

Charter Renewal Application

Reach Academy for Girls

September 30, 2013



Reach Academy for Girls
170 Lukens Drive
New Castle, Delaware 19720
302 654-3720

Tara Allen, School Leader
Rev. Canon Lloyd S. Casson, Board President

Reach Academy for Girls
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I. Overview

1.1 Provide the following information requested.

a) Fill in the following chart with the school's basic information.

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	Reach Academy for Girls
Year School Opened	2010
Grade Level(s) in 2012-2013	K-3 and 5-8, adding grade 4 in 2013-2014
Current Enrollment	468
Approved Enrollment	475
Current Waiting List by Grade	K-4, third-1, fifth-3, sixth - 2
School Address(es)	170 Lukens Drive New Castle, Delaware 19720
District(s) / Region of Residence	Colonial School District
Website Address	www.reachacademyforgirls.org
Name of School Leader	Tara Allen
School Leader Email and Phone Number	tara.allen@reach.k12.de.us 302.654.3720
Name of Board President	Rev. Canon Lloyd S. Casson
Board President Email and Phone Number	canonbhai@comcast.net 302.530.3821

b) Fill in the following chart with the school's demographics at the time of submission*.

CURRENT YEAR ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	
Total Enrollment	468
# of Students on Waiting List	10
Gender	
# Male	0
# Female	468
Ethnicity/Race	
# White	57
# Black	376
# Hispanic	26
# Asian	5
# Other	4
# Multiracial	0
Special Populations	
# Students with disabilities ()	26
# English Language Learners	0
# Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	479 - provision 2

1.2 Educational Program Overview

- a) Describe the school's educational philosophy and any unique and innovative features in the educational program. Unique and innovative features may include, but are not limited to, curriculum, instruction, school culture and discipline, community and parental involvement, teacher and staff development, school operations and management, and extra-curricular or after-school programming.

The Reach Academy offers a rigorous, standards-based curriculum in a single-gender learning environment where self-respect and respect for others are experienced, and differences in culture, physical ability are respected and valued. Girls are challenged to raise their levels of personal achievement and leadership while becoming curious, active, and responsible learners in the classroom. The Reach Academy empowers young ladies through the following features of the school's program:

Identification of Learning Styles – By promoting the holistic development of each child and offering an environment that addresses the personalized learning styles of each student, girls are provided with differentiated instruction that meets their individual needs and develops a wide range of interests. Annually, students take the Capsol assessment which provides measures on nine student learning preferences, profiling from low to high preference in each of the following areas: auditory, visual, kinesthetic, individual, group, oral expressive, written expressive, sequential, and global. Teachers use the assessment data to plan differentiated lessons which capitalize on students' learning strengths, while challenging students to build and expand capacity in their areas of growth.

Technology Literacy – The Reach Academy emphasizes technology as an interactive learning tool to propel student achievement and to prepare students to thrive in an information-driven global economy. The school utilizes interactive language skills software, robotics, and computer and internet technology to enrich students' learning experiences. In grades K-8, all classrooms are equipped with a SmartBoard and in grades 6-8 all rooms have a class set of iPads. Textbooks are available online for reading at school and at home. In grades K-5, students participate in a technology class each week and teachers have access to a class set of netbooks and online books.

Character Education/Leadership Development – The teachers and leadership at the Reach Academy strive to prepare girls for success in secondary and higher education and for confident leadership wherever their journey leads them in the diverse, global society of the 21st century. In grades K-5, students build these skills through classroom routines that teach responsibility and afterschool events such as the etiquette breakfast, parent events, and afternoon teas. In grades 6-8, all students take a leadership class that emphasizes leadership styles, goal setting, organization, personal finance, team building, conflict resolution, problem solving, decision making, and effective communication skills. In all grades, the girls are taught to value each other's differences and recognize the strengths of a diverse community.

Mentors, Role Models, and Lifelong Sponsorship – Although still in the beginning stages, it is the intent of the Board and school leadership to expand the existing mentoring program which brings together Reach Academy students with women of all ages to share life lessons and to provide guidance. Currently, girls from the middle school mentor girls in younger grades. Additionally, girls from the first graduating class will be asked to return to Reach and share high school lessons with middle school girls.

Parent Involvement – Since opening its doors in 2010, the Reach Academy has intentionally developed family engagement strategies to support the school’s philosophy of holistic instruction and to emphasize the critical role that parents play in their student’s education. The participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication with teachers around student academic proficiency ensures that parents are an integral part of the education process. Parents are also asked to contribute topics for parent workshops such as tips for assisting with homework, providing an overview of STEAM, and identifying psychological and behavioral issues in children. Parents attend academic and social events at the school at least once per month. Since moving to the new location in New Castle, parent engagement, as measured by attendance at school events, has risen to 70%. For additional information see the Parent Involvement Plan in Appendix B.

Extended Day – Students at the Reach Academy attend school for 7 1/2 hours each day from 8:15 am - 4:00 pm, increasing learning time.

Enhanced Professional Development Instruction – Teachers are provided with regular professional development in best practices for teaching reading and math, and designing learning experiences that empower girls to excel. In addition to cultivating a school culture that prioritizes adult learning and reflection, the Reach Academy also employs an instructional coach who provides daily coaching for teachers around instructional practices, data analysis, and effective use of the new technology for the purpose of differentiation and personalization.

