



# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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January 18, 2018  
Via email attachment

Ms. Sherese Brewington-Carr  
President, Board of Directors  
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security  
801 N. DuPont Highway  
New Castle, DE 19720

Dear Ms. Brewington-Carr:

Please be advised that, for the reasons set forth below and with the assent of the State Board of Education, the Department of Education (“Department”) has placed the charter of Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security (“DAPSS”) on Formal Review, pursuant to Title 14, Delaware Code, Section 515(b), to determine whether the school is violating the terms of its charter and, if so, whether to order remedial measures.

At the December 18, 2014 meeting of the State Board of Education, the charter for DAPSS was renewed with the following conditions:

1. The school shall attain a rating of “Meets Standard” on the Academic Framework for the 2014-15 school year; and
2. The school shall attain a rating of “Meets Standard” on the Financial Framework for the 2014-15 school year.

### Academic Performance

In July of 2015, the Department received approval from the United States Department of Education to use school year (SY) 2014-15 as a flexibility year for all schools in order to transition to a new accountability framework, the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF). As the State changed to a new statewide assessment and accountability system, DAPSS was provided additional time to meet its renewal conditions. In SY 2015-16, Delaware changed the academic assessment for high schools from Smarter Balanced to the SAT. The table below summarizes the school’s academic performance since the 2014-15 school year.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
<b>Academic Achievement</b>	1 Star Far Below	2 Stars Needs Improvement	1 Star Far Below
<b>Growth</b>	1 Star Far Below	3 Stars Approaching	2 Stars Needs Improvement
<b>On-Track to Graduation</b>	5 Stars Exceeds	4 Stars Meets	5 Stars Exceeds
<b>College and Career Preparation</b>	1 Star Far Below	1 Star Far Below	2 Stars Needs Improvement

As noted above, the school was expected to attain a rating of “Meets Standard” on the Academic Performance Framework (DSSF). However, the school’s academic performance has only met or exceeded standards in one of the four DSSF metric area, On-Track to Graduation. Otherwise, the school’s performance has not met standard in Academic Achievement, Academic Growth and College and Career Preparation in the last three years.

### Financial Performance

The school was also expected to attain a rating of “Meets Standard” on the Financial Performance Framework for SY 2014-15. The table below summarizes the school’s financial performance since SY 2014-15.

Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	Overall Rating
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants	Total Margin	Debt to Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Financial Mgmt & Oversight	
2014-15	F	F	F	M	F	F	F	M	M	Falls Far Below Standard
2015-16	F	F	F	M	M	F	F	M	D	Falls Far Below Standard
2016-17	F	AS	AS	M	M	F	M	M	M	Approaching Standard

Despite some improvements in individual metric areas, the school has failed to attain an overall rating of “Meet Standard” in the last three years. One of the key indicators of financial viability is robust student enrollment. This is an area where the school has failed to meet standard over the past three years (see table above, measure 1c. Enrollment Variance). In SY 2015-16, DAPSS was approved for a modification to decrease enrollment from 480 to 330 students beginning in SY 2016-17, with incremental year to year growth thereafter (340, 355, 365, 375). Despite the decrease to 330 students in SY 2016-17, the school did not meet the 80% requirement for enrollment by May 1, 2016, enrolling only 254 students (77% of authorized enrollment). Based on annual September 30<sup>th</sup> Unit Count data, this is the third year that the school has shown a decline in enrollment going from 303 students in SY 2015-16 to 270 students in SY 2016-17 and to 228 students in SY 2017-18.

DAPSS is currently authorized to enroll 340 students this year (SY 2017-18) but the school had only enrolled 228 students (67% of authorized enrollment) as of the September 30, 2017 Unit Count. DAPSS currently has 217 students enrolled (64%). A student enrollment number so far below the total authorized enrollment and 80% minimum raises concerns about whether the school will be financially viable. It also raises concerns about whether many areas of the approved charter application can be implemented with fidelity – these include, but are not limited to: plans for curriculum and education delivery, plans to serve students with special needs, and plans for administrative and financial operations. With a 2018 graduating class of 47 students, 48 choice applications, and one withdrawal at the time of this letter, it is questionable if DAPSS will be able to meet the standard for enrollment this school year. The school is authorized to enroll 355 students next year (SY 2018-19) and would need to enroll 284 students to meet the 80% requirement for enrollment by May 1, 2018.

