

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT – Renewing Charter School (Amended)
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

This Performance Agreement (“Agreement” is entered into this 19th day of December, 2013 by and between the Delaware Department of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DDOE”) and Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, 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 anytime 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.)

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) opened in August 2011 as the first dual language immersion charter school in Delaware. We served 303 students in grades K-5th in Year 1 and currently serve 439 students in grades K-7th. By the 2014-2015 school year, LAAA will grow enrollment to 514 students as we complete the expansion to our charter approved K-8 grade configuration. Our curriculum consists of two language programs: Dual Language Immersion Program (K-1st grades in Year 1; K-3rd in Year 3) and Spanish as a Second Language Program (2nd-5th grades in Year 1; 4th-7th in Year 3). The Dual Language Immersion Program will continue to grow each year, as our students graduate to the next grade level. LAAA is located in Newark, Delaware in the former Happy Harry's business and warehouse facility on the corner of Ruthar Drive and Red Mill Road (physical address: 326 Ruthar Drive, Newark, DE 19711). The student demographics include the following: 56% Hispanic, 29% Caucasian, 12% African American, 3% Asian; 50% free/reduced lunch; 40% English Language Learners.

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy is the direct outgrowth of the mission of ASPIRA of Delaware, Inc., an associate office of the national ASPIRA Association. ASPIRA, since its start with ASPIRA New York, has had over fifty years of experience creating and implementing formal and informal education programs that build up youth self-esteem, cultural awareness, and leadership abilities. ASPIRA associate offices successfully operate eleven charter schools in 3 cities: Philadelphia, Miami and Chicago. Originally founded as a Puerto-Rican organization, ASPIRA Associate Offices in the 6 states of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Florida and Illinois and the commonwealth of Puerto Rico now serve a diverse population of youth, with the specific mission to empower the Puerto Rican and Latino community through advocacy and the education and leadership development of its youth.

A 2008 report¹ released by the Delaware Governor's Commission on Hispanic Affairs states that "over the last ten years the number of Hispanic children in Delaware's schools has grown significantly with an overall increase of about 60% between the '97-'98 and '07-'08 school years. Forty-four percent of Hispanic students enrolled in English language learner programming. Data from the Department of Education show that they continue to experience significant achievement gaps. For instance, when examining the annual Delaware State Testing Program (DSTP) scores, we find that across all test subjects, Hispanic ethnicity and limited English proficiency (LEP) are both associated with low testing scores." The LAAA dual language immersion project-based learning curriculum, where students learn language while learning academic content aligned to Delaware standards, is a proven approach for English Language Learners to attain both English literacy and to meet and exceed state learning standards.

¹ **The Education Status of the Hispanic Community in Delaware: An Issue Brief Presented by the Governor's Consortium on Hispanic Affairs** In Collaboration with the University of Delaware Center for Community Research and Service Issue Brief 2 | October, 2008.

Mission Statement

The mission of *Las Américas ASPIRA Academy* is to provide a world-class education that prepares students through a dual language project-based learning curriculum, to become healthy productive community members and leaders, with an **expectation** that **every** child, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic level, is college bound.

Vision Statement

The vision of *Las Américas ASPIRA Academy* is to provide an educational experience that focuses the academic, physical, social, and emotional development of our students based on the following guiding principles:

The academic, physical, social, and emotional development of our students rests on:

- ASPIRA Principles of Awareness, Analysis and Action
- Setting high expectations for each student, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or socio-economic level, where **every** student is college-bound
- Building on the first language of English Language Learners to increase their academic performance
- Enriching the education of English speaking children by having them achieve literacy and fluency in a second language
- Making real-world connections for all learning
- Creating a healthy personalized school environment that is positive and student centered, focused on cross-cultural understanding
- Facilitating learning through investigations, interactions, and dual language instruction that is intellectually challenging and developmentally appropriate
- Providing ongoing professional development to teachers and staff in order to keep them abreast with the best research-based teaching practices
- Using systematic qualitative and quantitative student assessment to drive and strengthen instruction
- Creating a strong partnership between parents, community, private sectors, teachers and staff to increase overall educational achievement and attainment

Academic Performance Expectations

*Las Américas ASPIRA Academy overall academic rating is Does Not Meet Standard for the 2011-2012 school year. By **September 30, 2014**, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the 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.*

Mission Specific Goals (optional): One goal stated in our mission at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy is that our immersion program students will become biliterate in English and Spanish within six years of enrollment in the program. Our focus is on building academic biliteracy in alignment with achieving the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts and Spanish Language Arts. This objective will be measured using various AIMSweb benchmark fluency measures in both languages depending on the grade level. In Kindergarten and First Grade, Spanish language fluency will be measured using the MIDE Syllable Reading Fluency (SRF) assessment; in Second through Fifth Grades, the Reading-Spanish Curriculum Based Measurement (R-Span CBM). English reading fluency in Kindergarten and First Grade will be measured using the Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF) assessment; in Second through Fifth Grades, the Reading-Curriculum Based Measurement (R- CBM).

Growth targets will be measured in terms of the rate of improvement (ROI) from the Fall benchmark (FB) to the Spring benchmark (SB), using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{SB score} - \text{FB score}}{36 \text{ weeks}}$$

Listed below are the growth target tables for each fluency measure

Grade Level	AIMS Web Spanish Fluency Measures		AIMS Web English Fluency Measures	
	SRF	PSF	PSF	R- CBM
K	0.2	n/a	1.08	n/a
1	0.5	n/a	.38	n/a
2	n/a	0.7	n/a	1.02
3	n/a	0.6	n/a	1.16
4	n/a	0.5	n/a	.86
5	n/a	0.5	n/a	.80

We will receive one of the following four ratings based on our students’ outcomes:

- Exceeds Standard (greater than 75% of students at each grade level within the Dual Language Immersion Program achieved their ROI growth targets)
- Meets Standard (60-75% of students at each grade level within the Dual Language Immersion Program achieved their ROI growth targets)
- Does Not Meet Standard (45-59% of students at each grade level within the Dual Language Immersion Program achieved their ROI growth targets)
- Falls Far Below Standard (less than 45% of students at each grade level within the Dual Language Immersion Program achieved their ROI growth targets)

The Spanish Fluency Measures targets were determined by looking at the AIMSweb National Norm data which reflect growth made by native Spanish speakers and making modifications based upon the linguistic profile of our student population. Since only 20% of our enrollment is comprised of native Spanish speakers (Spanish-L1) and the rest being second language (Spanish-L2) learners, we adjusted the targets to reflect growth patterns of second language acquisition and vocabulary development.

Financial Performance Expectations

*Las Américas ASPIRA Academy overall financial rating is Meets Standard for the 2011-2012 school year. By **September 30, 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

*Las Américas ASPIRA Academy overall organizational rating is Meets Standard for the 2011-2012 school year. By **September 30, 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.

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BY: 
Lourdes Puig, Board Chair

BY: _____
Secretary of Education

Assented to by resolution of the Delaware State Board of Education on the 19th day of December, 2013.