II. Academic Framework

2.1 Is the academic program a success?

- a) Discuss the school’s academic achievement results over the last four years. How has the school performed with regards to student growth and proficiency measures over the last charter term? In the absence of expected achievement, identify proposed changes to instructional practices that your school will implement to improve the school’s academic performance and student outcomes.

The academic achievement results of the Reach Academy for the last three years have not been as expected. Except for reading in 2011, over the last four years, the Reach Academy was rated as either “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Falls Well Below Standard” on all criteria for both reading and math. The school has not made AYP in three years, and the school’s overall rating for the last three years is “Fall Well Below Standard” (see the 2013 Academic Performance Framework Report in Appendix B).

As a new school, the Reach Academy has expanded enrollment each year for three years, adding students at new grade levels and accepting new students at existing grade levels to fill open seats. Each year has brought the challenge of an expanding teaching staff and educating new students who came from many different elementary schools and levels of academic achievement, who then must be assimilated into the Reach culture and academic program.

Despite the challenges of rapid growth, the Board and school leadership acknowledges that the current rate of student achievement is not acceptable. With a stable student population, in the coming five years, the Board and school leadership anticipate that increased continuity will propel student learning. As an additional and important step, the Board will also initiate a strategic plan, described below, for school transformation with student achievement as the plan's core. As a result of the strategic planning initiative, the following are anticipated:

1) Increased Focus on Student Data:

Teachers will participate in weekly 90 minute professional learning communities with the instructional coach and the mathematics interventionist to ensure that they are using student data effectively, identifying patterns and trends in student work, determining root causes, using high-yield strategies for teaching, creating an action plan for re-teaching, and assessing the results in alignment with Common Core State Standards. During grade level Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teachers will analyze common grade level performance tasks and student work, and re-adjust instructional plans to align teaching practices across classrooms. Individually each teacher will be required to build a data binder to collect information on each student and will use that data to build flexible groups and targeted lessons. Each data binder will be reviewed by leadership team, consisting of the instructional coach, mathematics interventionist and school leaders.

The school leader will present academic achievement data at monthly board meetings. Additional data to be monitored will include attendance and discipline data, as well as data connected to Response to Intervention and movement between tiers.

2) Increased Effectiveness of Teachers and Leaders:

In PLCs, teachers will continue the work begun during the 2012-2013 school year and "unpack" the curriculum maps and model units to understand what the identified learning targets look like in student work and determine anchor/model student responses in reading and math that demonstrate standards proficiency. Clear expectations will be shared with students, along with models of excellent work. Additionally, teachers will engage in consistent professional development on cultural proficiency.

Given the lack of growth in math achievement, the intervention specialists and instructional coach will engage in professional development related to mathematics and turn-key those best practices and professional development to the K-5 teaching staff.

The math department in grades 6-8 will attend trainings related to College Board Math, and meet with the math interventionist in order to plan Problem-Based math tasks related to mathematics content and aligned math standards. The math tasks will be used with students in six week cycles to monitor growth in math achievement.

3) Strategic Intervention Program for All Students:

Thirty minutes of daily strategic intervention will be provided for all students in addition to the core reading and math curriculum. The intervention will be data-based, sequenced, and organized to ensure students know, do, and understand where they fall on a learning continuum, and what learning targets they need to meet. “Just in Time” learning opportunities will be provided for all students so that learning is engaging and specific to their needs - regardless of their performance classification. During the intervention classes, intervention specialists and special education teachers will work together to organize supports and strategies that align student needs to instruction and regular benchmarking assessment. During PLC’s, grade level teams will examine assessment data to determine student movement between groups as student instructional needs change.

4) Increase Student Engagement:

Through an instructional program that focuses on STEAM, students will engage in 21st century learning that fosters creativity, critical thinking, communications, and collaboration in an interdisciplinary program. Teachers will be provided with job-embedded, ongoing professional development learning opportunities to equip them with teaching tools that will enable them to integrate STEAM throughout the curriculum. To bring authentic STEAM into the classroom, the Reach Academy will recruit mentors and volunteers from the community to assist with projects and to provide an authentic context for projects. To further generate student interest in STEAM and to create student driven learning opportunities, the Reach Academy will develop and implement plans for STEAM Fridays and an after-school STEAM Club to challenge and expand students’ abilities.

5) Explore and Replicate a Comprehensive School Design:

The Board and school leadership will apply for the Innovative Schools Model Initiative grant, which will provide partial funding to replicate either the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM) or Expeditionary Learning (EL). Both models are high performing, deeper learning school models that are in alignment with the Reach Academy’s focus on STEAM, the instructional shifts of Common Core, and 21st century learning. Both models have a track record of success across demographics and students in these schools are out-performing their district peers and closing achievement and opportunity gaps. Research and data on the effect of the school models on student achievement is included in Appendix B. Through the grant application process, the Board and school leadership will visit exemplary SEM and EL schools, and engage in a planning process for replication. The planning team will select a model in the fall of 2013, and if the grant is awarded, will begin school transformation through replication of the school model in the fall of 2014. Since this process is a top priority, should the grant not be awarded,

the Board will commence as current resources enable, while seeking funding from other sources.

2.2 Is the school preparing students for college and career? (For High Schools Only)

Not applicable. Reach Academy is a K-8 school.

2.3 Is the school meeting its mission?

- a) State the mission of the school as it appears in your charter application. How does your school measure and track mission accomplishment?

REACH ACADEMY FOR GIRLS is a school that will provide a rigorous core curriculum based on scientifically-based research strategies, and globally recognized best practices. Our goal is to help all students, in collaboration with the family and community, reach their highest potential and become leaders in their school, family, and community.