## Organizational Performance

Although the school's charter renewal did not have a condition relative to organizational performance, the Department expects all charter schools to annually attain an overall rating of "Meets Standard." Despite improving its overall rating from "Does Not Meet Standard" in SY 2015-16 to "Approaching Standard" in SY 2016-17, the school has failed to attain an overall rating of "Meet Standard" in the last three years. A charter school's success is largely tied to its Board of Directors fulfilling essential governance and public stewardship responsibilities. While there has been some improvement, this is an area where the school has failed to meet standard over the past two years. Five Board members have not completed the required State financial training and two have not completed the required governance training.

The Charter School Office and other Department staff have provided ongoing technical assistance and various supports to address the school's performance (see attached timeline).

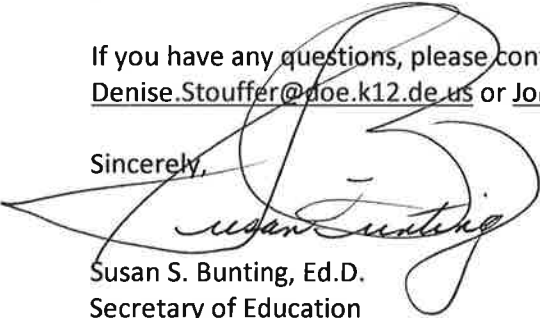
Please also be aware of the provisions of 14 Del. Admin. C. § 275.5.2, which states: "Compliance with the charter, including compliance with the terms of any conditions placed on the charter, is a condition precedent to the authority to open and operate the Charter School. Failure to comply with the terms of the charter and any conditions placed on the charter, including deadlines, constitutes a forfeiture of the authority to operate the Charter School regardless of previous approval. These regulations are incorporated into and made a part of each charter approved by the Department with the consent of the State Board. A Charter School's failure to comply with these regulations shall be treated as a failure on the part of the school to comply with its charter." The current situation constitutes a failure to comply with the terms of the charter the Department approved and therefore is a forfeiture of the authority to operate the Charter School.

This matter will be referred to the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) for review and recommendations. Please find attached a timeline for this process, including dates of CSAC meetings and public hearings.

The annual reports for SY 2014-15, SY 2015-16, and SY 2016-17 will be provided to CSAC along with the renewal record. We encourage you to submit additional information such as updated enrollment projections, recruitment plans, etc.

If you have any questions, please contact Denise Stouffer or John Carwell at (302) 735-4020 or [Denise.Stouffer@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Denise.Stouffer@doe.k12.de.us) or [John.Carwell@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:John.Carwell@doe.k12.de.us).

Sincerely,



Susan S. Bunting, Ed.D.  
Secretary of Education

Enclosures

Cc: Herb Sheldon, Head of School, Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security  
Karen Field Rogers, Associate Secretary, Delaware Department of Education  
Denise Stouffer, Lead Education Associate, Charter School Office, Delaware Department of Education

## Formal Review Process Timeline

Date	Event
January 30, 2018 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) Initial Meeting Location: Cabinet Room Delaware Department of Education 401 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901
February 1, 2018	CSAC Initial Report issued
February 13, 2018 6:30 p.m.	Public Hearing #1 Location: EastSide/Charter School of New Castle Administration Building 1101 Delaware Street, New Castle, 19720
February 16, 2018 (15 days)	School response to CSAC Initial Report Due
February 20, 2018 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) Final Meeting Location: Cabinet Room Delaware Department of Education 401 Federal Street, Dover, DE 19901
February 22, 2018	CSAC Final Report issued
March 9, 2018 5:00 p.m.	Public Hearing #2 Location: DOE West Large Conference Rooms A&B Delaware Department of Education John W. Collette Education Resource Center 35 Commerce Way, Dover, DE 19904
March 9, 2018	The public comment period closes
March 15, 2018	The Secretary of Education will announce her decision at the State Board of Education meeting (as required).

