

In The Matter Of:
Department of Educaiotn
In re: Public Hearing for Renewal

Sussex Adademy Charter School
October 16, 2017
Hearing

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 FOR RENEWAL
SUSSEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Georgetown Public Library
123 W. Pine Street
Georgetown, Delaware

Monday, October 16, 2017
5:03 p.m.

BEFORE: CATHERINE T. HICKEY, ESQ.
Deputy Attorney General for
the State Board of Education

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



1 MS. STOUFFER: Good evening.

2 I declare this public meeting to
3 be open.

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

8 The Sussex Academy Charter
9 School has filed an application to renew its
10 charter for a term of ten years. This matter
11 was referred to the Charter School
12 Accountability Committee for investigation and
13 report. This public hearing is being held to
14 receive public comments.

15 At the table today you have
16 myself, Denise Stouffer, lead education
17 associate, and Catherine T. Hickey, the deputy
18 attorney general for the Department of
19 Education.

20 I would like the record to
21 reflect that notice of the time, date and
22 place of today's public hearing was published
23 in The News Journal and the Delaware State
24 News on September 9th, 2017. In addition,



1 notice was posted at the Charter School
2 Accountability Committee's official place of
3 business on the Department of Education's
4 official website and on the State Public
5 Meeting Calendar on the state's official
6 website. Further, the Sussex Academy Charter
7 School was personally notified of the time,
8 date and place of today's public hearing on
9 September 9th, 2017.

10 A court reporter is present so
11 that a record of this hearing can be made. It
12 will be necessary for each speaker to clearly
13 identify his- or herself before beginning to
14 speak so that the court reporter will be able
15 to note who you are.

16 The record of this hearing will
17 be provided to the Secretary of Education and
18 the members of the State Board of Education,
19 together with any written or electronic
20 comments received during the course of the
21 renewal decision process. To date, no
22 comments have been received on this
23 application.

24 We will proceed in the following



1 manner. First, we will hear from any
2 representatives of the charter school who wish
3 to comment on the renewal application. Then
4 we will take comments from anyone else who
5 desires to speak.

6 At this point in time I will
7 accept comments from anyone who desires to
8 speak. Please identify yourself before you
9 begin your comments.

10 MS. MITCHELL: My name is Susan
11 Mitchell. I'm chairman of the executive board
12 for Sussex Academy. And I am pleased and
13 excited that we have submitted an application
14 for a ten-year charter renewal. It's my
15 understanding we are the first in the state to
16 do such an application.

17 I'm also the parent of two
18 children at Sussex Academy -- two very
19 different children with very different needs.
20 I'm thrilled and pleased with how my children
21 are doing in the school.

22 I'm excited that Sussex County
23 has a school now with such academic rigor.
24 And I believe we have been -- we had our first



1 graduates last year, several of whom
2 accomplished International Baccalaureate
3 degree. And most seniors -- I think all
4 seniors took at least some International
5 Baccalaureate classes. It is, I think, a very
6 needed and strong addition to the education
7 provided in Sussex County.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. STOUFFER: Is there anyone
10 else who would like to speak on behalf of the
11 school?

12 MS. OLIPHANT: Good evening.

13 I'm Patricia Oliphant, and I'm
14 head of Sussex Academy located at
15 21150 Airport Road, Georgetown, Delaware.

16 I'd like to echo the comments of
17 the chairman of our executive board,
18 Mrs. Mitchell. We have submitted our charter
19 renewal application, of course, hoping for a
20 ten-year renewal. It is my understanding that
21 we will have been the first school of the
22 charter schools to have submitted such an
23 application.

24 We have an outstanding record of



1 academic performance, organizational
2 performance and financial performance in our
3 school. We have very strong support of our
4 executive board and our foundation board. We
5 have the very, very strong support and honor,
6 to a great degree, the faculty who serve our
7 students. They are absolutely outstanding.
8 And we have the -- I guess one would say the
9 luxury of having great kids and great parents.
10 And we love our school. And we hope that the
11 school accountability finds in our favor.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. ELMER: Hi. My name is Tim
14 Elmer. I'm a teacher at the high school and
15 also a parent of a student in eighth grade.

16 And so I'd like to speak as a
17 parent. I'm very thankful that we have a
18 school that has a great environment for
19 learning and also the accelerated academics.
20 And I think it's a perfect fit for my
21 daughter -- a perfect place for her to learn
22 and set her up for a four-year college degree,
23 which she'll be doing after high school.
24 So -- and I'm also thankful that I'm able to



1 teach there. It's a wonderful place.

2 MS. STOUFFER: Is there anyone
3 else?

4 Does the school wish to provide
5 any closing remarks?

6 If not, I want to thank you all
7 for participating today. The Secretary will
8 consider your comments in deciding at the
9 conclusion of the renewal process what
10 decision to submit to the State Board for
11 assent, if needed.

