

**EastSide Charter School
Charter Renewal Application**

September 30, 2014



**EastSide Charter School
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I. Overview

1.1 Provide the following information requested.

a) Fill in the following chart with the school's basic information:

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	EastSide Charter School
Year School Opened	1997
Grade Level(s) in 2012-2013 and additional grade levels approved to be served in the next charter cycle	K - 8
Current Enrollment	421
Approved Enrollment	406
Current Waiting List by Grade	K: 5 1: 8 2: 4 3: 7 4: 5 5: 13 6: 3 7: 4 8: 7
School Address(es)	3000 North Claymont Street, Wilmington, DE 19802
District(s) / Region of Residence	Colonial / City of Wilmington
Website Address	www.eastsidecharterschool.org
Name of School Leader	Dr. Lamont W. Browne
School Leader Email and Phone Number	Lamont.browne@escs.k12.de.us / (302) 762-5834 x 103
Name of Board President	Charles S. McDowell, Esq.
Board President Email and Phone Number	cmcdowell@potteranderson.com / (302) 547-8094

- b) Fill in the following chart with the school’s demographics at the time of submission (all information must be verifiable through state reporting tools):

CURRENT YEAR ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	
Total Enrollment	421
# of Students on Waiting List	56
Gender	
# Male	217
# Female	204
Ethnicity/Race	
# White	7
# Black	377
# Hispanic	37
# Asian	0
# Other	0
# Multiracial	
Special Populations	
# Students with disabilities	72
# English Language Learners	14
# Low-Income	375

II. Academic Framework

2.1 Is the academic program a success?

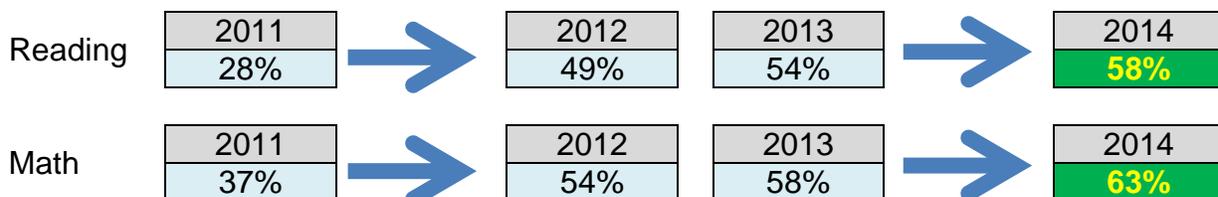
- a) Discuss the school’s academic achievement results over the last three or four years. How has the school performed with regard to student growth and proficiency measures over the last charter term? In the absence of expected achievement, identify proposed changes to instructional practices that your school will implement to improve the school’s academic performance and student outcomes.

The initiatives that started three years ago have paid off immensely as demonstrated by the school’s accelerated rate of academic improvement and achievement. EastSide has now achieved “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) for four straight years, the percentage of our students scoring proficient or better has increased dramatically and our growth has significantly outpaced the improvement demonstrated by all students statewide and by all low income students statewide. Impressively, while 87% of EastSide students are classified as low income and 20% are classified as special education, over 75% of our

students have made sufficient academic growth according to Department of Education indicators.

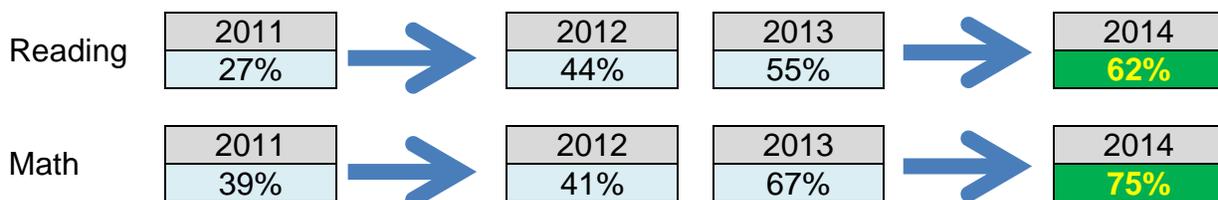
The graphic below shows the percentage of students scoring proficient or better on DCAS exams at EastSide over the past four testing cycles. EastSide students have made a 30 point growth in reading and a 26 point growth in math proficiency over this period.

