



**Department of Education
Charter School Accountability Meeting**

April 23, 2013

**Charter School New Application
Final Meeting**

The Delaware MET

Mr. Harrell called the meeting to order. He said the Secretary of Education has authorized him to Chair today's meeting in Mary Kate McLaughin's absence. For the purpose of the record introductions were made:

Attending Voting Committee Members

Paul Harrell, Director Public & Private Partnerships, Acting Committee Chair
Karen Field Rogers, Associate Secretary, Financial Reform & Resource Management
Mary Ann Mieczkowski, Director, Exceptional Children Resources
Deb Hansen, Education Associate, Visual and Performing Arts, Charter Curriculum Review

Support to the Committee

John Carwell, Director, Charter School Office
Catherine T. Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
Patricia Bigelow, Education Associate, Charter School Office
Chantel Janiszewski, Education Associate, Charter School Office
Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Finance Charter School
Sheila Kay-Lawrence, Administrative Secretary, Charter School Office

Other

Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Charter School Network
Barbara Mazza, Education Associate, Curriculum Access & Differentiation of Instruction

Representatives of Charter School

Dawn Downs, Innovative Schools

Mr. Harrell explained the purpose of today's meeting is to make a final recommendation on the Delaware Met's application for a new charter. He stated that the Committee's preliminary recommendation was that the charter application not be approved and the Committee's report required specific responses from the applicant.

Mr. Harrell said the Committee discussion today will focus on the following criteria that required further clarification from the school. He said at the conclusion of the Committee's discussion John Carwell will provide the next steps.

- Education Plan
- Performance Management
- Governance and Management
- Start-up and Operations
- Budget and Finance
- CMO Supplement

EDUCATION PLAN

Student Performance Standards. Ms. Janiszewski said Ms. McCrae found the response was adequate and it is considered met.

High School Graduation Requirements. Mr. Carwell said the Reviewer noted the Applicant has articulated its plan to address the requirements of 14 DE Admin Code 505. He said this section is met.

School Culture. Mr. Carwell said the Reviewer said the information was provided and it was met.

Supplemental Programming. Ms. Hansen said the Applicant did provide the information as requested and this section is considered met.

Special Populations and At-Risk Students. Ms. Mieczkowski said the applicant did address the data and is considered met.

English Language Learner. Mr. Carwell said the Reviewer had recommended several clarifications for the Applicant to amend in their application. He said the recommendations will be provided in the Final Report. He said because of the items that needs to be amended, he considers this subsection not met.

Student Recruitment and Enrollment. Ms. Hickey said if the Applicant adopts the policy and procedures as the draft revised School Admissions Policy and Procedure that was submitted then the school would be in compliance with the statutory requirements within a 5-mile radius of the school.

Student Discipline. Mr. Carwell said the response stated that expulsion procedures were included in attachment 9E. He said this document was not attached to the response and they will need it in order for this subsection to be considered met.

Ms. Janiszewski said some of her colleagues wanted to make a statement for the record that the ratio of students to advisor is considerably higher than what is recommended in the Big Picture Learning Model, and there is a recognized level of teacher burnout already connected to this particular advisory process. She said this is coupled with the inherent limited capacity of charter schools. She said because of this, there is a concern moving forward and they would caution the applicant to take a practical approach to mitigate these potential adverse effects.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Interim Assessments. Ms. Janiszewski said that Ms. McCrae reviewed this section and found the response was adequate and acceptable.

Measuring and evaluating academic progress. Ms. Janiszewski said Ms. McCrae reviewed this section and found the response was adequate and acceptable.

Information system to manage student performance. Ms. Janiszewski said Ms. McCrae reviewed this section and found the response was adequate and acceptable.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Mr. Carwell said they found that the grievance section needed to be amended and the response was acceptable.

Ms. Hickey said there were some concerns with the bylaws and the response addressed some of the concerns but they need to include the open meeting law in their bylaws that will be provided in the final report.

START UP AND OPERATIONS

Start-up Plan. Ms. Hughes said the narrative was detailed but it lacked specific and concrete steps that are needed to complete tasks identified in Attachment 19. She said the narrative served more as a job description for the staff of Innovative Schools. She said another area of concern was the capacity Innovative Schools would be taking on from the bulk of start-up and ongoing activities they will be assuming in 2014-15 school year. She said some of the activities that are identified in Attachment 19 occur prior to July 1, 2014. She has concerns as to how these activities will be funded and is the timing of the events and the potential conflict if newly hired teachers (for the 2014-15 school year) are finishing out the current school year (2013-14) at another school.

Transportation. Mr. Carwell said the Reviewer had a concern about Innovative Schools and transportation function in regards to qualification and time allocations. He said they would like more clarification in terms of the plan of Innovative Schools to turn over the role of the school after two years to the permanent business manager or the operations manager as it states in the application. He said just to clarify the model in terms of the transfer of the roles and responsibility and time allocation of the person to do their job sufficiently. He said that the response of transportation service cites an incorrect regulation and is not clear. He said more details will be provided in the final report.

Safety and Security. He said the Reviewer found this subsection to be considered met.

Lunch/Breakfast. Mr. Carwell said the Reviewer asked that the applicant contact her if the school is approved.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Ms. Hughes said there were inconsistencies in the response. The budget showed that it was considered low. She will provide a descriptive detail in the final report.

CMO SUPPLEMENT

Ms. Hughes said there were major concerns about Innovative School's capacity to take on the bulk of the start up and ongoing activities of the school especially if all new applications that Innovative Schools will be managing are approved. It was also noted that the school will open in 2014-15 school year along with a fifth school that would be opening in the same school year, if this application is approved, and Innovative School will be the back office partner too.

Ms. Hughes said there was another concern over the allocation of the back office support specialist position being a ¼ of a full-time position at two schools, which would be 1/8 of a full-time position per

school; which cannot effectively support a charter school with the vast array of responsibilities for that position.

Mr. Carwell said he had additional comments from another Reviewer who mentioned the capacity of Innovative Schools and the number of schools that they will be working with. He said there was a note in regards to the educational program and how they are working with a design partner and their capacity of startup for the school and the design partner provides more of a capacity than a typical charter school has in term of the educational program. He said they would like to see more of an infinity time period around school culture, CMO should name a time commitment and ensure that the contract with New Tech has a timeline noted. He said there was a lack of mention in how the school governing board would effectively oversee the CMO and how the Board would monitor and evaluate the CMO. He said they would need some clarifications around the school culture and time commitments.

RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Harrell said for the purposes of the Preliminary Report his recommendation to the Committee is that the charter application for the Delaware Met be *Approved* subject to the aforementioned conditions. All in favor say, Aye. Opposed? Abstentions? All ayes; motion carried.

Mr. Harrell asked Mr. Carwell to share next steps for upcoming meetings and dates.

Mr. Carwell stated the following next steps.

- Public Hearing will be held on May 7, 2013 at Delaware Department of Education 2nd Floor Cabinet Room, Townsend Building, Dover at 5:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned.