

In The Matter Of:
Department of Education
In re: Academy of Dover

Hearing
December 5, 2016

Wilcox & Fetzer, Ltd.
1330 King Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
email: depos@wilfet.com, web: www.wilfet.com
phone: 302-655-0477, fax: 302-655-0497



STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING (RENEWAL) OF
ACADEMY OF DOVER

Department of Education
Townsend Building
401 Federal Street
Cabinet Room - 2nd Floor
Dover, Delaware

Monday, December 5, 2016
5:00 p.m.

BEFORE: CATHERINE T. HICKEY, ESQ.
Deputy Attorney General

DENISE STOUFFER,
Lead Education Associate,
Charter School Office

WILCOX & FETZER
Registered Professional Reporters
1330 King Street - Wilmington, Delaware 19801
(302) 655-0477
www.wilfet.com



WILCOX & FETZER LTD
Registered Professional Reporters
(302) 655-0477
www.wilfet.com

1 MS. STOUFFER: Good evening,
2 everyone.

3 I declare this public hearing to
4 be open. My name is Denise Stouffer. I am
5 the lead education associate and I have been
6 appointed by the Secretary of Education to
7 conduct this public hearing.

8 The Academy of Dover Charter
9 School has filed an application to renew its
10 charter for a term of five years. As required
11 by law, the matter was referred to the Charter
12 School Accountability Committee for
13 investigation and report. This is a joint
14 public hearing and it's being held by the
15 Department of Education and the State Board of
16 Education to receive public comments.

17 The people representing the
18 Board today are Catherine Hickey.

19 MS. HICKEY: No. I don't
20 represent the Board.

21 MS. STOUFFER: Oh, I'm sorry.

22 MS. HICKEY: That's okay.

23 MS. STOUFFER: Representing the
24 Department of Education is Catherine Hickey.



1 And then, of course, myself, Denise Stouffer.

2 MS. HICKEY: My name is
3 Catherine Hickey. I'm a deputy attorney
4 general with the Delaware Department of
5 Justice and I am here tonight representing the
6 hearing officer in this matter.

7 MS. STOUFFER: Thank you for the
8 clarification.

9 And Denise Stouffer, lead
10 education associate.

11 I would like the record to
12 reflect that the notice of time, date and
13 place of today's public hearing was published
14 in The News Journal and the Delaware State
15 News on November 21st, 2016. In addition,
16 notice was posted at the Charter School
17 Accountability Committee's official place of
18 business, on the Department of Education's
19 official website, and on the State Public
20 Meeting Calendar on the state's official
21 website. Further, the Academy of Dover was
22 personally notified of the time, date and
23 place of today's meeting.

24 This meeting serves to receive



1 public comment as well as to provide the
2 school with an opportunity to respond to the
3 final Charter School Accountability Committee
4 report.

5 A court reporter is present so
6 that a record of this hearing can be made. It
7 will be necessary for each speaker to clearly
8 identify him or herself before beginning to
9 speak so that the court reporter will be able
10 to note who you are. The record of this
11 hearing will be provided to the Secretary of
12 Education and members of the State Board of
13 Education, together with any written or
14 electronic comments received during the course
15 of the renewal decision process. To date,
16 there have been no comments received.

17 We will proceed in the following
18 manner. First we will hear from any
19 representatives of the charter school who wish
20 to comment on the renewal application. Then
21 we will take comments from anyone else who
22 desires to speak. There is sign-up sheets at
23 the back of the room on the table by the door.
24 If you desire to speak, please sign up now.



1 I will now pause for a moment to
2 permit anyone who desires to speak to sign up.

3 First, however, can I have a
4 show of hands of whoever would like to make a
5 comment?

6 And we're going to pause and go
7 off the record for a second.

8 (A brief recess was taken.)

9

- - - - -

10 MS. STOUFFER: At this point I
11 will accept comments from the school.

12 MR. BOYNTON: Thank you,
13 Ms. Stouffer.

14 My name is Kimeu Boynton. I can
15 spell that for the reporter. First name is
16 K-i-m-e-u. Last name is B-o-y-n-t-o-n. I'm
17 the board president at the Academy of Dover.
18 And I just wanted to make a brief comment.

