



Delaware Department of Education
2017-18 Renewal Report
Sussex Academy

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Attachments:

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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 Review the following chart with the school's basic information:

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	Sussex Academy
Year School Opened	2000
Current Enrollment	692
Approved Enrollment	776 for SY17/18
School Address	21150 Airport Road, Georgetown, DE 19947
District(s) of Residence	Indian River School District
Website Address	http://www.sussexacademy.org/
Name of School Leader	Patricia Oliphant
School Leader Email and Phone Number	patricia.oliphant@saas.k12.de.us (302) 856-3636
Name of Board President	Denise Westbrook
Board President Email	denise.westbrook@saas.k12.de.us
Mission Statement:	
<p><i>The mission of the Sussex Academy is to foster academic achievement and social responsibility in a small school environment where students participate in an highly accelerated college preparatory program that prepares them for the technological and global mindedness needed for the 21st century and that instills ethical conduct and service to others in their day-to-day lives.</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			
	2014-15 ²	2015-16 ²	2016-17 ²
Total Enrollment	498	594	692
% Male	40.4%	42.1%	41.3%
% Female	59.6%	57.9%	58.7%
% African American	2.9%	5.2%	3.9%
% American Indian	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%
% Asian	4.0%	3.4%	3.9%
% Hispanic/Latino	.04%	8.6%	12.7%
% White	78.1%	77.6%	75%
% Multiracial	3.2%	3.5%	3.2%
% Special Education	4.4%	3.6%	4.6%
% English Language Learners	0.5%	0.4%	0.7%
% Low-Income	11.2%	7.8%	10.4%

1.3 Approved Minor and Major Modifications

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
February 2013	Minor - Name change to Sussex Academy	Approved for SY13/14

² Based on September 30th Unit 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								
Grade 1								
Grade 2								
Grade 3								
Grade 4								
Grade 5								
Grade 6	116	120	116	129	116	130	116	130
Grade 7	110	120	110	127	110	129	110	134
Grade 8	110	120	110	129	110	130	110	130
Grade 9	110	52	110	78	110	102	110	111
Grade 10			110	35	110	69	110	91
Grade 11					110	34	110	57
Grade 12							110	39
Total	446	412	556	498	666	594	776	692

Summary:

Sussex Academy has shown consistent enrollment growth over the last five years. The school has averaged enrollment of between 89% and 92% of projected enrollment.

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1.5 School 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 gray 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								
Grade 2								
Grade 3								
Grade 4								
Grade 5								
Grade 6	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Grade 7	108	93.04%	112	93.33%	117	90.0%	127	97.69 %
Grade 8	106	92.98%	103	85.83%	122	96.06%	114	88.37%
Grade 9	21	18.92%	40	33.33%	67	51.94%	70	53.85%
Grade 10			31	59.62%	63	80.77%	83	81.37%
Grade 11					30	85.71%	54	78.26%
Grade 12							39	100%
Total/Avg	235	69.12%	286	69.42%	399	80.12%	487	81.99%

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

Summary:

Sussex Academy averaged between 69.12% and 85.58% reenrollment rates over the last four years.

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 framework³. 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.

³ 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 School Success Framework

Year	Academic Framework																			
	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	OVERALL RATING/ SCORE	
	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA						
13-14	D	M	E	M	E	M	E	E	E	E	E	E	M	E	M	N/A	N/A	N/A	E	88.8%

2.2 Academic Achievement

Overall Academic Ratings

Metrics	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)	
	2014-2015	2015-2016
Academic Achievement	5 Stars Exceeds	5 Stars Exceeds (136/150 points earned)
Growth	5 Stars Exceeds	5 Stars Exceeds (170/200 points earned)
On Track to Graduation	5 Stars Exceeds	5 Stars Exceeds (48/50 points earned)
College and Career Preparation	4 Meets	5 Stars Exceeds(89/100points earned)

2.3 Summary of ratings narrative:

Over the last five years, including in the baseline year of Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium, Sussex Academy has met and exceeded all academic standards and measures. Based on proficiency ratings from SY16/17, Sussex Academy was the highest performing school in grades sixth through eighth in English Language Arts, and Science and the second highest performing school in the state in Math. Sussex Academy was the second highest performing school in the state in SAT.

2.4 Proficiency Data

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

DSSF Definition: *Proficiency* in a given subject is the percent of students who are on grade level (i.e., proficient) in said subject.

Academic Achievement	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	5 Stars Exceeds		5 Stars Exceeds (125/150 points earned)	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	95.9%	50.4%	98.34%	54.91%
Math	74.9%	36.0%	80.89%	42.87%
Science	92.6%	41.6%	90.13%	60.41%
Social Studies	99.1%	46.1%	93.81%	76.82%

Summary:

Sussex Academy has consistently outperformed the state in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The school has been ranked in the top ten of the highest performing schools in SBAC, SAT, and DCAS for 2017.

2.5 Growth Data

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

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.

2014-15

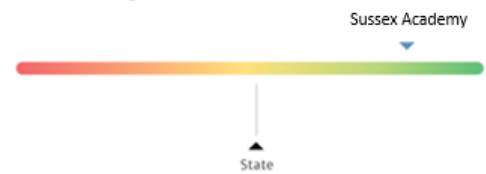
Growth in English Language Arts

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



Growth in Mathematics

The relative academic progress that students are demonstrating in Mathematics



Growth	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	5 Stars Exceeds		5 Stars Exceeds (170/200 points earned)	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	See graphic above	See graphic above	82.17%	50%
Math	See graphic above	See graphic above	87.5%	50%

Summary:

Sussex Academy has earned five stars in growth in English Language Arts and Mathematics for the last two years.

