



The Delaware STEM Academy
109 Lukens Drive, New Castle, DE 19720
302-993-6993
www.destemacademy.org

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Delaware Department of Education

Charter School Office

401 Federal Street, Suite #2

Dover, DE 19901-3639

Exhibits

May 16, 2016

To the Members of the Charter School Advisory Committee:

I am a member of the DE STEM Academy Board of Directors and I am here tonight to express my support for the opening of the school this September. I am one of eleven active board members who are passionately and actively involved in launching this new high school.

I am a DE licensed civil engineer who has spent the last thirty three years working in the public and private sectors specifically in the area of transportation. I have seen the growing need for technically educated employees for all aspects of planning, design and construction related jobs in Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic region. The work force of today not only needs to have critical technical skills but also critical thinking, ability to collaborate with others and work in teams as well as effective communication skills.

The vision of the DE STEM Academy is to create a learning environment that prepares its students to meet these work force needs through an exciting project based learning approach through the New Tech Network platform. We believe using STEM integrated projects will enable all of our students to learn the State's core curriculum in a manner that meets all developmental levels. As members of the business community we are passionate about the benefits to each student whether they move directly into the work force from high school or on to higher education.

But being passionate isn't enough to make a school successful – we need to have adequate enrollment numbers to meet the expectations of our charter. We are aggressively marketing our school through a digital marketing campaign, outreaching to local community groups, networking with student organizations such as the Boy's and Girl's Scouts, Boy's and Girl's clubs and the Police Athletic leagues and engaging our parents and students. We also value the opportunity this public process provides to show the level of commitment from our parents and business community through their testimonials and letters of support.

As business leaders, our Board appreciates the importance of the formal review process. Educating students should not be taken lightly as it is a huge responsibility. We also understand the importance of providing a high quality learning environment to an underserved population with regards to STEM related career pathways. We will keep our focus on this mission while we work with the CSAC committee to address any outstanding concerns or issues over the next few weeks. We are confident in our ability to increase our enrollment, as we continue our efforts to prepare for the successful opening of the DE STEM Academy this September.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carolann Wicks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carolann" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wicks".

Carolann Wicks, P.E.

V.P. DE STEM Academy

Delaware Department of Education
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Dover, DE 19901-3639

To Whom It May Concern:

SUBJECT: DELAWARE STEM ACADEMY

On behalf of myself, Dr Anthony S Ragone, Engineering R&D lead Investigator at DuPont Engineering Technologies and a member of the Delaware STEM Academy Board of Directors, I am writing to offer support for the opening of the Delaware STEM Academy in September 2016.

The need for STEM high schooling is critical in our rapidly changing natural, educational and business environments. Businesses and communities are increasingly aware of and active around biosciences and environmental engineering to combat global climate change, provide food and shelter to our world while sustaining natural resources. An education that fosters the capability to meet these demands is needed now. Delaware has been my home for the majority of my life, and treated me well, so I want to give back to its citizens and environment in meaningful ways. I think this STEM Academy will deliver.

Over the past 30+ years, and during my 34 year DuPont career, objective educational performance measures clearly indicate the US educational competitiveness has declined markedly in all categories, especially in math and science, compared to other key first world nations. Even though Delaware has been relatively competitive within the US, we will need to deliver higher quality education to meet the coming enormous environmental needs and business demands for an increasingly skilled and adaptive workforce. We will need to up our game and very soon to so our workforce can help meet the challenges faced by our citizens, governments and businesses.

Businesses are increasingly global in reach and outlook, and are wired via the internet in a way that provides connectivity and ability to network and develop teamwork almost anywhere. Our school will foster the STEM skills needed to meet the shared challenges. One key is improved teamwork. Our DE STEM Academy will prepare our students for this changing world and its' challenges through the New Tech Network project based learning system (PBL). It will deliver the skills to advance the reality of and need for effective workplace teamwork. PBL will help the students focus together on deliverables – not just grades - that have measureable impact, and deliver results quicker. We plan a greenhouse project to learn how to grow edible plants, as well a solar panel project to help drive sustainable energy solutions, and possibly lower the school energy bill, all the while meeting educational standards. The teams will use the basics of math and engineering to build a functioning greenhouse (with supplies from DuPont), as well as employ biophysical and chemical principles to grow the plant successfully by

sustainable regulation of nutrient and water content. You might say this is a direct application of Avogadro's number to increase greenhouse avocados numbers.

The need to improve education for our New Castle County constituents alone concerns me, as our county will experience sea level rises in the next decades and the changes to our shoreline, farms, and homes could be huge if solutions do not begin soon. Having beachfront property on Foulk Road is no joke.

