

CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



EastSide Charter School

**RENEWAL APPLICATION
FINAL REPORT**

CSAC Final Meeting: November 12, 2014
CSAC Final Report Published: November 20, 2014

By September 30, 2014, the EastSide Charter School submitted an application to renew its charter. Consideration of this application is in accordance with the applicable provisions of 14 *Del. C.* § 514A and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275. Written renewal application guidance is provided by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) on its website. The renewal application template developed by DDOE is aligned to measures and targets within the Performance Framework, which outlines the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all Delaware charter schools are evaluated. The evaluation of the school's performance as measured by the Framework is a major component of the decision on the renewal application. The decision on the renewal application is based on a comprehensive review, guided, in part, by the following three questions:

1. Is the academic program a success?
2. Is the school financially viable?
3. Is the school organizationally sound?

This report serves as a summary of the strengths, areas of follow-up, and/or concerns identified by members of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) during their individual reviews of the charter applicant's renewal application, Performance Review Reports, Annual Reports and Performance Agreements and during the CSAC meetings.

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on November 12, 2014:

Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee

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

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

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

Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)

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

Representatives of Charter School

- Dr. Lamont Browne, Head of School
- Nicholas Medaglio, Director of Operations
- Charles S. McDowell, Esq., Board President

Additional Attendees Noted

- Elizabeth Lewis, Delaware Office of Management and Budget

Performance Framework Ratings Summary

Rating Scales

Academic	Financial	Organizational
E = Exceeds Standard (89-100)	M = Meets Standard	M = Meets Standard
M = Meets Standard (63-88)	D = Does Not Meet Standard	
D = Does Not Meet Standard (39-62)	F = Falls Far Below	DNM = Does Not Meet Standard
F = Falls Far Below Standard (Below 39)		

Academic

Year	1.a. Growth		1.b. Bottom 25%		1.c. Growth to Prof		2.a. Prof		2.b. Overall Subgroup		2.c. District		2.d. Similar Schools		3.a. AYP	4.a. SAT	4.b. Grad Rate	5.a. Mission Specific	OVERALL RATING/SCORE	
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA						
10-11	F	F	M	F	D	F	F	F	D	F	F	F	D	F	M	N/A	N/A	N/A	F	37.5
11-12	D	D	D	D	D	D	F	F	D	D	F	F	D	D	M	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	46.9
12-13	M	D	M	M	M	M	D	F	D	D	D	D	M	M	M	N/A	N/A	N/A	D	61.9
13-14	M	M	E	M	M	M	D	D	D	D	D	D	M	M	M	N/A	N/A	E	M	71.9

Financial

Year	1.a.	1.b.	1.c.	1.d.	2.a.	2.b.	2.c.	2.d.	OVERALL RATING
10-11	F	D	M	M	NR	F	NR	NA	F
11-12	M	D	M	M	NR	M	NR	NA	M
12-13	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	NA	M
13-14	M	D	M	M	M	M	D	NA	M

Organizational

Year	1.a.	1.b.	2	3.a.	3.b.	3.c.	4.a.	4.b.	4.c.	4.d.	5.a.	5.b.	6	OVERALL RATING
11-12	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	N/A	M	M	M	M	Meets
12-13	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	DNM	M	M	M	M	Meets
13-14	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	M	M	M	M	Meets

Discussion

Mr. Blowman noted for the record that, at the Initial CSAC Meeting on October 14, 2014, the CSAC indicated that the Academic Framework, Financial Framework and Organizational Framework sections of the renewal application met standard.

Mr. Blowman noted that the CSAC had requested the following information in order to inform its decision-making:

- State and local funds;
- Five-year projection;
- Revenue sheets; and
- Targeted plan for improving Science and Social Studies outcomes.

Mr. Blowman asked the CSAC whether there were any questions, comments or feedback related to the supplemental information that the school submitted. Ms. Field-Rogers stated that the school submitted the local revenue sheets for the current fiscal year, but not the state and local revenue projections for the five-year budget.

Ms. McCrae confirmed that the school submitted a targeted plan for improving Science and Social Studies outcomes. She stated that the school's Social Studies submission was satisfactory, but that there were concerns regarding the Science submission. In particular, she noted that the Science submission referenced both the Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core State Standards as if they were the same, but stated they are not. She explained that this illustrates a misunderstanding of the Next Generation Science Standards and what is expected in Science. She commended the school for its membership in the Science Coalition and recommended that the school participate in the Science Coalition's Teacher Leader Program. She noted that the Next Generation Science Standards align to the Common Core State Standards. She also recommended that the school take advantage of the downloadable resources available from the National Academies of Science.