2.6 On Track to Graduation Data

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

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.

	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
On Track to Graduation	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	5 Stars Exceeds		5 Stars Exceeds (48/50 points earned)	
	School	State	School	State
Attendance	96%	94.7%	95.5%	94.4%
On-Track in the 9th grade	**	89.9%	**	84.8%
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate ⁴	**	84.4%	**	84.35%
5-year Cohort Graduation Rate ⁴	**	81.1%	**	85.84%
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate ⁴	**	81.3%	**	Not calculated at the state level.

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

Summary:

Sussex Academy did not complete its expansion of grades 9-12 until SY16/17 and therefore the school will not obtain a rating for graduation rates until the release of the SY18-19 Delaware School Success Framework reports⁴.

⁴ 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.

2.7 College & Career Preparation Data

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

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.

	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
College & Career Prep	2014-2015		2015-2016	
Rating	4 Meets		5 Stars Exceeds(89/100points earned)	
	School	State	School	State
Growth to Proficiency ELA	100%	49.9%	98.84%	57.1%
Growth to Proficiency Math	56.8%	23.8%	79.65%	34.42%
College & Career Preparation	**	69.42%	**	46.41%

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

Summary:

Sussex Academy met and exceeded the state in all growth to proficiency metrics. The school has maintained a rating of meeting and exceeding standards for the last four years.

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	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2014-2015	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N/R	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2015-2016	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	N/R ⁵	M	M	M	Meets Standard

Summary:

Sussex Academy has met all standards measured by the Organizational Performance Framework annually for the last three years. The school has maintained an overall rating of meets standard since the implementation of the Organizational Performance Frameworks in SY2011-2012.

⁵NOTE: In 2013-14 and/or 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	M	M	D	M	M	M	D	M	Meets Standard
2014-2015	M	M	D	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2015-2016	M	M	D	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

Summary:

Sussex Academy has maintained an overall rating of meets standard since the implementation of the Financial Performance Frameworks in SY2011-2012. The school has met all measures as assessed by the Financial Performance Framework metrics excluding cash flow (2c) in SY2013-2014 and enrollment variance (1c) for the last three years.

In SY 2013-2014, Sussex Academy did not meet standards in the Cash Flow (2c) metric. The school's result as a year one cash flow of -\$90,545 and a year three cash flow of \$40,900. Cash flow indicates the trend in the school's cash balance over a period of time. This measure is similar to days cash on hand but indicates long-term stability verses near-term. Since cash flow fluctuations from year-to-year can have a long-term impact on a school's financial health, this metric assesses both three-year cumulative cash flow and annual cash flow.

The preferred result is greater than zero. In all other years, Sussex Academy has met standards in this metric area.

Enrollment variance (1c) is a measure of budget based on projected in comparison to the actual enrollment. The preferred result is 95%. In SY2013-2014 the school's result for this metric was 92%. In SY2014-2015 the school's result for this metric was 90%. In SY2015-2016 the school's result for this metric was 94%. The chart below depicts the number of students needed to meet with 95% threshold over the last three years.

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
446	412	556	498	666	594	776	692
95%	+12	95%	+30	95%	+39	95%	+39

School's Response

In the annual report for 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, Sussex Academy noted the following response to not meeting standards in 1c and 2c metrics:

Challenges

Funding for our school is a function of enrollment. Funds for student transportation and local funding are based on expenditures of the prior school year and thus are difficult to predict. Shifts in the number of students enrolled at our school from one school district or another can cause anticipated revenues to fluctuate, as can decreases in local expenditures. In addition, the Sussex Academy has benefited greatly from the opportunity to swap buildings with Delmarva Christian High School as the new facility provides both finished and potential new spaces to accommodate the anticipated growth in our student population over the next few years. However, there will likely be unexpected building related expenses due to the age of the building and the unknown maintenance practices and history of the former tenant. In an effort to address this concern, the Sussex Academy maintains an account at PNC Bank and is currently depositing approximately \$1800 monthly to establish a maintenance reserve. It is anticipated that this amount will be increased as additional students are enrolled in the upper grades.

Opportunities for Growth

We are fortunate to have an active and successful foundation supporting our school. The Sussex Academy Foundation, Inc. has raised the funds to purchase and renovate portions of the building that the school is currently occupying. The Foundation has funds on hand to continue completing the unfinished portions of the new facility and will be aggressively soliciting funds to develop the property further in the coming years. This will include constructing additional classrooms, installing athletic fields, and finishing the stage, kitchen, library, and cafeteria. A Building and Grounds Committee has been established to work with the Foundation to ensure that the school's needs are addressed as we grow into an institution serving grades 6 through 12.

In SY2015-2016, revisions were made to the Financial Performance Framework that allowed schools to provide a response for any rating where the school failed to meet standards. Sussex Academy provided the following response:

School's Response

We believe that we will meet or exceed the preferred Enrollment Variance of 95% or more beginning in school year 2017- 18 and beyond based on the enrollment patterns of 2013-14 to present. During this time period we have expanded from a school offering services to grades 6-8 by adding high school grades one year at a time. Our expansion is complete and we now offer services to students in grades 6-12.