Percent of Students Testing “Proficient” or Better



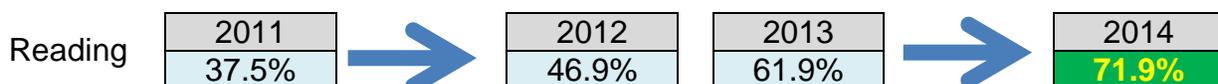
In addition to gains in DCAS proficiency, EastSide students have also made tremendous gains in reaching annual growth goals. The graphic below shows the percentage of students meeting their annual growth goals on DCAS exams at EastSide over the past four testing cycles. EastSide students have made gains of 35 and 36 points in reading and math respectively over the past four years.

Percent of Students Meeting Annual Growth Goals



These academic results support EastSide’s overall growth and performance on the Performance Framework. Since 2011, EastSide has improved by 34 points in its overall score as determined by the Framework. The table below breaks down these results. Please refer to Appendix I for the most recent Annual Report to the Department of Education and Appendix II for the 2013-2014 Academic Performance Framework Results.

EastSide Performance Framework Overall Score



2.2 Is the school meeting its mission?

- a) State the mission of the school as it appears in your charter application. How does your school measure and track mission accomplishment?

The mission of EastSide Charter School is to educate children in a safe, caring and nurturing environment so that they can excel academically and socially. We believe that all children are capable of mastering content standards and meeting social expectations when they have thorough understanding, adequate time and appropriate support. Students are viewed as individuals and every effort is made to accommodate each child's unique gifts and talents.

The vision of EastSide Charter School is to develop and sustain an academic community in which every direct stakeholder - teachers and staff, students and their parents - consistently model lifelong learning, selflessness, and self-respect. Each of these stakeholders take full advantage of every learning opportunity and, through this continual learning process, our teachers and students will learn more about themselves, improving upon and maximizing their knowledge, skills, and overall productivity and effect on the school community and our broader society. By learning to work in collaboration with their teachers and peers, our students will develop a strong sense of self respect, self-reflection, sense of independence, and sense of right and wrong. Upon leaving the EastSide community our students will have the character, knowledge, skills and self- and societal awareness to determine their own personal and professional destiny.

EastSide uses its demographic data as well as academic results to track mission achievement and alignment. As referenced above, 100% of our students are minorities and 87% come from low income families. By providing our students appropriate support and learning environment our students have made tremendous gains and have proven that all children are capable of mastering content standards as represented in the data above. Additionally, student attendance of 94.7% for the 2013-2014 school year and strong results from our parent surveys indicates our close connection to our students and their families. Finally, the student suspension rate this year was 1.31 (per 1,000 student days), this represents a 164% decrease in student suspensions compared to 2012-2013 and a 380% decrease over a two year period, marking the tremendous progress made in school climate and behavior in recent years.

III. Organizational Framework

3.1 Is the school organizationally sound?

- a) Discuss the school's organizational performance over the last three or four years. How has the school performed with regard to organizational measures over the last charter term? In the absence of expected achievement, identify proposed changes to organizational practices that your school will implement to improve the school's organizational outcomes.

EastSide Charter was rated as “Meets Standard” (tentative until financial audit reviewed) overall under DOE’s Organizational Performance Framework for the 2013-2014 year, meeting standards in 11 of 13 categories measured with one yet to be determined. The area yet to be determined is pending the submission and evaluation of our annual audit report. The one area in which we did not “Meet Standards” was staff credentialing requirements. The shortcoming in credentialing was attributable to deficiencies in some record keeping which was presumed to be fixed, but continues to be an issue. Our operations team is working diligently to rectify this issue in the coming year. We fully expect to meet standards in all categories measured in future years. Please refer to Appendix III for the 2013-2014 Organizational Performance Framework Results.

The matters covered under the “organizational” framework include the academic program (including special ed), financial reporting, governance, attendance, credentialing, holding the School accountable, employee and student rights, transportation, facilities, and health and safety. Our strengths in these areas are an exceptionally experienced and talented School Leadership Team, a skilled administrative and business team, an experienced and dedicated Board, and generous assistance from pro bono attorneys.