19 First I'd like to thank the
20 Committee on behalf of the board for walking
21 us through this process. Each time we've gone
22 through this process we've had some
23 challenges. And we recognize that. But each
24 time we feel that we are improving and getting



1 better.

2 Before I get into sort of the
3 nuts and bolts of responding to the final
4 report, I just wanted to recognize a few
5 individuals that are here. We've always
6 talked about the dedication of our teachers
7 and their commitment to the students and to
8 the school.

9 So we have with us today our --
10 first, our administrative assistant, Marianne
11 Longo; Carrie Holleger, one of our
12 instructors; Shirley Fletcher; Dana Nemecek;
13 and Anna Forston, who are all in the audience.
14 It's after work hours. I think that shows
15 their dedication. People could be doing a lot
16 of things with their families. It's the
17 holiday season. But it definitely shows that
18 we have a staff who are deeply committed to
19 the success of the school.

20 We also have with us another
21 board member, Dr. Charles Fletcher, and our
22 head of school, Sheri Marshall.

23 Recently the Department of
24 Education issued a recognition award. And we



1 are pleased to say that the Academy of Dover
2 was the only charter school to get that
3 recognition award, from what I believe. So we
4 are happy about that. Our -- a testament to
5 our test scores improving.

6 Ms. McCarthy just walked in.
7 She's also one of our teachers and our teacher
8 rep on the board. So I'm going to ask her to
9 step up to the next seat, since she's
10 technically a board member.

11 One of the biggest issues that
12 we talked about at the last meeting has been
13 our enrollment. And it's no secret that our
14 enrollment has declined over the last couple
15 years. However, the Charter School
16 Accountability Committee tasked us with facing
17 that challenge. And we have done that by,
18 one, creating a strategic planning document,
19 which you guys will receive in the next
20 30 days or so as a supplement to what we
21 turned in before. I don't believe there was
22 a -- we did get the 60-day time line, but I
23 don't think it was a fixed day. But you will
24 have that.



1 In addition to that strategic
2 planning document, which we've kind of
3 constructed as a board, we've engaged the help
4 of a marketing professional to assist us with
5 recruitment efforts and fund raising efforts.
6 We met, I think, about maybe two or three
7 times in the last month. We are dedicated to
8 getting our name out.

9 Some of the things that we have
10 found just by talking with people in the
11 community -- a lot of people don't know what a
12 charter school is. And this is after 15 to
13 20 years of charter schools being all over the
14 country. Many members of the community think
15 a charter school is a private school. They
16 think it's a parochial school where you have
17 to pay tuition. Or, you know, they're just
18 not familiar with what happens at charter
19 schools. So we're trying to get the word out
20 through marketing.

21 We have created an ambassadors
22 club where we will be engaging important
23 members of -- when I say "important,"
24 financially important members of the community



1 to assist us with fund-raising developments.
2 And we're going to start assigning very
3 important tasks to our board members to sort
4 of get the word out, talk about the school.

5 For a long time, I think we were
6 just like any other board dealing in state
7 business. We figured we'd get a budget. The
8 budget is fixed. And we work within that
9 budget. We realized the importance of trying
10 to expand that, trying to create some type of
11 endowment so that when we do have issues --
12 lean years, low enrollment -- we'll have the
13 ability to say to the state, no, we have a
14 plan for success, and we will make the plan
15 happen.

16 So, again, on behalf of the
17 board, we'd like to say thank you. And we
18 hope that we can continue to keep the Academy
19 of Dover a vital part of the Dover community
20 and the State of Delaware community.

21 MS. STOUFFER: Okay. Is there
22 anybody else from the school who would like to
23 make a statement?

24 Is there anyone from the public



1 who would like to make a statement -- make a
2 public comment?

3 If there is no one else who
4 desires to speak, I want to thank you all for
5 participating today. The Secretary will
6 consider your comments in deciding, at the
7 conclusion of the renewal process, what
8 decision to submit to the State Board for
9 assent, if needed.

10 This hearing is now closed.

11 (The hearing adjourned at
12 5:15 p.m. this same day.)