## Charter School Office Supports

- 10/9/15 Charter School Office met with former DAPSS Board President, Charles Copeland and school leadership to review 2014-15 Performance Framework Report and discuss FY16 budget and enrollment
- 11/9/15 Teleconference: Discussed 2014-15 Performance Framework Reports
- 9/20/16 Charter School Office team met with school to review FY17 preliminary budget
- 10/19/16 John Carwell attended the Board meeting to observe Board meeting process. Pre-meeting held with Board President, Sherese Brewington-Carr, to discuss concerns which included by-laws and enrollment.
- 11/3/16 Charter School Office team met with DAPSS leadership team to review 2015-16 Performance Framework Reports.
- 12/19/16 Teleconference with Sherese Brewington-Carr to prepare for Board governance technical assistance session.
- 12/21/16 John Carwell provided Board governance technical assistance session
- 1/24/17 Jenn Davis provided on-site technical assistance regarding school counseling services
- 5/10/17 Charter School Office site visit to review revised Organizational Performance Framework template and conduct classroom observations.
- 7/25/17 Charter School Office attended Board meeting
- 9/21/17 Denise Stouffer attended Board meeting
- 10/6/17 Teleconference with Herb Sheldon regarding FY17 Audit
- 10/17/17 Teleconference with Herb Sheldon to discuss FY17 Audit
- 10/13/17 Teleconference with Herb Sheldon and Sherese Brewington-Carr to review updated FY18 budget (Ms. Brewington-Carr had earlier confirmed her availability but did not participate)
- 10/25/17 Denise Stouffer attended CBOC meeting in place of DOE representative, Richard Riggs (see note below).
- 11/29/17 Denise Stouffer visited the school for classroom observations. Low attendance observed.
- 11/29/17 Denise Stouffer attended Board meeting to review 2016-17 Performance Framework Reports and low daily attendance rates.
- 12/8/17 John Carwell visited the school for classroom observations and monitor daily attendance.

Note: This list does not include the numerous phone calls to and from the school to provide information or problem solve an issue. Additionally, a DOE representative, Richard Riggs, attends the school's monthly Citizen Budget Oversight Committee meetings. The Charter School Office has also made numerous impromptu site visits and followed up with the school accordingly.

## DAPSS Recruitment Plan

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Position Responsible</b>	<b>Assessment/Evaluation Measures/Strategies</b>
Website design update: distribute pertinent information regarding early college programming, events and enrollment information	Recruitment Committee, Recruitment Coordinator	Each quarter, collect and evaluate data related to website usage. Ensure monthly website compliance and updates.
Improve internal marketing & communication: train staff for better use of Outlook calendar feature as an information tool for daily updates important events/dates to employees, students and parents	Recruitment Committee, Technology Staff	Update events each quarter. Train staff bi-annually.
Multi Media: Improve external marketing by placing Advertisement in Newspapers, Radio, and or TV, road billboards and mall banners	Recruitment Committee, Recruitment Coordinator	Analyze cost per ad and analyze investment compared to increased cadet traffic and information requests.
Increase knowledge or recruitment tactics among staff, parents, and cadets	Recruitment Committee, Staff, Cadets, and Parents	Once (1) a quarter: Create a monthly update recruitment: Provide mini in-service for faculty and staff to inform them of progress.
Recruitment video	Recruitment Committee, Technology staff, Recruitment Coordinator	Annually: Develop recruitment video
Attend community meetings, high school nights, recruitment and career fairs, and volunteer fire company open houses	Recruitment Committee, Recruitment Coordinator, cadets, staff	Distribute push cards, printed materials and program information; have cadets attend to speak to potential students.
Academy tours/site visits	Recruitment Committee, Cadets, Recruitment Coordinator, Director of Public Safety	Promote DAPSS through academy tours as requested.
New cadet/freshman interview	Recruitment Committee, Administrative team	Develop standardized questions that are in line with our public safety culture.
Add tutoring and other academic services for our cadets	Senior Administration	Add at least two new academic programs a year for the next five years.
Evaluate all pre-registration	Recruitment Committee	Every quarter closely monitor any cadet that files an application.
Conduct parent meeting for current and incoming cadets	Recruitment Committee, Senior Administration	Ongoing

Customer service	Recruitment Committee, Staff	Customer service training annually for all staff during Aug PD
Academic notification	Administration, School Counselor, Staff	Provide cadets/parents with ongoing academic progress notification monthly or as needed.
Open house nights	Recruitment Committee, Senior Administration	Twice a month; September-May.
Shadowing	Recruitment Committee, TacOps	Students from other schools may request to shadow a cadet during academy hours from September-May.
Create a budget for advertising and advertising materials	Head School, Operations Specialist, Board of Directors	yearly
Target marketing with volunteer fire companies, public safety organizations and our advisory partners to find cadets that have public safety interest	Recruitment Committee, Director of Public Safety, Cadets, TacOps	Three (3) each quarter: Distribute push cards, printed materials and program information; have cadets attend to speak.
Review and update enrollment information form and create an enrollment packet	Recruitment Committee, Recruitment Coordinator	Review existing enrollment information form.