12 This hearing is now closed.

13 (The hearing adjourned at
14 5:10 p.m. this same day.)

15 - - - - -

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
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:
:
SUSSEX 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 16th day of October A D 2017



Robert Wayne Wilcox, Jr., RPR

A	<p>associate (2) 2:5,17</p> <p>attorney (1) 2:18</p>	<p>classes (1) 5:5</p> <p>clearly (1) 3:12</p> <p>closed (1) 7:12</p> <p>closing (1) 7:5</p> <p>college (1) 6:22</p> <p>comment (1) 4:3</p> <p>comments (8) 2:14 3:20,22 4:4,7, 9 5:16 7:8</p> <p>Committee (1) 2:12</p> <p>Committee's (1) 3:2</p> <p>conclusion (1) 7:9</p> <p>conduct (1) 2:7</p> <p>consider (1) 7:8</p> <p>County (2) 4:22 5:7</p> <p>course (2) 3:20 5:19</p> <p>court (2) 3:10,14</p>	<p>deciding (1) 7:8</p> <p>decision (2) 3:21 7:10</p> <p>declare (1) 2:2</p> <p>degree (3) 5:3 6:6,22</p> <p>Delaware (2) 2:23 5:15</p> <p>Denise (2) 2:4,16</p> <p>Department (2) 2:18 3:3</p> <p>deputy (1) 2:17</p> <p>desires (2) 4:5,7</p> <p>different (2) 4:19,19</p> <p>during (1) 3:20</p>	
<p>able (2) 3:14 6:24</p> <p>absolutely (1) 6:7</p> <p>academic (2) 4:23 6:1</p> <p>academics (1) 6:19</p> <p>Academy (5) 2:8 3:6 4:12,18 5:14</p> <p>accelerated (1) 6:19</p> <p>accept (1) 4:7</p> <p>accomplished (1) 5:2</p> <p>Accountability (3) 2:12 3:2 6:11</p> <p>addition (2) 2:24 5:6</p> <p>adjourned (1) 7:13</p> <p>after (1) 6:23</p> <p>Airport (1) 5:15</p> <p>also (4) 4:17 6:15,19,24</p> <p>anyone (4) 4:4,7 5:9 7:2</p> <p>application (7) 2:9 3:23 4:3,13,16 5:19,23</p> <p>appointed (1) 2:6</p> <p>assent (1) 7:11</p>	B	<p>Baccalaureate (2) 5:2,5</p> <p>before (2) 3:13 4:8</p> <p>begin (1) 4:9</p> <p>beginning (1) 3:13</p> <p>behalf (1) 5:10</p> <p>being (1) 2:13</p> <p>believe (1) 4:24</p> <p>Board (6) 3:18 4:11 5:17 6:4, 4 7:10</p> <p>business (1) 3:3</p>	E	
	C	<p>Calendar (1) 3:5</p> <p>Catherine (1) 2:17</p> <p>chairman (2) 4:11 5:17</p> <p>Charter (9) 2:8,10,11 3:1,6 4:2, 14 5:18,22</p> <p>children (3) 4:18,19,20</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p>date (3) 2:21 3:8,21</p> <p>daughter (1) 6:21</p> <p>day (1) 7:14</p>	<p>each (1) 3:12</p> <p>echo (1) 5:16</p> <p>education (7) 2:5,6,16,19 3:17,18 5:6</p> <p>Education's (1) 3:3</p> <p>eighth (1) 6:15</p> <p>electronic (1) 3:19</p> <p>ELMER (2) 6:13,14</p>