13 - - - - -

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

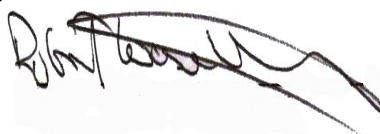


C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF DELAWARE:
:
KENT COUNTY :

I, Robert Wayne Wilcox, Jr., a Registered Professional Reporter, within and for the County and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing hearing was taken before me, pursuant to notice, at the time and place indicated; that said witness was by me duly sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; that the testimony of said witness was correctly recorded in machine shorthand by me and thereafter transcribed under my supervision with computer-aided transcription; that the foregoing hearing is a true record of the testimony given by the witness; and that I am neither of counsel nor kin to any party in said action, nor interested in the outcome thereof.

WITNESS my hand and official seal this
5th day of December A D 2016



Robert Wayne Wilcox, Jr., RPR

<p style="text-align: center;">A</p>	<p>appointed (1) 2:6</p>	<p>8:3 9:3,6,17 10:8 bolts (1) 6:3</p>	<p>comment (5) 4:1,20 5:5,18 10:2</p>
	<p>assent (1) 10:9 assigning (1) 9:2 assist (2) 8:4 9:1 assistant (1) 6:10 associate (2) 2:5 3:10 attorney (1) 3:3 audience (1) 6:13 award (2) 6:24 7:3</p>	<p>BOYNTON (2) 5:12,14 B-o-y-n-t-o-n (1) 5:16 brief (2) 5:8,18 budget (3) 9:7,8,9 business (2) 3:18 9:7</p>	<p>comments (6) 2:16 4:14,16,21 5:11 10:6 commitment (1) 6:7 committed (1) 6:18 Committee (4) 2:12 4:3 5:20 7:16 Committee's (1) 3:17</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">B</p>	<p>back (1) 4:23 before (3) 4:8 6:2 7:21 beginning (1) 4:8 behalf (2) 5:20 9:16 being (2) 2:14 8:13 believe (2) 7:3,21 better (1) 6:1 biggest (1) 7:11 Board (14) 2:15,18,20 4:12 5:17,20 6:21 7:8,10</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <p>Calendar (1) 3:20 Carrie (1) 6:11 Catherine (3) 2:18,24 3:3 challenge (1) 7:17 challenges (1) 5:23 Charles (1) 6:21 Charter (12) 2:8,10,11 3:16 4:3, 19 7:2,15 8:12,13,15, 18 clarification (1) 3:8 clearly (1) 4:7 closed (1) 10:10 club (1) 8:22</p>	<p>community (5) 8:11,14,24 9:19,20 conclusion (1) 10:7 conduct (1) 2:7 consider (1) 10:6 constructed (1) 8:3 continue (1) 9:18 could (1) 6:15 country (1) 8:14 couple (1) 7:14 course (2) 3:1 4:14 court (2) 4:5,9 create (1) 9:10 created (1) 8:21 creating (1)</p>

7:18	desires (3) 4:22 5:2 10:4	7:13,14 9:12	found (1) 8:10
D	developments (1) 9:1	evening (1) 2:1	fund (1) 8:5
Dana (1) 6:12	document (2) 7:18 8:2	everyone (1) 2:2	fund-raising (1) 9:1
date (3) 3:12,22 4:15	done (1) 7:17	expand (1) 9:10	Further (1) 3:21
day (2) 7:23 10:12	door (1) 4:23	F	G
days (1) 7:20	Dover (6) 2:8 3:21 5:17 7:1	facing (1) 7:16	general (1) 3:4
dealing (1) 9:6	9:19,19	familiar (1) 8:18	getting (2) 5:24 8:8
deciding (1) 10:6	Dr (1) 6:21	families (1) 6:16	going (3) 5:6 7:8 9:2
decision (2) 4:15 10:8	during (1) 4:14	feel (1) 5:24	gone (1) 5:21
declare (1) 2:3	E	few (1) 6:4	Good (1) 2:1
declined (1) 7:14	each (3) 4:7 5:21,23	figured (1) 9:7	guys (1) 7:19
dedicated (1) 8:7	education (9) 2:5,6,15,16,24 3:10	filed (1) 2:9	H
dedication (2) 6:6,15	4:12,13 6:24	final (2) 4:3 6:3	hands (1) 5:4
deeply (1) 6:18	Education's (1) 3:18	financially (1) 8:24	happen (1) 9:15
definitely (1) 6:17	efforts (2) 8:5,5	First (5) 4:18 5:3,15,19 6:10	happens (1) 8:18
Delaware (3) 3:4,14 9:20	electronic (1) 4:14	five (1) 2:10	happy (1) 7:4
Denise (3) 2:4 3:1,9	else (3) 4:21 9:22 10:3	fixed (2) 7:23 9:8	head (1) 6:22
Department (5) 2:15,24 3:4,18 6:23	endowment (1) 9:11	Fletcher (2) 6:12,21	hear (1) 4:18
deputy (1) 3:3	engaged (1) 8:3	following (1) 4:17	hearing (9) 2:3,7,14 3:6,13 4:6,
desire (1) 4:24	engaging (1) 8:22	Forston (1) 6:13	
	enrollment (3)		

