

January 25, 2018 Submitted Electronically

Dear Board of Director's Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security, Delaware Charter Accountability Commission and Delaware State Board of Education

Re: DAPSS Board Management and Performance:

As you are aware, the Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security has been placed under formal review and has begun due process of investigation. The primary origin of the request for review is: Failure to comply with the Core Charter Frameworks in the areas of Academic Performance, Financial Viability/Sustainability and Charter Compliance. These findings are accurate and regrettably egregious.

My point of reference for this missive originates from my consistent volunteer involvement with the school as a founding board member, Chair of its personnel committee having led the hiring process for all Heads of School to date, primary author of the culture shift strategic plan, initial marketing plans and more. As a volunteer who and as an African American woman with a state historical experience in a non-traditional career path, I believed in the school's mission and hoped it would be an vocational pathway with real world community integration for interested students in First Responder careers. I and others of like mind worked consistently to ensure it was an environment conducive to inclusivity, diversity and academic success.

Most recently my experience with the school is one as its Board Chair since 2016 after a course/culture correction within the board's administration and intentional elimination of an era of cronyism, nepotism, lack of diversity within its leadership, staffing and school population, singular board governance and non-inclusion, supported unethical practices, lack of academic structure and follow thru, increased financial burdens due to dual leases and unbalanced negotiated salaries, originated by singular leadership decisions and agreements, non-compliance with ADA requirements, and student abuse allegations. I am most proud this work and those who joined me.

These actions and environment offended my value system, motivated contention as well as extreme discourse among the board, adversely impacted student and staff recruitment and retention and enabled a non-productive academic environment. During this time frame, the DAPSS Board was not engaged or experienced interaction with the DOE Charter Office or the Charter Network(DAPSS has been a consistent member).Per DOE Charter School review process we were duly placed on Conditional review, given modification and waivers due to state educational systemic changes.

Per inquiry, I understand that during that time, the DOE Charter Office and the Delaware Charter School Network interaction was robust with the then Board Chair and Head of School and assumed the board was informed. This is regrettable as we did not benefit from direct information, relationship building, support and or communications despite repeated query.

DAPSS has emerged from that era, but still struggles as evidenced in its most recent reports. All are not in agreement with a sanitized environment, professional environment a changing student demographic and need (increase in African American students, students presenting with core skills deficits in reading and math below grade level and special education needs) including some staff .DAPSS has been plagued by a lack of leadership follow through in the day to day operations, good cop bad cop approaches in leadership, ongoing teacher

turnover and ultimately student blight. Core instruction, educational gain or knowledge attainment is not occurring is still not occurring in the current climate.

Externally and most recently and as a part of the review process ,Kendall Massett,Executive Director ,DCSN presented at our most recent board meeting with an abrasive and unprofessional approach/tone regarding our situation. She initially interrupted an exchange between an Emeritus Board member (Dennis O'Brien) and myself/board chair and implied this was our board norm. It was unfortunate but not the case prior to this meeting. She yelled at the board that we were going to lose our charter and that drastic change had to occur stating change of the board and listed several schools (mostly with populations of color) who lost their charter and those who survived had used this strategy. She further accused the Board of lack of governance, expressly looking at me and stated that Denise Stouffer, DOE Charter authorizer spoke to me monthly about issues at DAPSS, etc. I indicated it was not accurate, but it was clear she was not postured or willing to listen. Her manner was most unhelpful, divisive and not in keeping what I understand the mission of the membership organization to be, one as an advocate and constructive critic. It is expected that this body should assist and support with charter accountability, as well as a critic to its members, but this manner is unacceptable and represents a direct abuse of authority. No one is allowed to address me in that manner and she was informed of the same. It was embarrassing. It is my sincere hope that this section will be received as a direct response to the same and that no other volunteer or entity involved in a Charter school ever be exposed to like behavior again.

Since that meeting and currently, the DAPSS board and staff are influx, practicing hysterics, and participating in manipulative and divisive actions led by a returning previous board member, who was a key participant of the negative, non-inclusive culture that eroded the school's environment during its initial decline. As such the board has turned its attention to me, the Board chair to facilitate an ouster of me as Chair of the Board lead by the same, Dennis O'Brien. It has called an emergency meeting with an expressed agenda to do so, without my input, although I was planning a meeting via the Head of School, Herb Sheldon with input from DAPSS attorney simultaneously to discuss our plans and path forward. Mr. Sheldon and other staff are signatures listed on the petition to call a meeting. While they are key stakeholders, they are not members of the board. Their presence throughout my tenure was to deliberately afford them direct access to board information and actions and to support their inclusion and benefit from their critical input.

Acutely aware of the abysmal academic progress, academic best practices have been developed, and implemented to address these critical issues. In this volatile environment and with current operational leadership, I am not confident DAPSS should continue and that emergent efforts are enough to yield academic progress. The students and family deserve more and this is regrettable. They love the school and what it stands for. Again it is not enough and I completely support admonishment for poor academic progress.

Given the personal time I have committed to DAPSS, I refuse to exist or subject myself further to such disrespect and disregard from this group. Through much prayer, consultation with my husband and legal counsel, I therefore resign my position as Board Chair and forgo my professional interest in DAPSS effective immediately.
Sincerely,

Shereese Brewington-Carr. M. H. S.