The school leadership and Board believe that the success of the girls who attend the Reach Academy is a reflection of the success of the school. However, because of the rapid growth of the school and the annual influx of students into the academic and cultural programming, school-wide data do not accurately reflect the potential of the students at the Reach Academy. The Board and leadership recognize that all teachers and students must be challenged to work through the next three years to increase student achievement and drive student performance into the “Meets Standards” rating

on the Academic Performance Framework. To accomplish this, the Reach Academy Board and school leaders have set bold goals for achievement, and based on student cohort data from the last three years, are confident that they can drive student achievement.

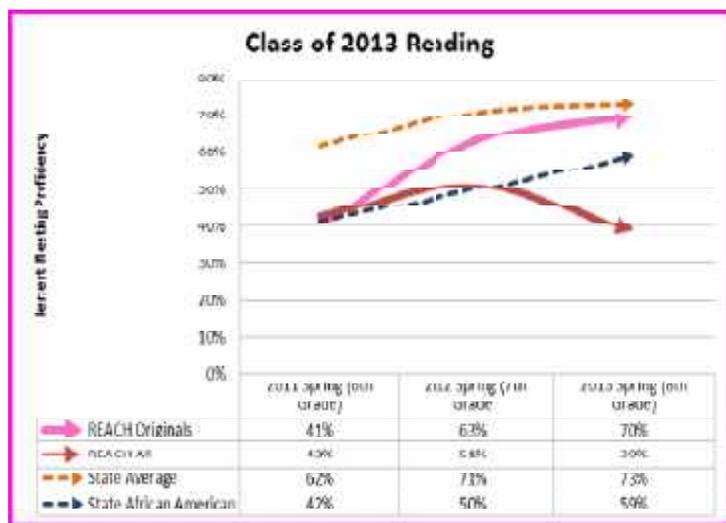


Figure 1

the state average in reading decreased from an initial gap of 21 percentage points to a gap of only 3 percentage points and far exceeded the average score for African Americans by 11 percentage points.

Figure 1 shows the reading growth of students who began at the Reach Academy as 6th graders in the fall of 2010. When those same students graduated from Reach in the spring of 2013, the achievement gap between the Reach cohort and

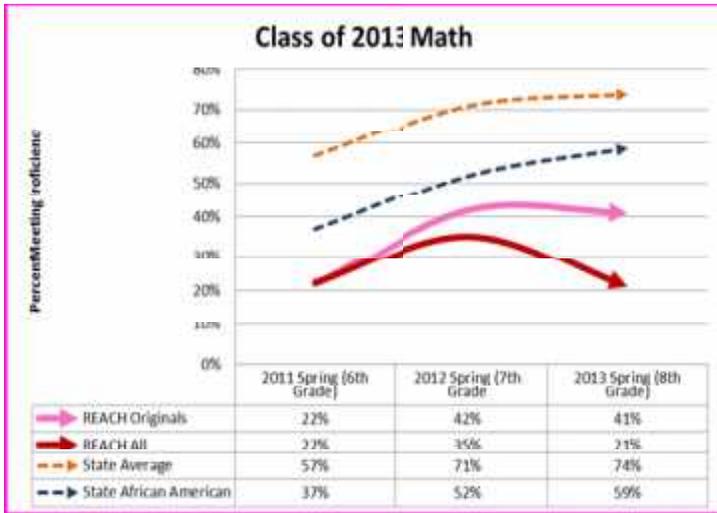


Figure 2

Likewise the math achievement data in Figure 2 also shows a grow trend. In 2011 only 22% of students were proficient in math. Two years later those same students grew in proficiency so that 41% met standards. While the achievement gap was not decreased, the Reach cohort students' growth in math proficiency was on a trajectory similar to students across the state. In the coming renewal period, as the student population of the Reach Academy stabilizes and greater numbers of students

stay at the school over time, the Board and school leadership anticipate that the continuity of the student body will allow even more students to increase proficiency levels and close the achievement gap. Additional data analysis and professional development in mathematics instruction will also better equip teachers to instruct students and propel math proficiency levels.

III. Organizational Framework

3.1 Is the school implementing the essential terms of the charter's education program as defined in the current charter, and complying with applicable state and federal requirements?

- a) Provide specific examples of how your educational program is in compliance with instructional days/minutes requirements, the use of state assessments, and Delaware content standards requirements.

The school year at the Reach Academy is 182 student days. Students attend school from 8:15am-4:00 pm, totaling 1,410 hours each year – a number that is greater than the 1060 hours required by Delaware statute. The Reach Academy School Calendar for the 2013-2014 school year, noting the number of school days is included in Appendix C.

The Reach Academy students are assessed each year on the Early Learning Survey (grade K) within the first 30 days of school, and take the DCAS in grades 3-8 as required, and in grade 2 at the end of the school year. Additional assessments are given in alignment with DPASS II component 5 and to continually monitor student learning. The Reach Academy Assessment Calendar is included in Appendix C.

ELA curriculum maps for all grades, K-8, and representative units for each grade cluster are included in Appendix D.

Mathematics curriculum maps for all grades, K-8, and representative units for each grade cluster are included in Appendix E.

3.2 Is the school protecting the rights of students with disabilities and English language learners?

- a) Describe the process by which students with special needs are identified and evidence that the school is effective in providing the right resources and services for students with disabilities.