<p>11 10:10,11 held (1) 2:14 help (1) 8:3 herself (1) 4:8 Hickey (6) 2:18,19,22,24 3:2,3 holiday (1) 6:17 Holleger (1) 6:11 hope (1) 9:18 hours (1) 6:14 however (2) 5:3 7:15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <p>joint (1) 2:13 Journal (1) 3:14 Justice (1) 3:5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">K</p> <p>keep (1) 9:18 Kimeu (1) 5:14 K-i-m-e-u (1) 5:16 kind (1) 8:2</p>	<p>9:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <p>made (1) 4:6 make (6) 5:4,18 9:14,23 10:1, 1 manner (1) 4:18 Many (1) 8:14 Marianne (1) 6:10 marketing (2) 8:4,20 Marshall (1) 6:22 matter (2) 2:11 3:6 maybe (1) 8:6 McCarthy (1) 7:6 Meeting (4) 3:20,23,24 7:12 member (2) 6:21 7:10 members (5) 4:12 8:14,23,24 9:3 met (1) 8:6 moment (1) 5:1 month (1) 8:7 myself (1) 3:1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N</p> <p>name (6) 2:4 3:2 5:14,15,16 8:8 necessary (1) 4:7 needed (1) 10:9 Nemecek (1) 6:12 News (2) 3:14,15 next (2) 7:9,19 note (1) 4:10 notice (2) 3:12,16 notified (1) 3:22 November (1) 3:15 nuts (1) 6:3</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L</p>		
<p>identify (1) 4:8 importance (1) 9:9 important (4) 8:22,23,24 9:3 improving (2) 5:24 7:5 individuals (1) 6:5 instructors (1) 6:12 investigation (1) 2:13 issued (1) 6:24 issues (2) 7:11 9:11</p>	<p>Last (4) 5:16 7:12,14 8:7 law (1) 2:11 lead (2) 2:5 3:9 lean (1) 9:12 line (1) 7:22 long (1) 9:5 Longo (1) 6:11 lot (2) 6:15 8:11 low (1)</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">O</p> <p>off (1) 5:7 officer (1) 3:6 official (3) 3:17,19,20 one (5) 6:11 7:7,11,18 10:3 only (1) 7:2 open (1)</p>