My travels in DuPont have been worldwide and these same lessons apply everywhere, in varying degrees. We need to help equip the next generation with an education to derive the solutions to and thus mitigate the problems we have created through a new level of problem solving. A STEM education and project based learning skills will be critical but the basics in terms of generous and skilled, teachers, scientists and engineers are available now. As Isaac Newton once said, we stand on the shoulders of giants to see the future. We also rely on those we live with to make help achieve that vision. I believe Delaware STEM Academy will be an integral part of this effort. Our STEM students can be part of the vanguard to meet this existential threat, here and globally. Our students will participate in, indeed they will help lead these changes. They will have the scientific, communication and business acumen they built and honed at our school.

The natural, educational and business challenges require skills in STEM and in the social sciences to meet increased demands and they cannot come soon enough.

The students that graduate from the school will be job-ready out of high school, or will be able to continue on to higher education (as we expect a great majority will). Whether they obtain a high school diploma, a two-year degree or a four-degree, the students will have the academic and scientific training to work in demanding technical environments that are required for the jobs of today. The rationale for the mission of the school is that all parties benefit: the students, employers, and the economy which is extremely important our firm and the State of Delaware.

We look forward to opening of the school and our participation in supporting its educational mission.

Sincerely yours,

Dr Anthony S Ragone
Principal Investigator
DuPont Engineering Technologies
Route 141 & Henry Clay Road
E357/ 212
Wilmington, DE 19803-0357
Office: 302-695-1281
Mobile: 302-353-2694

Public Statement in Support of the Delaware STEM Academy
J. Brett Taylor, Ed.D.
May 16, 2016
Carvel State Office Building, Wilmington, DE

Thank you members of the Charter School Accountability Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Dr. Brett Taylor and I am founder and Executive Director of the Delaware STEM Academy.

I would like to thank the CSAC for the opportunity for the Academy to outline our vision, provide details on the implementation of the school, and demonstrate public support for the school. I would like to thank the Board of Directors of the Academy, Ms. Laura Jennice, our Principal for the hard work in reaching this point in the process.

When I began this journey four years ago, it was based on two very simple premises. First, to create a school where science, technology, engineering and math could be taught in an innovative, project based way and make it accessible to students who previously did not have the opportunities to learn STEM;

And to provide Delaware's industries with a skilled and talented workforce to fill much-needed STEM jobs

After four years, the Academy is close to fulfilling this dream.

We recognize that there is uncertainty in the development of a charter school. Market conditions, previous closures, parent uncertainty and financial commitments all have impacts. However, we hope that when this process concludes, your questions will be answered and you will provide us with approval to move forward. We feel confident that the two main issues of concern – enrollment and financial viability – can be remedied through our marketing efforts and financial oversight by our dedicated Board, leadership and partners. Working together with the Department of Education we can succeed in opening the school by September 2016.

We have remained true to our original charter intent – to provide an educational option for students wanting to learn STEM, using a project-based learning environment, as an open-enrollment school seeking diversity in the student population, in a geographic area educationally underserved.

In final analysis, though – when the final budget estimates are prepared, the facilities are in place and students are enrolled – all challenges which are solvable with our talented team, the decision to open comes down to what is good for the students. This school will provide opportunities for students that otherwise they may not have, and we will be growing a skilled workforce and college ready students for Delaware's tomorrow. If we provide a good product where students feel safe and engaged, parents feel that their students are getting a quality education and the school is operated properly, the future will be bright.

I urge the CSAC to allow us to continue to move forward with the opening of the Academy in September. We are committed – I am committed – to the ensuring the success of the Academy. We will work with the Department of Education fully to realize this vision. We hope that you will be a partner in this endeavor. Thank you.

May 16, 2016

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Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, #2
Dover, DE 19901

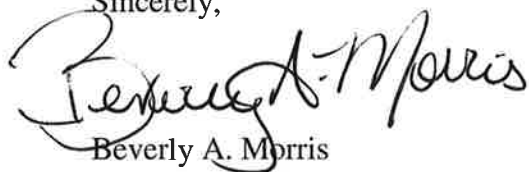
Dear Members,

As a parent of three school aged children, I write to you today in support of Delaware STEM Academy and urge the Department of Education to find in favor of the school opening its doors at the start of the 2016-2017 school year.

Delaware STEM Academy will provide the children of this state with a learning environment that will incorporate STEM education on a daily basis unlike any other school in Delaware. By incorporating an innovative learning process which includes project base learning, this school will equip the students of today with the skills they need to fill the jobs of tomorrow. Our state legislative officials and major corporations all support the idea of advancing a "Jobs Driving Economy" and Delaware STEM Academy can provide the children of this state with the tools they need to fill that vision.

I am excited about the prospect of watching my children grow and learn in a school that will not only prepare them academically but one that will teach the art of working in a collaborative environment while maintaining a positive and personalized learning experience for each student. With that, I urge you to seriously consider the information provided to you today by Dr. Taylor and Ms. Jennice as well as the opinions of the parents who have a strong desire for their children to be a part of this wonderful learning opportunity.

Sincerely,



Beverly A. Morris