The Reach Academy uses the Response to Intervention (RtI) process with all students. This process provides a carefully documented learning path outlining areas of growth with aligned intervention strategies and accommodations. If the RtI process results in a student reaching Tier III without improving learning outcomes, she can be referred through the Instructional Support Team (IST) for a psycho-educational evaluation. Once parental permission is received, the evaluation will be conducted by a certified school psychologist to determine whether or not there are identifiable disabilities hindering the student's academic success. Once results of the evaluation are made available, the teachers, parents, school administrator, psychologist, school nurse (if appropriate) and student, if the parent so desires, will meet to discuss the results of the evaluation and determine whether or not there are enough data to determine if the student is eligible for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and special education services.

In addition to the RtI process, Reach Academy parents or guardians who have specific concerns about the academic progress of their daughter may make a written request for a psychological evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services. In addition, educational professionals at the Reach Academy who suspect that a child may have a disability may bring these concerns, along with data gleaned from assessments and research-based intervention practices, to the IST for their review and evaluation referral. Parents and educators do not need to wait until the student has moved to Tier III to make the request for evaluation.

To ensure that the appropriate resources are provided for special education students, the Reach Academy employs a Coordinator of Special Education Services who makes certain that IEP meetings are held, and that the appropriate IST members attend along with the parents or guardian. The Coordinator ensures that correct timelines for identification and services are followed and that paperwork is completed and signed, in accordance with regulations. Teachers receive the IEP goals and accommodations for their students at the beginning of the school year, and participate in Special Education Refresher Training. The Coordinator also ensures that any students who need a psycho-educational evaluation are scheduled, and monitors the Speech and Occupational Therapy consultants to ensure that students receive the correct number of hours as outlined in each student's IEP.

- b) Describe the process by which students with English language learners are identified and evidence that the school is effective in providing the right resources and services for these students.

The Home Language Survey is given to all new students as part of the application process for the Reach Academy. If a language other than English is listed on the application, the student will be given the WIDA ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) within 25 days of enrollment. All students in grades K-8 who score below a 5.0 on the W-APT will receive ELL support. In the spring all ELL's will take the ACCESS to determine their eligibility to continue to receive ELL services. In the event that ELL students begin to attend the Reach Academy, the school will hire an ELL teacher to ensure they receive the correct services.

3.3 Is the school monitoring and minimizing attrition rates and maintaining enrollment stability?

- a) Fill in the following chart with the appropriate enrollment information over the last 4 years.

	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		
	Approved Enrollment	Sept 30 Enrollment Count	Approved Enrollment	Sept 30 Enrollment Count	Approved Enrollment	Sept 30 Enrollment Count	Current Waitlist
K	51	75	51	47	51	63	0
Grade 1	71	41	71	61	71	59	0
Grade 2			44	38	44	56	0
Grade 3					44	49	3
Grade 4							
Grade 5	60	48	54	27	54	21	2
Grade 6	70	57	64	52	64	51	0
Grade 7			54	41	52	49	0
Grade 8					52	42	0
Total	252	221	338	266	432	390	

- b) Provide information regarding the school's attrition rate over the last 4 years (3 years if this is the school's first renewal). Using data starting with the number of students enrolled September 30, what number and percentage of students transferred out of the school by the end of the school year?

School Year	September 30 Count	Enrollment as of June 15	Attrition Rate
2010-2011	221	215	2.7%
2011-2012	266	268	0%
2012-2013	390	385	1.2%

- c) How does the school both monitor and plan to minimize attrition rates? Provide a summary of why students left your school.

In the few cases where students did leave the Reach Academy, the decision was based on the geographic location of the school. Some families from the Middletown area

enrolled daughters in the school, but found that the distance between the family's home and the school was burdensome. Another family moved out of the area taking students out of the school.

3.4 Is the school meeting financial reporting and compliance requirements?

- a) Provide specific examples of how your school complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter relating to financial reporting requirements.

The Reach Academy complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of financial reporting requirements by

- Maintaining a Budget Oversight Committee—Del Code, Title 14, Section 1508
- Providing monthly financial reporting—Del Code, Title 14, Section 509(k)
- Conducting an annual audit—Del Code, Title 14, Section 513
- Posting the check register on the webpage —Del Code, Title 14, Section 1509
- Posting the 990 on the Web —Del Code, Title 14, Section 509(k)
- Completing an annual report—Del Code, Title 14, Section 513

3.5 Is the school complying with governance and reporting requirements?

- a) Provide a current organizational chart, which includes the Board of Trustees.

The Reach Academy for Girls Organizational Chart is included in Appendix C.

- b) Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates the school administration. What policies and procedures are in place to evaluate the school leader on an annual basis?

The Board of the Reach Academy has implemented a governance policy that seeks to ensure the school operates efficiently, effectively and in accordance with the school's charter, mission, vision and contracted performance goals. This policy is based on an inclusive and collaborative process between the Board and Head of School that recognizes each party's distinct role, and sets up mechanisms for evaluation and accountability. The leadership of Reach Academy maintains an open communication policy to ensure that important information is appropriately shared with the board chair, the school's leader or the entire board in a timely fashion. This communication is formalized with monthly reports from the Head of School covering administrative, operational and academic matters that are subject to Board review and recommendation for action if required. In addition, three times a year, in accordance with DPAS II, members of the board meet in private with the Head of School specifically for a performance evaluation, and a review of progress on goals set at the beginning of the school year.

