

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT – Renewing Charter School
Gateway Lab School

This Performance Agreement (“Agreement” is entered into this 20th day of May, 2014 by and between the Delaware Department of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DDOE”) and *Gateway Lab School*, a public charter school of the State of Delaware (hereinafter referred to as “School”), authorized by the Department of Education with the assent of the Delaware State Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DSBE”).

1. **Effective Date.** Notwithstanding the date set forth above this Agreement shall become effective on the date upon which the DSBE shall assent to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

2. **Term of the Agreement.** This agreement shall continue in full force and effect during the term of the school's charter and any subsequent renewal term thereof; provided, nevertheless, that in the sole discretion of the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE, this agreement may be amended at such time as the school's charter may be renewed under the provisions of 14 *Del. C.* §515 (b) or subjected to review under 14 *Del. C.* §515 (c). This agreement may also be amended to comply with subsequent changes in state or federal law and/or regulations relating to charter schools or the Performance Framework (“Framework”) as deemed necessary by the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE. This Agreement may also be modified:

(a) At any time by mutual consent of the DDOE and the School, provided, nevertheless that the DSBE shall assent to such modification; or

(b) If the DDOE shall determine, with the assent of the DSBE, that it is necessary or appropriate to modify this Agreement to reflect subsequent changes in the Performance Framework.

3. **Obligations of School.** While this agreement remains in effect, the School shall:

(a) Comply with all state and federal laws and regulations imposed on Delaware public charter schools, and otherwise comply with the terms of the School's charter, including any conditions now or subsequently imposed upon its charter by the DDOE with the assent of the DSBE; and

(b) Make satisfactory annual progress toward the indicators and performance targets in the Academic, Financial and Organizational Expectations set forth in this Agreement as measured by the Framework. An annual performance review will be conducted by the Department of Education Charter School Office using the Framework to evaluate such progress. The Framework is incorporated into and made a part of this agreement. If the DDOE finds that the school is not making satisfactory progress toward its performance targets, the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE, may place the school's charter on formal review pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* §515 (c).

Background Information (*Characteristics of school, current location, summary of student population and grades served by the school, etc.*)

The Gateway Charter School, Inc. d.b.a. Gateway Lab School (GLS) is a Title I school located in suburban Wilmington, Delaware, drawing students from every district in New Castle County. GLS first opened its doors to the public in the 2011-12 school year; and, serves the educational needs of 208 students in grades 3 through 8 with an average class size of 14 students. Approximately 65% of Gateway students have Individual Education Plans (IEP).

The GLS model was created specifically for Delaware students and aligned as required at application, to the Delaware Content Standards. Gateway, like other public schools in Delaware, has made the shift to align its curriculum to National Core Content Standards. Our school model is related to a model designed by the Lab School of Washington®, located in Washington, DC. The efficacy of the Lab School of Washington® (LSW) model is its unique arts-infused, special education approach specifically designed for students with learning disabilities and ADHD.

Based on research, we understand that approximately 12% of students in area schools have been identified as Special Ed and have the accommodations they qualify for under law. However, Gateway Lab School goes beyond the mandated accommodations and uniquely meets the needs of our entire student body with most of these accommodations because they are built into our curriculum and are a natural part of everyday school life. This approach provides an enormous benefit to those students without IEP plans as well. The Gateway model is holistic. Our curriculum includes daily LAB periods for small group instruction in math and reading, social skill training through Responsive Classroom®, as well as daily arts and physical education instruction.

Mission Statement

To provide an extraordinary educational opportunity for our students using arts-based, multi-sensory teaching techniques and curriculum that is aligned to Delaware Content standards in a safe, secure, and nurturing environment. The school plans to eventually serve the community as a center for the professional development and education of teachers, parents and students by providing access to the latest research-based curriculum, technology, and training.

Vision Statement

The vision of Gateway Lab School is to prepare children who have struggled academically in the traditional classroom for success in high school and beyond. We do this by using an academically rigorous, arts-infused curriculum aligned to Common Core standards in an atmosphere that values each student's individuality and unique gifts, and helps them to articulate their learning styles which will lead to self-advocacy.

The Gateway Lab School philosophy is based on the belief that children, who have struggled to achieve academic success in the traditional school environment and learn differently, have the capacity to achieve academic success and to realize individual learning potential. The teachers and staff of Gateway Lab School are committed to developing a sense of inquiry and love of learning in each student. This is accomplished by focusing on providing interventions in the areas of reading, oral and written language, math and motor skills. The social studies and humanities areas of study are supplemented through the Academic Club Method™ developed at the Lab School of Washington®, which provides a unique program that incorporates art, music, drama and hands-on learning experiences. Students also learn how to function effectively in school and society through tailored social skills/character development training and an understanding of how they best learn.

