



Delaware Department of Education
2017-18 Renewal Report
First State Montessori Academy

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Charter School Renewal Report

Requirements Under the Law

The charter school law (14 *Del. C.* § 514A) outlines the provisions that the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) follows for charter renewal and nonrenewal. The DDOE is required to review the preliminary performance of the charter school to determine its compliance with its charter and its satisfaction of the criteria set forth in this title for the purposes of renewal or nonrenewal¹. 14 *Del. C.* § 514A (c) states that,

(c) No later than April 30, the approving authority shall issue a charter school renewal report and charter renewal application guidance to any charter school whose charter will expire the following year. The renewal report shall summarize the charter school's performance record to date, based on the data required by 79 *Del. Laws*, c. 51 and the charter contract, and shall provide notice of any weaknesses or concerns perceived by the approving authority concerning the charter school that may jeopardize its position in seeking renewal if not timely rectified. The charter school shall have 10 working days to respond to the renewal report and submit any corrections or clarifications for the report.

¹ A full copy of 14 *Del. C.* Chapter 5 can be found at: <http://delcode.delaware.gov/title14/c005/>

I. Overview

1.1 Fill in the following chart with the school’s basic information:

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	First State Montessori Academy
Year School Opened	SY 2014-15
Current Enrollment	428
Approved Enrollment	501 for SY 2017-18
School Address	1000 N French St, Wilmington, DE 19801
District(s) of Residence	Christiana School District
Website Address	http://firststatemontessori.org/
Name of School Leader	Courtney Fox
School Leader Email and Phone Number	Courtney.Fox@fsma.k12.de.us 302-576-1500
Name of Board President	Yvonne Nass
Board President Email	yvonnepec@aol.com
Mission Statement:	
<p><i>The mission of the First State Montessori Academy is to create successful, contributing, life-long learners in a Montessori public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.</i></p>	

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1.2 Review the following chart with the school's demographics at the time of submission (all information must be verifiable through state reporting tools):

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION			
	2014-15²	2015-16²	2016-17²
Total Enrollment	280	325	428
% Male	47.50%	48.92%	48.13%
% Female	52.50%	51.08%	51.87%
% African American	22.14%	18.77%	16.59%
% American Indian	0.71%	0.92%	1.40%
% Hawaiian	1.07%	0.92%	0.70%
% Asian	6.07%	6.77%	5.14%
% Hispanic/Latino	8.57%	6.46%	4.67%
% White	61.07%	65.23%	68.22%
% Multiracial	0.36%	0.92%	3.27%
% Special Education	5.36%	8.30% ³	13.78% ³
% English Language Learners	1.79%	1.23%	3.04%
% Low-Income	10.00%	8.31%	11.21%

1.3 Approved Minor and Major Modifications (since last renewal)

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
Nov 2012	Minor – request to delay opening	Approved: Open SY 2014-15
Dec 2013	Minor – increase enrollment	Approved
Jan 2016	Major – increase enrollment	Approved to increase grades from K-6 to K-8 and increase enrollment

Summary:

In the table above, the school's special education percentages for SY 2015-16 and SY 2016-17 are based on the December 1st Enrollment Count instead of the September 1st Unit Count because the December 1st count more accurately reflects the school's percentages of students with disabilities.

² Based on September 30th Unit Count

³ Based on December 1st Enrollment Count

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1.4 School Enrollment: Review the following chart with the school’s enrollment trends during the current term of the charter.

School Enrollment Trends								
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school.</i>								
	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
	Approved Enrollment	9/30 Enrollment Count	Approved Enrollment	9/30 Enrollment Count	Approved Enrollment	9/30 Enrollment Count	Approved Enrollment	9/30 Enrollment Count
K			50	50	50	49	78	78
Grade 1			50	49	50	55	78	73
Grade 2			50	50	50	49	65	66
Grade 3			50	53	50	56	65	61
Grade 4			39	37	50	59	55	62
Grade 5			24	28	39	37	54	62
Grade 6			6	13	24	20	35	26
Grade 7								
Grade 8								
Grade 9								
Grade 10								
Grade 11								
Grade 12								
Total			269*	280	313	325	430	428

Summary:

The charter was originally approved to enroll 241 students in SY 2014-15 but the school’s request for a minor modification to increase enrollment was approved. In school year (SY) 2014-15, First State Montessori Academy launched with 104% of its authorized enrollment. In school year 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy enrolled 104% of its authorized enrollment. In school year 2016-17, First State Montessori Academy enrolled 99.5% of its authorized enrollment. Overall, the school’s actual enrollment has aligned to its projected enrollment.

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1.5 Reenrollment: Review the following chart with the school’s reenrollment trends during the current charter term. Reenrollment Rate is the % of students continuously enrolled in the school from one year to the next.