- c) Identify the school's plan to ensure the effectiveness of its Board of Trustees, including governance training and new member induction.

In addition to the Board training required by the Department of Education, the Reach Academy board members attend regular board working sessions and retreats. A

strategic plan for the school, involving all stakeholders is being implemented. When new members join the board they must attend a special orientation training session so that they understand their roles and responsibilities as governing board members and complete a criminal background check.

- d) Describe the school's plan for procedures it will follow in the event of the closure or dissolution of the school, including a plan to set aside sufficient funds to cover the salaries owed to those employees who are paid over a 12-month period.

To prepare for a possible closure or dissolution of the school, the Reach Academy will set aside adequate funds to ensure that all employees are paid according to their contractual agreements with the school; to pay any staff who would be required for close-out activities; and, to pay any vendors such as auditors, movers, liquidators, etc. that would be needed (see budget information in Appendix F). All cash and cash equivalents will be distributed first to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the school, then to the remaining creditors of the school. To ensure that the cash reserve is built up as soon as possible, the school's Board will, over the next five fiscal years, build into its budget a cash reserve equivalent to 20% of estimated closing costs; and in each succeeding year, budget an amount sufficient to maintain revised closing costs (review funding balances and financial projections on a monthly basis to ensure the fiscal health of the school and the creation of the reserve fund.) In the event that the Reach Academy is closed for nonfinancial reasons and, following the authorizer's charter school closure protocol, the Reach Academy's Board would work closely with the DDOE concerning the steps forward (parent notification, transfer of records, disposition of school assets, etc.) to ensure a smooth and orderly closure and transition. The school will follow all legal and regulatory requirements such as those contained in Delaware Code 512, Section 16.

3.6 Is the school protecting the rights of all students and employees?

- a) Explain how the school is complying with federal Highly Qualified Teacher and Paraprofessional requirements within Title II of the ESEA. What policies and procedures are in place to ensure state certification requirements and background checks are completed?

It is the intent of Reach Academy to hire teachers and paraprofessionals who are highly qualified. When a potential candidate is interviewed, s/he is required to bring all supporting certification documents for review. When certified teachers are not available, the school will work with ARTC (alternative routes to certification). Completion of an alternative certification program within a two year time period will be a condition of continued employment. If candidates are hired for instructional positions exceptions might be considered if the individual has significant education, business and/or field related experience, and the individual is planning to obtain alternative certification within a reasonable amount of time. Utilization of the PRAXIS II test will also be offered to uncertified teachers. No uncertified teachers will be hired over the state regulation of 35%. Any uncertified teacher will be assigned a mentor to assist him or her as the teacher demonstrates compliance with all regulations and provides a viable and

consistent education to our students. All candidates who are not certified or cannot show that they have successfully completed all the testing and other requirements for certification must provide the School Leader with a comprehensive plan to become certified within one year.

Qualifications and experiences will be the primary determining factors in selecting new personnel to fill available positions. As required by the State of Delaware for all individuals working in school districts and/or charters, all prospective and current employees must undergo a national background check for criminal activity and be checked against the Child Abuse Registry. Previous employment references and personal reference checks will be conducted to receive additional feedback from others about the candidate. The results of the background check must be satisfactory to the school administration and consistent with Delaware law in order for that individual to commence employment at Reach Academy for Girls Charter School.

- b) Describe how the school utilizes educator evaluation as required by state code and regulation, including how the school evaluates teachers and specialists. This should include the usage of multiple measures for student growth, and a state-approved system for appraising teacher and specialist performance.

The Reach Academy uses the state's DPAS II evaluation system for teachers and specialists. The school leader has been trained in administering the DPAS II and evaluates teachers on an annual basis as required. For Component 5, teachers of ELA and Math (Group 1) are evaluated using both DCAS growth data (grades 3-8) or DIBELS (grades K-2) and the approved external measures, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and Scholastic Mathematics Inventory (SMI). For teachers of other content areas (Group 2), the Reach Academy uses the SRI/SMI data as well growth data from DDOE approved measure C goals. For teachers in Group 3 who don't assign grades, evaluation is based on Measure C goals that are quantifiable and will show student and/or professional growth.

- c) Explain how high expectations are communicated to both students and teachers and how the school's policies foster a positive school culture that allows for the fulfillment of the schools mission/educational goals. Evidence should include levels of disciplinary referrals, class attendance, and participation in school events and activities

High expectations for student achievement are communicated to teachers through professional goal setting as required by the DPAS II evaluation process. Additionally, the teachers' professional development, instructional coaching, and Professional Learning Community meetings continually focus on increasing academic achievement, along with building a positive school culture. There is widespread recognition among the Board, school leader and teachers that school culture and the instructional program are linked in a symbiotic relationship, each influencing the other.

A culture of high expectations is communicated to students through the celebration and sharing of excellent work, the recognition of academic leadership, and modeling of appropriate behavioral outcomes as an important component of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS). The high expectations for behavior are communicated to students through a thoughtful articulation of the school norms: Be Respectful; Be Responsible; Be Safe. These three norms have been articulated in specific behaviors that govern all areas of the school: school-wide behavior, behavior in the cafeteria, hallways, at recess, in bathrooms, and on the bus. These norms are consistent across the school and are revisited and modeled with students each fall. When students do not adhere to acceptable norms for student behavior, they begin to move through the tiers of the PBIS plan and receive additional support through daily behavior plans, mentoring, and/or counseling, depending on which tier of intervention and support is required.

