration seeks out quality professional development for its staff to meet the needs identified during the course of the year.

As part of this process, 65% of the teaching staff have become dual certified in Regular and Special Needs Education.

Three units of instruction

Response: *These units were included in the curriculum submittal.*

Curricular resource adoptions

Response: *The Academy of Dover is using the following curriculum for grades K-4 and will be used for the proposed 5th grade*

English/Language Arts: Harcourt Storytown

Math: Go Math, supplemental material from Singapore and Real Math

Science: Delaware Science Coalition (FOSS, EIE, and STC kits)

Social Studies: Social Studies Coalition

Technology: Internet Safety (i-safe) curriculum

Alignment of curriculum to instruction

Response: *AOD's curriculum has been aligned to the Common Core State Standards for ELA and Math in grades K-5.*

School calendar, master instructional schedule

Response: *Refer to section 4 for 2013-2014 school calendar.*

Note: The Academy of Dover has a 200 academic day school year.

Criterion Seven: Students with Special Needs

The Academy of Dover's approved renewal application included plans for serving students with special needs in grades K-4. However, the school's modification application does not describe how the school will be in full compliance with current Federal and State statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities, including the employment of certified special education teachers to teach fifth grade students with disabilities, or how the school will provide for a continuum of educational placements for students with disabilities.

Criterion Seven was not met. (Please note that the Committee incorrectly concluded that this criterion was met at the Initial/Preliminary meeting.)

- **Describe how the school will be in full compliance with current federal and state statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities, including but not limited to: evaluation, re-evaluation, accommodations, and employment of certified special education teachers prior to the admission of students with disabilities and include a continuum of educational placements for students with disabilities.**

Response:

The Academy of Dover Charter School will be in full compliance with current Federal and State statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities and special needs in grades K – 5. Students with disabilities will have their Individual Education and/ or 504 Plan, developed in

compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which will identify annual goals, specifically – designed instruction, and accommodations or modifications to be provided. The Academy of Dover will continuously reach out to the Delaware Department of Education as a resource in these areas.

The school's plan for modification to fifth grade will include, but is not limited to; parent, teacher, and administrator involvement, evaluation, re-evaluation, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan development, accommodations, positive behavior planning, transition services to sixth grade feeder or charter schools, procedural safeguards, and certified special education teacher involvement in serving students with disabilities. The plan will also provide for Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to students with disabilities in grades K – 5.

With the addition of fifth grade, the Response to Intervention (RTI) Team will continue to review and assess concerns teachers and/ or parents may have when students are having difficulty with academic achievement. This team reviews data collected by the student's teacher(s), observe the student in their learning environment, and may implement a series of interventions to be carried out by the classroom teacher, Reading Specialist, and Special Needs Manager. Following documented interventions, the RTI Team may recommend a Special Education Evaluation.

More than half of the teachers (65%), at the Academy of Dover are dully certified in special education, including, 11% who are also Autism certified; expanding the schools capacity to provide appropriate services to students with a range of disabilities. The remaining 35% of teachers not special education certified work closely with the Special Needs Manager to best accommodate special needs students. Students with disabilities will receive services directly from the Special Needs Manager if a teacher is not certified in special education for all grades K – 5. The Academy of Dover will continue to employ highly qualified teachers and encourage dual certification.

A continuum of education placements and services will be provided for every identified student at the Academy of Dover Charter School in accordance with current Federal and State laws in grades K - 5. Students with disabilities will be included and educated with their non-disabled peers. Services provided outside the general education environment would occur based on the severity of the child's disability resulting in services and accommodations not meeting compliance. Based on a student's degree of disability, requirement of accommodation or adaptation academically, behaviorally or medically, the Academy of Dover has the ability to create a change in placement to best serve and meet these student's needs.

Students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment and in a manner which fully complies with their IEP/ 504, promotes inclusion and engagement in school activities, and fosters involvement with the entire school community. Parents of students with disabilities will be provided with current procedural guidelines and safeguards along with all copies of all IEP/ 504 documents and evaluation results.

The principal of the school will maintain responsibility for assuring compliance with this section.

- **Renewals and Modifications Only – Discuss how the school has resolved any administrative complaints.**

Response:

There have been no documented administrative complaints relative to serving students with disabilities.

- **Complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.**

Response:

As a result of evaluations complete as part of either the pre – referral process and/or IEP process, students with a defined disability will have, as appropriate, either a 504 Plan or an IEP written and monitored in accordance with State and Federal guidelines.

The principal of the school will maintain responsibility for assuring compliance with this section.

- Complying with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Academy of Dover Charter School has a non-discrimination policy that no person shall be subjected to discrimination in the educational programs, services or activities based on race, national origin, gender, age, or disability in accordance with State and Federal laws.

The principal of the school will maintain responsibility for assuring compliance with this section.

- Complying with Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972.
See item C above.
- Having certified special education teacher(s) prior providing services for students with disabilities.

The Academy of Dover Charter School will continue to employ teachers certified in providing services for students with disabilities in grades K – 5.

Criterion Eight: Economic Viability

Revenue and expenditure worksheets were not included with the school's modification application. The application does reference that the expansion to fifth grade at the Academy of Dover would “offer financial stability to the school,” but provides no additional details.

Without any additional information, it is impossible to determine if the Academy of Dover has a reasonable plan for how to ensure financial viability based on the proposed modification application.

Response:

Refer to financials in section 7

Summary and Recommendations

| Criterion | Charter School Accountability Committee' s Recommendations |
|--|---|
| (3) Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives | Not Met |
| (4) Goals for Student Performance | Not Met |
| (5) Evaluating Student Performance | Not Met |
| (6) Educational Program | Not Met |
| (7) Students with Special Needs | Not Met |
| (8) Economic Viability | Not Met |

The Charter School Accountability Committee recommended that the modification application from the Academy of Dover Charter School **not** be approved.

Appendix A

List of Attendees

Initial/Preliminary Meeting of the Charter School Accountability Committee

11 March 2013

Modification Application from the Academy of Dover Charter School

Members of the Committee

- Mary Kate McLaughlin, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Chief of Staff, Delaware Department of Education
- Debora Hansen, Education Associate, Visual and Performing Arts, Charter Curriculum Review
- Paul Harrell, Director of Public and Private Partnerships
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM
- Karen Field Rogers, Manager, Financial Reform & Resource Management
- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter Schools Network (Non-voting)
- Donna R. Johnson, Executive Director, State Board of Education (Non-voting)

Staff to the Committee

- Catherine T. Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- John Carwell, Director, Charter School Office
- Patricia Bigelow, Education Associate, Charter School Office
- Chantel Janiszewski, Education Associate, Charter School Office

Representatives from the Academy of Dover Charter School

- Kimeu W. Boynton, Board President
- Noël Rodriguez, Principal
- Cheri Marshall, Curriculum Director