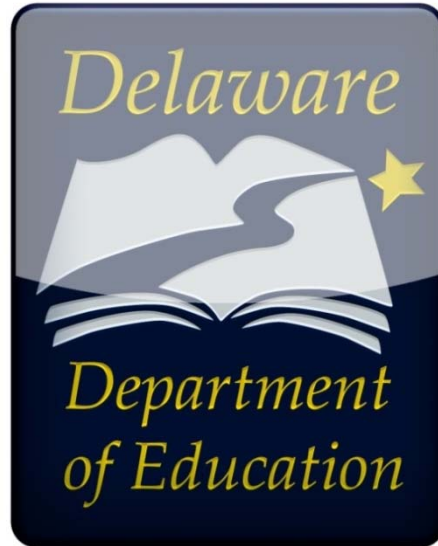


# CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## **Early College High School at Delaware State University**

### **MAJOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION INITIAL REPORT**

CSAC Initial Meeting: January 28, 2015  
CSAC Initial Report Published: February 2, 2015

The following were in attendance at the Initial Meeting of the CSAC on January 28, 2015:

**Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee**

- David Blowman, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Deputy Secretary of Education, DDOE
- Karen Field Rogers, Associate Secretary, Financial Reform and Resource Management, DDOE
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM, DDOE
- Barbara Mazza, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources, DDOE
- Tasha Cannon, Deputy Officer Talent Recruitment, Selection and Strategy, Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU), DDOE
- Charles Taylor, Community Member and Former Charter School Leader

**Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)**

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

**Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)**

- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- Jennifer Nagourney, Executive Director, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Michelle Whalen, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Financial Reform and Resource Management

**Representatives of Early College High School at DSU**

- Judi Coffield, Director
- Teresa Gerchman, Chief Schools Officer, Innovative Schools

**Additional Attendees Noted**

- Kathleen Geiszler, Deputy Attorney General

## Discussion

The following issues were discussed:

- A summary of the requests – The school explained that the request is to remove two enrollment preferences for admission outlined on page 81 of the original charter application: a preference for students with a specific interest in the school’s educational philosophy and focus, and a preference for children of the school’s founders.
- The requested effective date for the modification request – The school explained that its intent is for the proposed changes to apply to the incoming cohort of applicants. It was clarified that the request, if approved, would become effective as of the approval date.
- The reason for the requests – The school explained that there is no need to provide a preference to children of the school’s founders, as there are none of that age. The school Board also does not want to limit, in any way, the opportunity for as many students to attend the school as possible. Additionally, the Board wants to eliminate any perception that the school is selective in its enrollment policies. The Board believes that by applying to the school, families show an interest in the school’s model and philosophy.
- Other enrollment preference(s) – The school noted that it also has a sibling preference.
- The federal guidance for the non-SEA Charter School Program (CSP) grant referenced in the application – The school replied that the federal guidelines refer to the U.S. Department of Education’s (USDOE) guidelines for acceptable enrollment preferences for charter schools. Under those guidelines, a preference for students who have a specific interest in the school is not an acceptable enrollment preference. The school’s contact at USDOE was Brian Hunt. The motivation for the charter modification request was to align the school’s enrollment preferences with the federal guidelines. The school noted that it is not currently using the interest preference as part of its admissions process. The CSAC requested a copy of the federal guidance.
- The anticipated amount of the USDOE grant – The school stated that it would be between \$550,000 and \$600,000 over three years.

## Conclusion

Mr. Blowman asked voting members of CSAC whether there was any additional information that it required to inform its decision-making.

The following information was requested:

- A copy of federal guidance relative to enrollment preferences.

## Next Steps:

- The CSAC will provide the school with an Initial Report no later than February 2, 2015.

- An initial public hearing will be held on February 3, 2015, in the 2nd floor Cabinet Room of the Townsend Building in Dover, DE.
- The applicant's written response to the CSAC Initial Report is due on or before February 18, 2015.
- The final meeting of the CSAC will be held on February 24, 2015, in the 2nd floor Cabinet Room of the Townsend Building in Dover, DE.
- CSAC's Final Report will be issued no later than February 27, 2015.
- A second and final public hearing will be held on March 9, 2015, in the 2nd floor Auditorium of the Carvel State Office Building in Wilmington, DE.
- The public comment period ends on March 13, 2015.
- The Secretary will announce his decision at the March 19, 2015 State Board of Education meeting.