Days Present (from school profile)		
2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
95.4%	94.75%	94%

Suspensions and Expulsions			
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of Suspensions	39	40	208
Number of Expulsions	0	0	1
Count of Students Suspended/Expelled	18	33	97
September 30 Enrollment	221	266	390
Percent of Students Suspended/Expelled	8%	12%	25%
District Percentage	8%	12%	25%
State Percentage	16%	15	14%

As reflected in the discipline data above, the Reach Academy has enrolled additional students each year to grow the school. The influx of students creates a significant impact on school culture, and results in an annual cycle of teaching new students the norms and expectations of behavior and how to contribute to a positive school culture. In discipline table above, the increase in the number and percentage of students suspended between year 2 and 3 of operations is not insignificant. However, when the discipline data for the 2012-2013 school year are disaggregated by month, 48% of the suspensions occur between September-November, suggesting that students are responding to the increased enrollment and engaging in a norming process around behavior expectations. As enrollment stabilizes and most students enter the school in kindergarten, the Board and school leaders anticipate a reduction in the number of suspensions. See Appendix C for the 2012-2013 school year suspension data disaggregated by month.

- d) Describe your school’s admissions and enrollment practices and the actions your school has taken to ensure compliance with 14 *Del C.* §506.

The Reach Academy is authorized by Delaware’s State Board of Education to be a single-gender, all-girls school. While the Board values a higher percentage of racial and cultural diversity in its student population, the Academy will employ only one admission preference: children who have siblings in the school will have preference and will be defined as another individual living in the same legal residence, or having the same parent who may not live in the same residence.

The following timeline will be used each year to ensure that the Reach Academy complies with 14 *Del C.* §506.

Date	Action
November 1 – 2 nd Wednesday in January	Open enrollment period for all grades. As part of the application, parents sign an Intent to Enroll statement, acknowledging that their student may not leave the Reach Academy without good cause as defined in 14 <i>Del C.</i> §506.
January	Re-enrollment forms sent to the parents of current Reach Academy students
February	<p>School leader assesses number of available seats at each grade level for the coming school year based on re-enrollment forms and sibling preference applications. If any grade is over-subscribed, then a lottery is planned for that grade level.</p> <p>A public lottery is conducted for over-subscribed grade levels. After all available seats are pulled, remaining names are pulled and their order is recorded on a waiting list. Families will be notified by mail of the status of the application.</p>
March	School districts are notified of the preliminary enrollment (by April 1), and preliminary enrollment will be reported to DDOE.

3.7 How is the school ensuring compliance with regulations governing school facilities, grounds, transportation, safety and health related services?

- a) Provide evidence that the school is complying with statutory regulations regarding school facilities, grounds, and transportation, safety and health related services (including compliance with school nurse requirements as well as school breakfast & lunch requirements).

In the 2013 Organizational Frameworks Review Report for the Reach Academy (Appendix C), the school received a rating of “Meets Standards” on all compliance criteria governing school facilities and grounds. Additionally, through the school’s recent move to the facility in New Castle, the Reach Academy had to obtain a transfer of the Certificate of Occupancy for the facility, demonstrating that the facility met all building, safety, and land use codes, and successfully passed a fire inspection. The fire alarm systems in the facility are monitored and inspected on a regular basis and any concerns are addressed immediately. Fire drills, lock-down drills, and other safety drills are held on a monthly basis, as required.

The Reach Academy employs a full-time registered nurse who provides direct nursing services for chronic and episodic conditions, health screenings and referrals, health promotion, health services management, a link to healthcare providers in the community, and an on-site health resource for students, families and staff. The nurse ensures that the Reach Academy is in compliance with all school health related regulations.

The Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program is overseen by a full time business manager. The Reach Academy contracts with Linton Food Services for the students' meals and the contract with the food vendor is monitored for compliance with Federal nutrition regulations. Both free and reduced breakfast and lunch are provided for students each day.

The fulltime Dean of Students serves as the Transportation Supervisor. The Transportation Supervisor coordinates with DDOE to ensure compliance with regulations. The school requires that the transportation vendor, First Student, adhere to transportation regulations. Delaware Code 14 Title 14 Section 1100 regulations are monitored to include, but are not limited to the following: Insurance requirements (2904); Safety requirement for public school buses (2907); Renewal of transportation contracts (2908); School bus drivers; drug and alcohol testing (2910); License qualification (2707); School bus driver's qualification (2708).

b) Describe your school's emergency management plan and how it aligns to statutory regulations.

Within the past year, the Emergency Management Plan was evaluated by a DDOE representative, the Reach Board, and was found to be compliant and in alignment with Delaware statutes. The Reach Academy's Emergency Management Plan was updated after moving the school to its new location in New Castle, DE and is included as Appendix C.

4. Financial Framework

4.1 Is the school fiscally viable?

a) Present the following information regarding your school's fiscal viability **over the last four years (3 years if this is your first renewal)**. Please use audited financial information for the years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 (if available): **Current Ratio (working Capital Ratio); Unrestricted Days Cash; Enrollment Variance; Loan default; Total Margin; Debt to Asset Ratio; Cash Flow; Debt Service Coverage Ratio)**

See attached schedule for presentation of information

b) Provide a summary of findings from independent audits and, where applicable, how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings. (If necessary, evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in the Appendix.)