Our challenge and opportunity going forward is to continue to develop in-house administrative talent in order to decrease the need to call on outside resources. EastSide has already begun working toward this goal as we have brought all technology and financial management back in-house with the additions of the Director of Technology and the Director of Operations.

2013-2014 Organizational Performance Framework Summary:

Year	1.a.	1.b.	2	3.a.	3.b.	3.c.	4.a.	4.b.	4.c.	4.d.	5.a.	5.b.	6	OVERALL RATING
11-12	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	N/A	M	M	M	M	Meets
12-13	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	DNM	M	M	M	M	Meets
13-14	M	M	TBD	M	M	M	M	M	DNM	M	M	M	M	Meets

3.2 Is the school implementing the essential terms of the charter’s education program as defined in the current charter, and complying with applicable state and federal requirements?

- a) Provide specific examples of how your educational program is in compliance with instructional days/minutes requirements, the use of state assessments, Delaware content standards requirements, and providing an education and accommodations for at-risk students.

Instructional Days

EastSide operates on a 179 day academic calendar (142 full days and 37 half days). With 7 instructional hours in a full day and 4.5 instructional hours in a half day, students

are in session for 1,142 instructional hours each year, exceeding the minimum required number of hours by a total 12 days.

State Assessments

For each of the past 4 years, EastSide has administered the DCAS assessment during the fall and the spring. For each year, we have exceeded the required participation threshold of 95%. Beginning in the Spring of 2015, all EastSide students will participate in the Smarter Balanced Assessment and DCAS for Science and Social Studies. As an alternative academic measure, EastSide administers the MAP test published by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) each fall and spring to demonstrate annual growth of our our students.

Academic Standards

EastSide has implemented the Common Core Standards in Math and ELA beginning in 2012 and with complete fidelity in the 2013-2014 school year and is a member of the Science Coalition. Please refer to Appendix IV for evidence of curriculum alignment to the Common Core State Standards. EastSide uses Delaware state standards for all other subjects.

At-Risk Students

EastSide has complied with all state and Federal statues and regulations with regard to the education and accommodations for at-risk students. Compliance has been demonstrated through regular DOE compliance monitoring visits and desk audits. Our most recent review was conducted in November 2012. All items of non-compliance were corrected as verified in a November 2013 letter from DOE (See Appendix V). To ensure continued compliance, systems were designed and put in place to ensure that all needs are met and supports are put in place to ensure the success of all special education students and those who are at-risk.

3.3 Is the school protecting the rights of students with disabilities and English language learners?

- a) Describe the process by which students with special needs are identified and evidence that the school is effective in providing the right resources and services for students with disabilities.

EastSide Charter adheres to Title 14 DE Administrative Code Section 900: Special Populations, Subsection 922.1.0 through 929.3.0 when identifying, evaluating, servicing, and monitoring a student suspected of having a disability. A "Child with a Disability" means a child evaluated in accordance with 14 DE Admin. Code 925.4.0 through 925.12.0 as having intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in these regulations as "emotional disturbance"), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an Other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason

thereof, needs special education and related services. Please refer to Appendix VI for more information.

- b) Describe the process by which students with English language learners are identified and evidence that the school is effective in providing the right resources and services for these students.

EastSide Charter follows state regulations, outlined in Title 14 Section 900: Special Populations, Subsection 920: Educational Programs for English Language Learners (ELLs), when identifying and servicing students who speak and/or are regularly exposed to a language other than English. Please refer to Appendix VI for more information.

3.4 Is the school monitoring and minimizing attrition rates and maintaining enrollment stability?

- a) Fill in the following chart with the appropriate enrollment information over the last 4 years (3 years if this is the school's first renewal)

School Enrollment Trends									
	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		
	Approved Enrollment	Sept 30 Enrollment Count	Current Waitlist for the 2014-2015 school year						
K	57	65	57	67	57	55	60	57	5
Grade 1	60	58	60	57	60	54	50	51	8
Grade 2	60	57	60	57	60	56	50	57	4
Grade 3	60	42	60	58	60	40	50	49	7
Grade 4	53	60	53	40	53	58	36	38	5
Grade 5	32	35	32	49	32	32	50	52	13
Grade 6	32	35	32	32	32	44	40	39	3
Grade 7	16	18	16	22	16	32	40	34	4
Grade 8	16	18	16	19	16	21	30	26	7
Grade 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	386	388	386	401	386	392	406	403	56

- b) Provide information regarding the school's attrition rate over the last 4 years (3 years if this is the school's first renewal). Using data starting with the number of students enrolled September 30, what number and percentage of students transferred out of the school by the end of the school year?