Dr. Browne asked Ms. McCrae for additional information regarding the Teacher Leader Program. Ms. McCrae stated that the Science Coalition has a cohort of Next Generation teacher leaders. She stated that there are 100 teacher leaders participating this year. She added that all members of the Science Coalition were invited to have at least one teacher from each participating district or charter school participate in the Teacher Leader Program. She stated that the teacher leaders are working with national leaders on the Next Generation Science Standards to develop effective pedagogy for the classroom. She added that a second cohort will be added next year. She recommended that the school contact Tonyea Mead at the DDOE for more information and resources for implementing the Next Generation Science Standards. Ms. Johnson suggested that the school reach out to other charter schools in the Science Coalition for professional development opportunities. Dr. Browne raised a concern that the Teacher Leader Program may take the school's only Science teacher out of the classroom. Ms. McCrae

noted that the Teacher Leader Program meetings do not occur during classroom time, but during the summer and evenings.

Mr. Blowman noted for the record that the renewal application also included a request to modify the school's enrollment preferences and he asked Ms. Hickey to address this area. Ms. Hickey noted that, at the Initial CSAC Meeting, the CSAC requested that the school submit documentation to affirm that they had requested a charter modification that would provide an enrollment preference to students who live within a five-mile radius of the school. She added that the school has submitted the documentation and the request lists one of the enrollment preferences that are permissible under the statute. Ms. Hickey also noted that the CSAC's decision-making process on the renewal application includes a recommendation on the school's request to modify its charter. She also noted a concern with the student enrollment protocol that was included with the school's submission. Ms. Hickey indicated that she had a conversation with Mr. McDowell regarding the concern and agreed to provide him with a document that would assist the school in ensuring that the student enrollment protocol complies with State requirements. Accordingly, she suggested that, if the CSAC ultimately recommends renewal of the charter, then the CSAC's recommendation should include a condition that the student enrollment protocol be revised and received no later than the end of the public comment period.

Ms. Nagourney asked the school to explain how the modification might change the population of the school and how it aligns to the school's mission. Mr. McDowell stated that the intent is to provide a holistic revitalization project for the entire community that is supported by a cradle to college high-quality education pipeline. He added that the school's Board has been in discussions with the Wilmington Housing Authority regarding the neighboring public housing project to develop a strategy that has proven successful in other places. He stated that the intent is to ensure that the families have access to the great schools that are connected to the neighborhood revitalization project.

Ms. Hickey noted that the school currently has 402 students who reside within the five-mile radius and 67 who reside outside of the five-mile radius, as well as a waiting list. She asked the school to explain how the preference would impact the 67 students who reside outside of the five-mile radius. Mr. McDowell stated that the waiting list does not become involved until the summer because of late enrollments, which occur after the school choice period. He added that the goal is to become a strong preference for the community and eventually utilize a lottery.

Conclusion

Mr. Blowman noted that the school meets the standard on all sections of the Performance Framework. He added that there are a few items that the school needs to address that are not substantive to the renewal.

Mr. Blowman then requested a motion to recommend renewal of the charter of the EastSide Charter School with the following specific conditions:

1. The school shall submit the state and local revenue projections for the five-year budget by December 10, 2014; and
2. The school shall submit a revised student enrollment protocol that complies with State requirements by December 10, 2014.

Mr. Blowman added that the renewal recommendation also includes a recommendation to approve the charter modification.

The motion was made to approve the recommendations and the motion was carried unanimously.

Mr. Blowman reminded the applicant that the CSAC's recommendation was just that; a recommendation to the Secretary of Education on the renewal application.

Next Steps:

- A second public hearing will be held on December 9, 2014, in the 2nd floor Auditorium of the Carvel State Office Building, located at 820 North French Street, Wilmington DE, beginning at 5:00 p.m.
- The public comment period ends on December 10, 2014.
- The State Board of Education will hold a meeting on December 18, 2014, at 1:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor Cabinet Room of the Townsend Building, located at 401 Federal Street, Dover DE, at which point the Secretary of Education will announce his decision on the renewal application and, if required, the State Board will act on that decision.