School Reenrollment Trends								
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school.</i>								
	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
	Number of Students Reenrolled	Percentage of Students Reenrolled	Number of Students Reenrolled	Percentage of Students Reenrolled	Number of Students Reenrolled	Percentage of Students Reenrolled	Number of Students Reenrolled	Percentage of Students Reenrolled
	count	%	count	%	count	%	count	%
K					**	**	**	**
Grade 1					52	100%	46	93.88%
Grade 2					40	81.63%	53	96.36%
Grade 3					52	100%	47	95.92%
Grade 4					48	90.57%	52	92.86%
Grade 5					29	78.38%	56	94.92%
Grade 6					20	71.43%	26	70.27%
Grade 7								
Grade 8								
Grade 9								
Grade 10								
Grade 11								
Grade 12								
Total/Avg					241	90.26%	280	91.80%

** School entry grade level. Reenrollment data not collected for this grade level.

Summary:

In SY15-16 First State Montessori Academy reenrolled 90.26% of the 267 students who attended the school in SY14-15. In SY16-17, First State Montessori Academy reenrolled 91.80% of the 305 students who attended the school in SY15-16. Overall, the school’s reenrollment rate has increased from 90.26% to 91.80% (2.36% increase) from SY 2015-16 to SY2016-17.

II. Academic Performance

Changes in the Academic Framework

From School Year (SY) 2010-11 through SY 2013-14, the academic performance of all charter schools was evaluated using the Delaware Academic Framework Reports that were publishing annually. In July of 2015, the DDOE received approval from the United States Department of Education to use 2014-15 as a flexibility year for all schools in order to transition to a new accountability framework⁴. This new accountability report is referred to as the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF).

For the purposes of reporting the academic achievement for charter schools during this transition period, academic performance is broken down into reporting categories. These categories include:

- ❖ Academic Framework Reporting (2010-11 through 2013-14): This report includes percentages reflecting: Student Progress Over Time (Growth), Student Achievement Status, State and Federal Accountability, Post-Secondary Readiness (High Schools Only), and Mission-Specific Academic Goals which were an optional measure.
- ❖ DSSF Reporting (2014-15 through 2015-16): This report includes two systems for ratings. Metric ratings represented by a one to five star rating for Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, On-Track to Graduation, and College and Career Readiness. This report also includes Academic Performance ratings in the four core subject areas (English Language Arts (ELA), Math, Science, and Social Studies as well as Academic Growth, On Track to Graduation, and College and Career Preparation that are represented as a percentage.

Because these reports differ in how individual reporting categories are calculated, it would not be appropriate to incorporate the data from the DSSF into the Academic Framework utilized from 2010 through 2014. Because SY14/15 was a flexibility year, the charter school data is reported in relationship to the state for comparison purposes only.

All charter schools provide descriptions of their academic performance strengths and areas of growth in their annual reports. Please review the annual reports attached to this report to see the school's response to their annual academic performance.

⁴ US DOE Flexibility Letter can be found at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/232/esea/DEESEA_Flex_Renewal_Letter_7-9-15.pdf.

II. Academic Performance

Is the academic program a success?

2.1 Academic Framework/Delaware Student Success Framework

Year	Academic Framework																			OVERALL RATING/ SCORE	
	1.a. Growth		1.b. Bottom 25%		1.c. Growth to Proficiency		2.a. Proficiency		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 Goal			
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA							
13-14	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

** School opened in August 2014

2.2 Academic Achievement

Overall Academic Ratings

Metrics	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)	
	2014-2015	2015-2016
Academic Achievement	N/A	3 Stars (68/150) Approaching
Growth	N/A	2 Stars (75/200) Needs Improvement
On Track to Graduation	N/A	5 Stars (48/50) Exceeds
College and Career Preparation	N/A	2 Stars (32/100) Needs Improvement

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy did not receive accountability ratings for SY 2014-15 since it was in its first year of operation, in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 3.1.4. In SY 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy earned a rating of 'Approaching' for the Academic Achievement metric and 'Needs Improvement' for the Growth and College and Career Preparation metrics, respectively. The school earned a rating of 'Exceeds' for the On Track to Graduation metric.

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2.3 Proficiency Data

Academic Framework		
Year	2.a. Proficiency	
	Math	ELA
13-14	**	**

** School opened in SY 2014-15

Academic Achievement	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	N/A		3 Stars (68/150) Approaching	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	N/A	50.4%	49.91%	54.91%
Math	N/A	36.0%	33.62%	42.87%
Science	N/A	41.6%	39.00%	60.41%
Social Studies	N/A	46.1%	61.85%	76.82%

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy did not receive accountability ratings for SY 2014-15 since it was in its first year of operation, in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 3.1.4. In SY 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy earned three stars in Academic Achievement. Proficiency in English Language Arts was at 49.91% which was 5% less than the State average. Proficiency in Mathematics was at 33.62% which was 9.25% less than the State average. Proficiency in Science was at 39.00% which was 21.41% less than the State average. Proficiency in Social Studies was at 61.85% which was 14.97% less than the State average.

2.4 Growth Data

Academic Framework		
Year	1.a. Growth	
	Math	ELA
13-14	**	**

** School opened in SY 2014-15

DSSF Growth Data

DSSF Definition: DSSF Growth measures how well schools are doing at improving student learning over time. This metric is a relative calculation of student progress as compared to students with similar assessment history on statewide summative assessments.