After undergoing a leadership change after the 2010-2011 school year, EastSide has continued to grow with regard to its academic performance, behavioral climate, and reputation amongst parents, students, and the community. Because of this significant growth, student retention has remained high and our enrollment has increased, prompting EastSide to apply for an enrollment extension (approved by DOE in Winter 2013).

During the 2011-2012 school year, 3 students withdrew before the end of the year. 81% of students re-enrolled for the following year.

During the 2012-2013 school year, 1 student withdrew before the end of the year. 93% of students re-enrolled for the following year.

During the 2013-2014 school year, 15 students withdrew before the end of the year. 92% of students re-enrolled for the following year.

- c) How does the school both monitor and plan to minimize attrition rates? (*Attrition rate is calculated by the number of students leaving the school during the school year over number of students enrolled in the school on September 30.*) Provide a summary of why students left your school.

EastSide receives immediate notice of student withdrawals and schedules an exit interview with parents. The school uses mid-year parent/family satisfaction surveys, student achievement results, and ad hoc interviews with students and parents to monitor stakeholder satisfaction of the quality of our program. Over the last three years, we have seen that more than 90% of our attrition was due to family relocation.

3.4 Is the school complying with governance and reporting requirements?

- a) Provide a current organizational chart, which includes the Board of Trustees.

Please refer to Appendix VII for the current organizational chart.

3.5 Is the school complying with closure requirements?

- a) Describe the school's plan for procedures it will follow in the event of the closure or dissolution of the school, including a plan to set aside sufficient funds to cover the salaries owed to those employees who are paid over a 12-month period.

The school will follow the state provided closure protocol for all charter schools. Please refer to Appendix VIII. In addition to the state provided protocol the school implements added measures to ensure we can fulfill all our financial responsibilities. We include as a regular part of our

periodic reports to the Finance/Citizens Budget Oversight Committee a cash flow projection that must show that on June 30 there will be sufficient funds to pay for all employee and other obligations incurred during the school year just ending. In addition we have considerable flexibility to reduce our budgeted costs at any time because all of our employees, except the Head of School, are employed on an at-will basis and can be terminated at any time, without cause, with two weeks' notice. Finally, our affiliated foundation typically has on hand a reserve of approximately \$300,000 that could be made available to meet any unexpected financial need. Please refer to Appendix IX for the foundation's Case For Support and Appendix X for the foundation's Annual Report.

IV. Financial Framework

4.1 Is the school financially viable?

- a) Provide an analysis of the results of your Financial Performance Reports over the last three years (2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13). Where applicable, provide explanations for areas where standards were not met, including your plans and strategies for improving the individual measures and overall ratings.

For 2010-2011 EastSide Charter was rated overall as “Far Below” under DOE’s Financial Performance Framework although it met standards in 2 of the 6 areas tested. (See chart below) After receiving the ratings from the 2010 - 2011 school year, the Board of Directors, Head of School, Director of Operations and a contracted accounting firm worked diligently to improve the school’s practices to ensure the ratings would be met in the future. The school saw drastic improvement in the 2011 - 2012 school year as we met standards overall and met standards on all but on eof the individual areas tested.. By the 2012 - 2013 school year EastSide Charter was rated as “Meets Standard” in all areas tested under DOE’s Financial Performance Framework.

Year	1.a.	1.b.	1.c.	1.d.	2.a.	2.b.	2.c.	2.d.	OVERALL RATING
10-11	F	D	M	M	NR	F	NR	NA	F
11-12	M	D	M	M	NR	M	NR	NA	M
12-13*	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	NA	M

- b) Provide a summary of findings from independent audits and, where applicable, how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings.

There were no findings in our most recent independent audit. Please refer to Appendix XI for more information.