FY 2011:

Finding 01: Management was unable to provide documentation to support checks totaling \$208,000 to Universal Education Resources (UER), a management company setup by the former executive director. The company paid bills on behalf of the

Academy, then billed the Academy and charged a management fee for its services. During November 2010, the Academy went under State review and all payments to UER ceased. Auditors confirmed that \$196,000 of the amounts paid UER during 2011 were for rent and utilities.

Finding 02: The opening balance for grants received was \$355,000 of which \$107,000 remained. The expenditure balance was audited but not the original expense. The Academy represented that the original expenses were in accordance with the terms of the original grant. For the time related to the documentation in question, the Academy did not have a documented accounting policy and procedures manual or a record retention policy.

Recommendation for Findings 01 and 02: Management should retain copies of all supporting documentation related to income and expenditures so that sufficient audit records are maintained.

Corrective Action Taken:

Finding 01: UER was contracted from August 2010 to December 2010. As of January 2011, a Business Manager position was created to handle all financial processing and reporting. All supporting financial documentation is currently maintained on-site.

Finding 02: An accounting policy and procedures manual has been created and the Academy is currently following the State's retention policy.

Finding 03: Management did not track fixed assets purchased since the Academy did not have a documented capitalization policy or a documented method of tracking fixed asset purchases and disposals.

Corrective Action Taken: A method of tracking fixed assets additions and disposals has been implemented.

Finding 04: Board meetings were either not documented at all or information presented was limited in the summaries. The recommendation was for the Academy to establish a procedure for written documentation of each meeting and ensure a detailed summary of each topic discussed. The financials should be reviewed, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis and documentation of the review be include in the minutes.

Corrective Action Taken: In January 2011, a new Board of Directors was created and a secretary appointed. The secretary, since that time, has created Board minutes and financial documents are reviewed at each meeting.

Finding 05: Information provided to the Academy's employees from the State of Delaware made it difficult for the Academy to follow and ascertain useful information to generate an accurate trial balance. In addition, expenses of approximately \$18,000 were booked but unable to be audited. The recommendation was for the Academy to

work with the State's offices and determine a method for obtaining the necessary data for accurate preparation of trial balances and related financial reports.

Corrective Action Taken: A response was not provided.

FY 2012 and 2013 (included in one Financial report)

There are no current year findings. Findings 1-4 from 2011 were satisfied. However, Finding 05 was continued from FY2011 with an additional Effect citing the Academy's cash balance:

The Academy is unable to determine the amount of cash on-hand with the State. Furthermore, neither the State's Treasurer or its Finance office was able to confirm the amount of cash on-hand belonging to the Academy. However, during 2013, the State issued reports allowing the Academy to determine its cash balances. The Academy restated its cash balances for the affected years and the finding was resolved.

The Policies and Procedures Manual and the Fixed Asset Methodology will be made available upon request.

- c) As an appendix, provide a budget summary, narrative, and cash flow for fiscal year 2012-2013 and the approved budget for 2013- 2014 in the prescribed DDOE format. In addition, provide projected budgets through 2018-2019 in the prescribed DDOE projection format. Do not include any reliance on outside fundraising unless the school can document that funding has been secured.

All required budgets, summaries, and narratives are included in Appendix F.

5. Five-Year Planning

5.1 Projected Enrollment

- a) Provide a five-year enrollment chart by grade level, in the prescribed format below. Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of students from year-to-year.

Grade level	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
K	72	44	50	50	25	53
1	62	72	44	50	50	25
2	60	62	72	44	50	50
3	59	60	62	72	44	50
4	53	59	60	62	72	44
5	25	53	59	60	62	72

Grade level	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
6	50	25	53	59	60	62
7	50	50	25	53	59	60
8	44	50	50	25	53	59
Total	475	475	475	475	475	475

5.2 What are the school's plans for the next five years of the charter?

- a) Describe what changes and improvements the school will undertake in the next five years based on the school's examination of results and student performance outcomes.

Now that the Reach Academy is fully enrolled at all grade levels the Board and school leadership looks forward to stabilizing the school population and school culture, while continuing to refine the academic program to increase rigor and ensure that all students experience academic growth. The Board and school leadership are aware that while the school-wide DCAS data show declining test scores, internal data analysis suggest that students who have remained at the Reach Academy for all three years of operations are demonstrating growth (see Appendix B). Through the next five years, the Board and school leadership are committed to expanding those trends of academic achievement through offering a rigorous and consistent learning experience to all students.

To increase the rigor of the academic program at the Reach Academy, the Board and school leadership will build on the current technology foundation and build out academic programming to include a focus on STEAM education with the infusion of arts into the study of science, technology, engineering, and math as an avenue to foster creativity and ingenuity within the design process. Expanding STEM into STEAM will create a learning experience for the girls at the Reach Academy which combines designing products and solutions that propel both scientific advancement and economy growth while integrating the arts and humanities to “ask the deep questions about humanity that reveal which way forward actually is” (Edutopia, 2012¹). Through content-integrated projects, the girls will engage in 21st century learning that asks them to be critical thinkers, asking and answering the design questions of how a problem can be solved along-side the historical and ethical consequences of our actions.

To begin the work of transforming the academic program into a STEAM school, the Reach Academy Board and school leaders will apply for the Innovative School Model Initiative Grant in December of 2013. Through the development of the grant application, the leadership of the Reach Academy will collaborate with Innovative Schools to evaluate several comprehensive models of school design which have a proven track

¹ Maeda, J. (October 2, 2012). STEM to STEAM: Art in K-12 is Key to Building a Strong Economy. Edutopia.org. Accessed September 18, 2013 at <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/stem-to-steam-strengthens-economy-john-maeda>

record of results, visit high performing schools that are replicating those models, and conduct several community meetings to elicit feedback from the school community. If the Reach Academy is awarded the grant, planning would begin in the spring of 2014 and replication of the school model would begin in the fall of 2014.