An education at Gateway Lab School includes helping our students know the appropriate behavior in a given situation, knowing how to approach the unknown, knowing how to request additional support/accommodations, and knowing how to interact with other people. These skills are the foundation for functional living essential to the student population we will serve.

Academic Performance Expectations

Gateway Lab School's overall academic rating is "Falls Far Below Standard." By 2014, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standard as measured by the Alternative Academic Performance Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

This year we are using data to determine the needs of our students and to group them for academic success in RTI groups. When our students are in tier groups our faculty can deliver instruction on the specific common core standards that they need help in mastering. The students will also have targeted differentiated instruction in the classrooms using our paraprofessionals in addition to our classroom teachers to keep the groups small for guided practice and independent practice. Our focus this year is standards based instruction, and teaching 'bell to bell' so that very little time is wasted in transitions. The use of Reading and Math interventionists will assist GLS in targeting individual student needs.

Mission-Specific Goal 1	As a school that focuses on high needs students, our goal is to have students increase performance in Reading skills.
Measure/Metric	Percentage of students meeting expected growth targets using Fall to Spring MAP assessments.
Target	60% of students will meet anticipated growth targets on the Spring MAP assessments..
Indicators	<p><u>Exceeds Standard -</u> The school has at least 80 percent of all students meeting their growth target using MAP</p> <p><u>Meets Standard -</u> The school has between 60 and 79 percent of all students meeting their growth target using MAP</p> <p><u>Does Not Meet Standard -</u> The school has between 40 and 59 percent of all students meeting their growth target using MAP</p> <p><u>Falls Far Below Standard</u> The school has less than 40 percent of all students meeting their growth target using MAP</p>

The Curriculum and Staffing Committee of Gateway Lab School met to make a final decision on an assessment tool to be used to determine if students are meeting their annual growth goals. The committee agreed that the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment is rigorous, is used successfully by other schools, and is a norm referenced test. This mechanism will allow DDOE to verify student achievement on an annual basis. One of the strengths of this assessment is the reporting tools it offers. In addition to providing feedback to DDOE, MAP provides valuable feedback to teachers for setting their goals for individual student achievement.

The MAP testing is three times per year which will provide data throughout the year to drive instruction. It is an adaptive test which adjusts to student performance. MAP provides a baseline in the fall and will direct RTI group instruction throughout the year. With the introduction of the new Smarter Balanced testing it will be valuable to have additional assessments throughout the year. The Head of School and the Board of GLS have read, agree with, and accept the weighted Alternative Framework as submitted to the Delaware Dept. of Education.

Financial Performance Expectations

Gateway Lab School's overall financial rating is "Meets" standard" as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. By September 2014 our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets Standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

Organizational Performance Expectations

Gateway Lab School's overall organizational rating is Does Not Meet. The school's student attendance rate is impacted negatively when students are in alternate placements/hospitals. Due to our unique student population, students attend day treatment centers and inpatient facilities for extended stays to address their mental health needs. Attendance at these alternate placements/hospitals is often a result of a doctor's recommendation. Additionally, the excused absence rate is impacted by anxiety and sleep related health problems that some of our students have.

With approval from the DOE Pupil Accounting office, we are revising Measure 4b to: Gateway Lab School's average daily attendance will exceed 90%. By September 2014, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets," as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those organizational performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their Hand and Seals the day and year first above-written.

GATEWAY LAB SCHOOL

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BY: 
President

BY: _____
Secretary of Education

Assented to by resolution of the Delaware State Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 20__.

Gateway Lab School

Board of Directors Meeting



DATE: May 20, 2014, 7:00 pm

LOCATION: 2501 Centerville Road, Wilmington DE

Come to Order and Attendance: 7:05pm

Present: Kecia Blackson, Meredith Chapman Pamela Draper, Ron Miller, Chris Santantasio, Anne Budischak, Devie Smith