<p>else (3) 4:4 5:10 7:3</p> <p>environment (1) 6:18</p> <p>evening (2) 2:1 5:12</p> <p>excited (2) 4:13,22</p> <p>executive (3) 4:11 5:17 6:4</p>	<p>Georgetown (1) 5:15</p> <p>Good (2) 2:1 5:12</p> <p>grade (1) 6:15</p> <p>graduates (1) 5:1</p> <p>great (4) 6:6,9,9,18</p> <p>guess (1) 6:8</p>	<p>I</p>	<p>M</p>
<p>F</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>identify (2) 3:13 4:8</p> <p>International (2) 5:2,4</p> <p>investigation (1) 2:12</p>	<p>made (1) 3:11</p> <p>manner (1) 4:1</p> <p>matter (1) 2:10</p> <p>meeting (2) 2:2 3:5</p> <p>members (1) 3:18</p> <p>MITCHELL (3) 4:10,11 5:18</p> <p>most (1) 5:3</p> <p>Mrs (1) 5:18</p> <p>myself (1) 2:16</p>
<p>faculty (1) 6:6</p> <p>favor (1) 6:11</p> <p>filed (1) 2:9</p> <p>financial (1) 6:2</p> <p>finds (1) 6:11</p> <p>First (4) 4:1,15,24 5:21</p> <p>fit (1) 6:20</p> <p>following (1) 3:24</p> <p>foundation (1) 6:4</p> <p>four-year (1) 6:22</p> <p>Further (1) 3:6</p>	<p>head (1) 5:14</p> <p>hear (1) 4:1</p> <p>hearing (8) 2:7,13,22 3:8,11,16 7:12,13</p> <p>held (1) 2:13</p> <p>herself (1) 3:13</p> <p>Hi (1) 6:13</p> <p>Hickey (1) 2:17</p> <p>high (2) 6:14,23</p> <p>his- (1) 3:13</p> <p>honor (1) 6:5</p> <p>hope (1) 6:10</p> <p>hoping (1) 5:19</p>	<p>J</p> <p>Journal (1) 2:23</p> <p>K</p> <p>kids (1) 6:9</p> <p>L</p> <p>last (1) 5:1</p> <p>lead (2) 2:5,16</p> <p>learn (1) 6:21</p> <p>learning (1) 6:19</p> <p>least (1) 5:4</p> <p>located (1) 5:14</p> <p>love (1) 6:10</p> <p>luxury (1) 6:9</p>	<p>N</p> <p>name (3) 2:4 4:10 6:13</p> <p>necessary (1) 3:12</p> <p>needed (2) 5:6 7:11</p> <p>needs (1) 4:19</p> <p>News (2) 2:23,24</p> <p>note (1) 3:15</p> <p>notice (2) 2:21 3:1</p> <p>notified (1) 3:7</p>
<p>G</p>			

O	point (1) 4:6	reporter (2) 3:10,14	STOUFFER (5) 2:1,4,16 5:9 7:2
official (3) 3:2,4,5 OLIPHANT (2) 5:12,13 one (1) 6:8 open (1) 2:3 organizational (1) 6:1 outstanding (2) 5:24 6:7	posted (1) 3:1 present (1) 3:10 proceed (1) 3:24 process (2) 3:21 7:9 provide (1) 7:4 provided (2) 3:17 5:7 public (7) 2:2,7,13,14,22 3:4,8 published (1) 2:22	representatives (1) 4:2 rigor (1) 4:23 Road (1) 5:15	strong (3) 5:6 6:3,5 student (1) 6:15 students (1) 6:7
P		S	submit (1) 7:10
parent (3) 4:17 6:15,17		same (1) 7:14 School (16) 2:9,11 3:1,7 4:2,21, 23 5:11,21 6:3,10,11, 14,18,23 7:4 schools (1) 5:22	submitted (3) 4:13 5:18,22 support (2) 6:3,5 Susan (1) 4:10 Sussex (7) 2:8 3:6 4:12,18,22 5:7,14
parents (1) 6:9	R	Secretary (3) 2:6 3:17 7:7	T
participating (1) 7:7	receive (1) 2:14	seniors (2) 5:3,4	table (1) 2:15
Patricia (1) 5:13	received (2) 3:20,22	September (2) 2:24 3:9	teach (1) 7:1
perfect (2) 6:20,21	record (4) 2:20 3:11,16 5:24	serve (1) 6:6	teacher (1) 6:14
performance (3) 6:1,2,2	referred (1) 2:11	set (1) 6:22	ten (1) 2:10
personally (1) 3:7	reflect (1) 2:21	several (1) 5:1	ten-year (2) 4:14 5:20
place (5) 2:22 3:2,8 6:21 7:1	remarks (1) 7:5	speak (5) 3:14 4:5,8 5:10 6:16	term (1) 2:10
Please (1) 4:8	renew (1) 2:9	speaker (1) 3:12	thankful (2) 6:17,24
pleased (2) 4:12,20	renewal (6) 3:21 4:3,14 5:19,20 7:9	State (5) 2:23 3:4,18 4:15 7:10	there (3) 5:9 7:1,2
pm (1) 7:14	report (1) 2:13	state's (1) 3:5	They (1) 6:7

<p>think (3) 5:3,5 6:20</p> <p>thrilled (1) 4:20</p> <p>Tim (1) 6:13</p> <p>today (2) 2:15 7:7</p> <p>today's (2) 2:22 3:8</p> <p>together (1) 3:19</p> <p>took (1) 5:4</p> <p>two (2) 4:17,18</p>	<p>2:10</p> <p>yourself (1) 4:8</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <hr/> <p>2017 (2) 2:24 3:9</p> <p>21150 (1) 5:15</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <hr/> <p>5:10 (1) 7:14</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">U</p>	<p>9th (2) 2:24 3:9</p>		
<p>understanding (2) 4:15 5:20</p> <p>up (1) 6:22</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">W</p>			
<p>website (2) 3:4,6</p> <p>wish (2) 4:2 7:4</p> <p>wonderful (1) 7:1</p> <p>written (1) 3:19</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>			
<p>year (1) 5:1</p> <p>years (1)</p>			