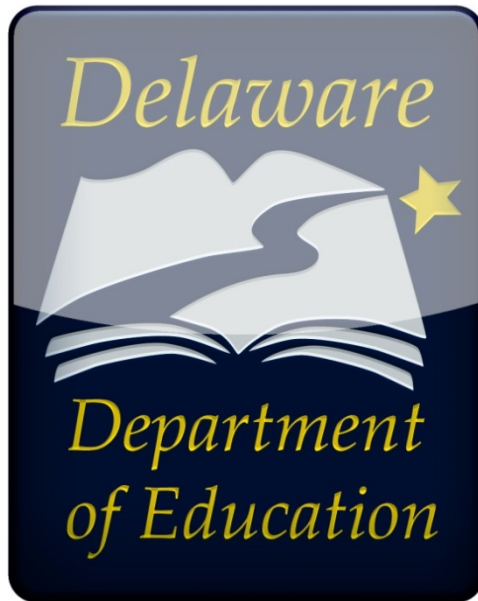


CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Gateway Lab School

MAJOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION

FINAL REPORT

CSAC Meeting: May 27, 2014
Final Report Published: June 4, 2014

CSAC RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

In July 2013, Governor Jack Markell signed House Bill 165 into law, which brought sweeping changes to Delaware's existing charter school laws. This legislation included a number of provisions to strengthen the application process for charter school modifications.

Per 14 Del. C. §511(e), the first Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) meeting provides the applicant an opportunity for an interview in support of the application, and provides the members of the CSAC and the Delaware Department of Education an opportunity to assess applicant capacity, allow the applicant to clarify information provided in the application, and gather additional information. The applicant was provided the Initial Report on May 7, 2014 which detailed areas of follow-up and/or concerns identified by members of the CSAC during the Initial Meeting. The applicant then submitted a response to the Initial Report on May 22, 2014, which is considered part of the application.

After reviewing the response to the Initial Report, CSAC holds a Final Meeting to issue a recommendation on whether the application should be approved. This Final Report details CSAC's recommendation and outstanding concerns about the application.

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on May 27, 2014:

Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee

- David Blowman, Deputy Secretary, DDOE (Chair to the Committee)
- Karen Field Rogers, Associate Secretary, Financial Reform Resources, DDOE
- Tasha Cannon, Deputy Officer Talent Recruitment, Selection and Strategy, Teacher & Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU), DDOE
- Rich Heffron, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM, DDOE
- Michelle Whalen, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources Workgroup, DDOE

Ex-officio Members (Non-voting)

- Donna Johnson, Executive Director, Delaware State Board of Education
- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter Schools Network

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- Jennifer Carlson, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Financial Reform Resources, DDOE
- Chantel Janiszewski, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Jennifer Nagourney, Executive Director, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE

Representatives of the Charter School

- Catherine Dolan, Head of School

Section A: Core Questions

At the Initial Meeting, CSAC determined that there were no questions or concerns about Section A of the application that would prevent the school from meeting the approval criteria. The school did not submit a Response to the CSAC Initial Report.

At the Final Meeting, the chair asked the CSAC members if they had any additional concerns and questions that would prevent the school from meeting the approval criteria. No CSAC member spoke to offer one.

Section D: Mission (At-Risk Designation) Questions

At the Final Meeting, Mr. Blowman stated that the following concerns were noted at the Initial Meeting.

- The applicant is requested to provide a copy of the Board-approved proposed Performance Agreement reflecting all of the proposed modifications. The date the Agreement is entered into should be changed from October 14, 2013, as it was written on the version that was originally submitted, to the May date of the Board of Directors meeting when the Performance Agreement is approved.
- The applicant is requested to provide either: an assurance that the Performance Agreement was presented and voted upon at a public board meeting with the date of that meeting, or a copy of the minutes from the board meeting where the Performance Agreement was voted upon.

In response to the Initial Report, Gateway submitted the requested Performance Agreement and Board minutes. The chair asked the CSAC members if they had any additional concerns and questions that would prevent the school from meeting the approval criteria. The CSAC determined that there were no questions or concerns about Section D of the application that would prevent the school from meeting the approval criteria.

Conclusion:

Mr. Blowman gave the reviewers the opportunity to state any concerns or questions about the application. Ms. Johnson requested that the Alternative Performance Framework be included as part of the record.

A motion was made and seconded that the application be recommended for approval. The motion was unanimously carried.

Mr. Blowman articulated the next steps in the modification application process as follows:

- The CSAC Final Report will be issued to the applicants no later than June 4, 2014.
- The applicant's final public hearing will be held on June 10, 2014, at 5:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Cabinet Room in the Townsend Building in Dover.
- The process will conclude with the State Board of Education meeting on Thursday, June 19, 2014, when Secretary of Education will present his decision.