Other Principal Present: Stacy Solomon, Catherine Dolan

Guest: Ellen Cooper, GLS Attorney

Absent: Joyce Henderson

- **Open for Public Comment** – None
- **Vote on April Meeting Minutes**
 - Motion to approve the April minutes, with a change in the account of the vote on the retreat, this was seconded and approved unanimously.
- **Old Business** – None
- **New Business**
 - A motion was made to add an additional item to the agenda for tonight's meeting due to the urgency of the matter. Item 1 – The board will consider an exception to the rollover vacation policy for the Head of School and Assistant Head of School. A motion to accept the addition to the agenda was made, *seconded and approved unanimously*.
 - The President of the Board read the GLS Charter Vision for the school to help focus all of the board members on the goals and mission of the school.
 - In an effort to improve communications with all Board members a recommendation was made to have all Board committees provide the minutes of their monthly meetings to the entire board one week before the monthly board meeting. A motion to accept this new procedure was made, *seconded and approved unanimously*.
 - **Action: The Board President should send a reminder notice to the head of all committees to comply with this new process change**
- **Guest Speaker: Ellen Cooper, GLS Attorney**
 - GFF Tax Status – It was recommended by our attorney that the GFF speak to a tax legal expert to determine the appropriate path forward regarding the need for the GFF to seek a 501 C3 Tax Exempt status. **Action: Ellen will provide the Head of School with a name of a tax attorney for her to pass on to the GFF strongly recommending that they follow through with the meeting.**
 - Reviewed the cases under consideration for a Due Process hearing. A review of each of the cases was presented to the board and Ellen reviewed all of the alternatives that were available. Ellen has assured the board that she will explore all options and do a cost /benefit analysis for each case so that the board will understand their options in each case.

- **Review of the Revised Performance Agreement**

- The Board was presented the revisions in the Performance Agreement document and after discussion the board was satisfied with the document as presented. A motion was made to accept and submit the revised Performance Agreement document to the state on May 22, 2014; this motion was *seconded and approved unanimously by the GLS Board*.

- **Head of School Report**

- Art Festival had a great attendance, standing room only.
- The 8th Grade Activities
 - Dance, Trip to Washington DC, and Graduation on May 22, 2014
- Head of School message at the last assembly is to – pass on a legacy.
- Field Day May 21, 2014
- Safety Plan based on Homeland Security has been updated.
- Staffing changes were made by May 15, 2014
- Enrollment on May 1, 2014 was 199 which is 11 students that last year at the same time.
- Increase activity in tours
- Special Education Report presented to the Board.
- Attendance records indicate 95%

- A proposal was made to the Board to eliminate the Reading and Math interventions positions in the school. All of the students will still get intervention focus with the RIT program. Should these roles be replaced in the future they need to be more specialized and at a differentiated trained specialist level. In replacement of these positions it is recommended that a Technology Coordinator role be created to work with the facility and students integrating technology into our school classrooms. **A vote was taken to eliminate the two positions and replace the roles with a Technology Coordinator, seconded and approved by majority of the Board. Two Board members abstained from the vote. (Meredith Chapman and Chris Santantasio)**

- **Leadership and Governance Update**

- The GLS Board Retreat weekend is set for May 30th- June 1st to be held at the Christiania Hilton. A facilitator and grant writer will be in attendance to help the board find a positive strategic direction for GLS and our students in the future.
- Reminder of the Board member self evaluations
- The Leadership & Governance committee will be held the 4th Wednesday of the month.

- **Fund Raising Committee**

- Kecia Blackstone did some investigation into fundraising and proposed that the Board Fund Raising Committee be larger in scope and incorporates the members of the GFF to be a part of the fund raising efforts for GLS. The one committee would run both small and large fund raising efforts to benefit the school.
- **Action Plan: The plan will be for Kecia to talk to the GFF and work over the summer to build our school year calendar that identifies fund raising efforts throughout the year.**

- **Marketing and Communications Update**

- After the Board retreat and the direction is defined for the school the MARCOM committee will plan key marketing events to align with the school year.
- The commitment letter and the parent survey was sent to all parents to provide their input on their student's past year at Gateway. They have the option to fill out a paper copy or use the Survey Monkey.
- All Board members are encouraged to come into the school before the retreat to observe classes to have a good understanding of the school, its students and teachers as we define our strategic objectives for the next five years.

- **Curriculum and Staffing Update**
 - The committee now has 10 members and they are actively reviewing five different math curriculum. A decision is going to be made by May 30th to receive a 20% discount.
 - Looking at reforming the grading system and policy so the factuality will all be on the same page for the next year school season.

- **Finance and Treasurer Report**
 - Pamela Draper guided the Board in reviewing the *Gateway Lab Budget Highlights for the Month Ending April 30, 2014* as prepared by Neely and Spence.

- **Vote For Exception To Vacation Rollover Policy**
 - Pam Draper made a motion to have an exception for the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School to be allowed to carry over more than one week into the new fiscal year. This motion was seconded and it was unamously approved by the GLS Board.
 - **Action: A n amendment to their contracts will be made at the July 1 renewal.**

- **Meeting Adjourned, 9:25 PM**