2:4	point (1)	recognition (2)	10:12
opportunity (1)	5:10	6:24 7:3	School (18)
4:2	posted (1)	recognize (2)	2:9,12 3:16 4:2,3,
other (1)	3:16	5:23 6:4	19 5:11 6:8,19,22 7:2,
9:6	present (1)	record (4)	15 8:12,15,15,16 9:4,
out (3)	4:5	3:11 4:6,10 5:7	22
8:8,19 9:4	president (1)	recruitment (1)	schools (2)
over (2)	5:17	8:5	8:13,19
7:14 8:13	private (1)	referred (1)	scores (1)
	8:15	2:11	7:5
P	proceed (1)	reflect (1)	season (1)
	4:17	3:12	6:17
parochial (1)	process (4)	renew (1)	seat (1)
8:16	4:15 5:21,22 10:7	2:9	7:9
part (1)	professional (1)	renewal (3)	second (1)
9:19	8:4	4:15,20 10:7	5:7
participating (1)	provide (1)	rep (1)	secret (1)
10:5	4:1	7:8	7:13
pause (2)	provided (1)	report (3)	Secretary (3)
5:1,6	4:11	2:13 4:4 6:4	2:6 4:11 10:5
pay (1)	public (9)	reporter (3)	serves (1)
8:17	2:3,7,14,16 3:13,19	4:5,9 5:15	3:24
people (4)	4:1 9:24 10:2	represent (1)	sheets (1)
2:17 6:15 8:10,11	published (1)	2:20	4:22
permit (1)	3:13	representatives (1)	Sheri (1)
5:2		4:19	6:22
personally (1)	R	representing (3)	Shirley (1)
3:22		2:17,23 3:5	6:12
place (3)	raising (1)	required (1)	show (1)
3:13,17,23	8:5	2:10	5:4
plan (2)	realized (1)	respond (1)	shows (2)
9:14,14	9:9	4:2	6:14,17
planning (2)	receive (3)	responding (1)	sign (2)
7:18 8:2	2:16 3:24 7:19	6:3	4:24 5:2
please (1)	received (2)	room (1)	sign-up (1)
4:24	4:14,16	4:23	4:22
pleased (1)	Recently (1)		sorry (1)
7:1	6:23	S	2:21
pm (1)	recess (1)		sort (2)
10:12	5:8	same (1)	6:2 9:3

<p>speak (5) 4:9,22,24 5:2 10:4</p> <p>speaker (1) 4:7</p> <p>spell (1) 5:15</p> <p>staff (1) 6:18</p> <p>start (1) 9:2</p> <p>State (8) 2:15 3:14,19 4:12 9:6,13,20 10:8</p> <p>statement (2) 9:23 10:1</p> <p>state's (1) 3:20</p> <p>step (1) 7:9</p> <p>STOUFFER (10) 2:1,4,21,23 3:1,7,9 5:10,13 9:21</p> <p>strategic (2) 7:18 8:1</p> <p>students (1) 6:7</p> <p>submit (1) 10:8</p> <p>success (2) 6:19 9:14</p> <p>supplement (1) 7:20</p>	<p>6:6 7:12</p> <p>talking (1) 8:10</p> <p>tasked (1) 7:16</p> <p>tasks (1) 9:3</p> <p>teacher (1) 7:7</p> <p>teachers (2) 6:6 7:7</p> <p>technically (1) 7:10</p> <p>term (1) 2:10</p> <p>test (1) 7:5</p> <p>testament (1) 7:4</p> <p>their (3) 6:7,15,16</p> <p>there (6) 4:16,22 7:21 9:21, 24 10:3</p> <p>They (1) 8:15</p> <p>things (2) 6:16 8:9</p> <p>think (6) 6:14 7:23 8:6,14,16</p> <p>9:5</p> <p>three (1) 8:6</p> <p>times (1) 8:7</p> <p>today (3) 2:18 6:9 10:5</p> <p>today's (2) 3:13,23</p> <p>together (1)</p>	<p>4:13</p> <p>tonight (1) 3:5</p> <p>trying (3) 8:19 9:9,10</p> <p>tuition (1) 8:17</p> <p>turned (1) 7:21</p> <p>two (1) 8:6</p> <p>type (1) 9:10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">U</p> <p>up (3) 4:24 5:2 7:9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p>vital (1) 9:19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">W</p> <p>walked (1) 7:6</p> <p>walking (1) 5:20</p> <p>wanted (2) 5:18 6:4</p> <p>website (2) 3:19,21</p> <p>wish (1) 4:19</p> <p>within (1) 9:8</p> <p>word (2) 8:19 9:4</p>	<p>work (2) 6:14 9:8</p> <p>written (1) 4:13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Y</p> <p>years (4) 2:10 7:15 8:13 9:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>15 (1) 8:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p>20 (1) 8:13</p> <p>2016 (1) 3:15</p> <p>21st (1) 3:15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p>30 (1) 7:20</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p>5:15 (1) 10:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p>60-day (1) 7:22</p>
T			
<p>table (1) 4:23</p> <p>talk (1) 9:4</p> <p>talked (2)</p>			