- b) Provide goals and performance outcomes, including assessment tools and measures to be used. Provide a rationale for the identified goals and assessment measures.

The following goals set aggressive three or four year growth targets for the teachers, leadership, and Board of the Reach Academy. During year three of the renewal period, through the strategic planning action plan, the Board and leadership will develop a new set of goals that are based around the new ELA and math assessments and which will drive the Reach Academy beyond the “Meets Standards” rating and into the “Exceeds Standards” rating on the Academic Achievement Performance Framework.

Goals	Tools:	Rationale:
Increase the number of students meeting reading growth targets by at least 15% each year for the next three years.	Reading DCAS, grades 3-8 Scholastic Reading Inventory, grades 1-8	Based on the 2013 Academic Performance Framework report, 36.4% of the girls met fall to spring growth targets for reading. By increasing the percentage of girls meeting growth targets by 15% each year, in three years, fall to spring growth measures will fall within the Meets Standard criteria in the Performance Framework. The SRI is able to provide forecast growth toward the grade-level state assessment. Individual growth targets for reading will be set for each student and monitored through quarterly SRI benchmarking assessments.
Increase the number of students meeting math growth targets by at least 15% each year for the next three years.	Math DCAS, grades 3-8 Scholastic Math Inventory, grades 1-8	Based on the 2013 Academic Performance Framework report, 26.8% of the girls met fall to spring growth targets for math. By increasing the percentage of girls meeting growth targets by 15% each year, in three years, fall to spring growth measures will fall within the Meets Standard criteria in the Performance Framework. The SMI is able to provide forecast growth toward the grade-level state assessment. Individual growth targets for math will be set for each student and monitored through quarterly SRI benchmarking assessments.
Increase the number of students meeting or exceeding reading standards by at least 10% each year for three years.	Reading DCAS, grades 3-8 Scholastic Reading Inventory, grades 1-8	Based on the 2013 Academic Performance Framework report, 42.5% of the girls achieved proficiency in reading. By increasing the percentage of girls meeting reading standards by 10% each year, in three years the percentage of girls meeting or exceeding standards will fall within the Meets Standard criteria for student achievement in the Performance Framework. The SRI provides immediate, actionable data on students' reading levels so that teachers can differentiate instruction and plan meaningful intervention strategies. Through quarterly benchmarking assessments, students, teachers, and the school leader can monitor whether or not a student is on track to meet or exceed standards by the school year's end and adjust classroom instruction and/or intervention groups to increase achievement.

<p>Increase the number of students meeting or exceeding math standards by at least 15% each year for three years.</p>	<p>Math DCAS, grades 3-8 Scholastic Math Inventory, grades 1-8</p>	<p>Based on the 2013 Academic Performance Framework report, 25.2% of the girls achieved proficiency in math. By increasing the percentage of girls meeting standards by 15% each year, in three years the percentages of girls meeting or exceeding standards will fall within the Meets Standard criteria for student achievement in the Performance Framework.</p> <p>The SMI provides immediate, actionable data on students' reading levels so that teachers can differentiate instruction and plan meaningful intervention strategies. Through quarterly benchmarking assessments, students, teachers, and the school leader can monitor whether or not a student is on track to meet or exceed standards by the school year's end and adjust classroom instruction and/or intervention groups to increase achievement.</p>
<p>Increase the number of students meeting or exceeding science standards by at least 15% each year for four years in grades 5 and 8.</p>	<p>Science DCAS, grades 5 and 8 Grade level benchmark assessments aligned to the Next Gen. science standards.</p>	<p>Based on the 2013-2013 DCAS science assessment, 5% of the grade 5 girls and 8% of grade 8 girls were proficient in science. Moving into a STEAM model of education, the science instruction at the Reach Academy will become more robust. An increase of 15% in science proficiency each year for four years at grades 5 and 8 will allow the Reach Academy to exceed the current state science proficiency average of 50% at grade 5 and 49% at grade 8.</p>
<p>Increase the number of students meeting or exceeding social studies standards by at least 15% each year for three years.</p>	<p>Social Studies DCAS, grades 4 and 7 Grade level benchmark assessments from the Social Studies Coalition units.</p>	<p>Based on the 2-13-2014 DCAS social studies assessment, 21% of students in grade 7 were proficient in social studies. The Reach Academy did not have 4th graders until the current school year, so baseline data are not available. However, in grade 7, an increase of social studies proficiency scores of 15% per year for three years will allow the Reach Academy to exceed the current state social studies proficiency average of 59% at grade 7.</p>

c) In the format below, provide any mission-specific goals that you will include in your Performance Agreement. *(Please note: mission-specific goals are optional)*

The Reach Academy will not have any mission specific goals.

d) Provide detailed information on the school's plan for any changes or improvements to its facility for the five years of the next charter. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the proposed facility improvements.

The Reach Academy Board does not anticipate making any changes or improvements to the existing facility in the coming renewal period. Regarding the grounds outside of the school, in the coming year the property will be enclosed with a fence to provide increased security and safety. The Board also intends to raise adequate funds to build a playground space and blacktop area for physical education classes and recess.