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2014-15

Growth in English Language Arts

The relative academic progress that students are demonstrating in English Language Arts

Data Not Available for This School and District



State

Growth in Mathematics

The relative academic progress that students are demonstrating in Mathematics

Data Not Available for This School and District



State

Growth	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	N/A		2 Stars (75/200) Needs Improvement	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	See graphic above	See graphic above	45.83%	50%
Math	See graphic above	See graphic above	28.83%	50%

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy did not receive accountability ratings for SY 2014-15 since it was in its first year of operation, in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 3.1.4. In SY 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy earned two stars in growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Growth in English Language Arts was at 45.83% which was 4.17% less than the State average. Growth in Mathematics was at 28.83% which was 21.17% less than the State average.

2.5 On Track to Graduation Data

Academic Framework	
Year	4.b. Graduation Rate
13-14	**

** School opened in SY 2014-15

DSSF Definition: In elementary and middle schools, attendance data are used to calculate On Track to Graduation Metric. In high schools, the data for the calculation of the On Track in 9th Grade metric is gathered from course credit information and statewide assessment data.

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Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)				
On Track to Graduation	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	N/A		5 Stars Exceeds (48/50 points earned)	
	School	State	School	State
Attendance	96.79%	94.7%	96.28%	94.4%
On-Track in the 9th grade	**	89.9%	**	84.8%
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate ⁵	**	84.4%	**	84.35%
5-year Cohort Graduation Rate	**	81.1%	**	85.84%
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate	**	81.3%	**	Not calculated at the state level.

** The school did not service students in the grade levels assessed by this metric.

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy has exceeded the state’s average daily attendance for the past two years.

2.6 College & Career Preparation Data

Academic Framework			
Year	1c. Growth to Proficiency		4a. SAT
	ELA	Math	
13-14	**	**	N/A

** School opened in August 2014

DSSF Definition: This DSSF metric gives an indication of whether students are growing enough to be proficient in the future. **For elementary and middle schools**, Growth to Proficiency in ELA and Math is based on 3 years of statewide assessment data, including Smarter assessment data and up to 3 years of DCAS, the prior statewide summative assessment. **For high schools: College and Career Preparation** is the percent of students who have demonstrated preparation for education and career training after high school through Smarter, AP, IB, SAT, Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and dual enrollment.

⁵ Graduation rate data is lag data by one school year to include all students that have completed their high school diplomas during that year including summer graduates.

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	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
College & Career Prep	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	N/A		2 Stars (32/100) Needs Improvement	
	School	State	School	State
Growth to Proficiency ELA	N/A	49.9%	50.91%	57.1%
Growth to Proficiency Math	N/A	23.8%	13.64%	34.42%
College & Career Preparation	**	69.42%	**	46.41%

** The school did not service students in the grade levels assessed by this metric

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy did not receive accountability ratings for SY 2014-15 since it was in its first year of operation, in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 3.1.4. In SY 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy earned two stars for growth to proficiency in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Growth to proficiency in English Language Arts was at 50.91% which was 6.19% less than the State average. Growth to proficiency in Mathematics was at 13.64% which was 20.78% less than the State average.

III. Organizational Framework

- *Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?*
- *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations, fiduciary duties, and sound public stewardship?*
- *Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?*

School Year	Education Program		Financial Management	Governance and Reporting			Students and Employees				School Environment		Additional Obligations	OVERALL RATINGS
	1a	1b	2	3a	3b	3c	4a	4b	4c	4d	5a	5b	6	
	Charter Terms	Students with Disabilities	Financial Management and Oversight	Governance	Management Accountability	Reporting Requirements	Protecting Student Rights	Attendance Goal	Staff Credentialing	Employee Rights	Facility and Transportation Requirements	Health and Safety Requirements	Additional Obligations	
2013-2014	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
2014-2015	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	D	N/R ⁶	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2015-2016	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N/R	M	M	M	Meets Standard

** School was not open in 2013-14

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy earned overall ratings of ‘Meets Standard’ in SY 2014-15 and SY 2015-16. In SY 2014-15, First State Montessori Academy did not meet the standard for staff credentialing (measure 4c) because the school’s percentage of high qualified teachers (HQT) was less than the federal requirement of 100% (78.6%). The school would have met the State requirement. In SY 2015-16, First State Montessori Academy earned a rating of ‘Meets Standard’ for this measure.

⁶ In 2014-15, all schools were held to the NCLB requirement of 100% HQT which was more restrictive than the Delaware statute which allows for charter schools to hire uncertified staff under certain conditions.

IV. Financial Framework

Is the school financially viable?

	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				Overall Rating
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, &	Total Margin	Debt Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	
2013-2014	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
2014-2015	M	M	M	M	N/R	M	N/R	N/R	Meets Standard
2015-2016	M	M	M	M	N/R	M	N/R	N/R	Meets Standard

** School was not open in 2013-14

Summary:

First State Montessori Academy has earned overall ratings of 'Meets Standard' since the school opened. Measures 2a (Total Margin), 2c (Cash Flow), and 2d (Debt Service Coverage Ratio) were not rated because these measures require three years of audited statements for the calculations.