- c) Please refer to the following Appendices:
- Appendix XI: Final Fiscal Year 2014 Revenue & Expenditure Budget Report in the prescribed DDOE format

- Appendix XII: Approved preliminary Fiscal Year 2015 Budget
- Appendix XIII: Fiscal Year 2014 Audited Financial Statements (if final report is not available, draft version is acceptable)
- Appendix XIV: Projected revenue and budget worksheets and narrative through 2018-2019 in the prescribed DDOE projection format

V. Five-Year Planning

5.1 Projected Enrollment

- a) Provide a five-year enrollment chart by grade level, in the prescribed format below. Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of students from year-to-year.

Projected Enrollment					
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
K	59	63	63	63	63
Grade 1	45	54	58	58	58
Grade 2	53	50	50	52	52
Grade 3	59	50	50	50	50
Grade 4	43	56	50	48	50
Grade 5	41	40	52	48	46
Grade 6	52	34	35	47	46
Grade 7	36	48	32	33	44
Grade 8	33	33	45	30	31
Grade 9	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 10	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 11	0	0	0	0	0
Grade 12	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	421	428	435	429	440

5.2 What are the school's plans for the next five years of the charter?

- a) Describe what changes and improvements the school will undertake in the next five years based on the school's examination of student performance outcomes.

A series of strategic planning sessions in the spring of 2013 resulted in the re-institution of a pre-kindergarten class at EastSide for the 2013-2014 school year. With nearly \$800,000 of capital expenses secured through philanthropic support (including \$150,000 from the Delaware Department of Education high performing charter fund), a Delaware STARS 5-star rating, and licensing approval from the Office of Child Care Licensing, we have been able to expand our Early Childhood Program to 3 classrooms serving 66 four-year old students in a brand new facility on our school campus. We plan to continue this program, promoting each of our Pre-K students into our Kindergarten program. By meeting the emotional, social, and intellectual needs of these students early, they will be in a prime position to begin their elementary careers without the deep deficits so many children from underrepresented groups face, thus preparing them for academic success throughout their primary school years.

Our Pre-K program is founded on the principles of Expeditionary Learning with little to no direct instruction as concepts and standards are taught through students doing the bulk of their work in student-lead learning stations or small groups where students have greater ownership and investment of their learning. Our knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice and the development of self-regulation skills in students has led us to a structure where there is no whole group instruction in the afternoon. Not only are our students more engaged in the content, but they are the main drivers of the work they are doing. This model is consistent throughout our Early Learning Program (grades Pre-K, K, and 1). (See Appendix XV).

The school has contracted with Expeditionary Learning for professional development both in and outside the building as we continue to revolutionize our instructional model to meet the needs of our students and the rigor of the Common Core Standards and the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The academic leadership team plans to spend the 2014-2015 school year continuing to conduct research and dive into the Expeditionary Learning model as we consider adopting the model as the basis for our core academic program. A final decision (and subsequent plan of implementation) will be presented to our Board of Directors followed by a vote in the spring of 2015.

Based on our examination of student performance outcomes and evolving state regulations, EastSide will do the following:

- Implement the Teaching Excellence Framework to evaluate all instructional staff members as approved in our 2013 Minor Modification application
- Continue to implement our 5th Grade Academy to support the transition from Lower School to Middle School for our rising 5th grade students
- Implement four rounds of Common Core and Smarter Balanced-aligned Interim assessments, designed and published by Amplify.
- Implement the Common Core standards, Next Generation Science standards and Delaware Social Studies Standards
- Expand extracurricular programming to meet the needs and desires of Lower School students

- Implement daily high school preparation program (60 minutes a day, 4 times a week over a 12 week trimester) to support the preparation and development of our 8th grade students
- Adjust scheduling and staffing model to accommodate increases in student enrollment
- EastSide anticipates increasing approved enrollment from 406 to 426 to accommodate organic growth student needs and we are applying for the requisite minor modification to our charter. Please refer to our minor modification for enrollment (Appendix XVI).

b) Provide goals and performance outcomes, including assessment tools and measures to be used. Provide a rationale for the identified goals and assessment measures. Provide any mission-specific goals that you will include in your Performance Agreement.

Performance goals in three major areas (Academic, Financial, and Organizational) are defined in the Proposed Renewing Charter School Performance (See Appendix XVII).

Our Mission Specific goal, as approved by the Charter School Office, is more than one year of academic growth on average for students in grades 2 - 8 in ELA and Math. The measure is average academic growth of students using Fall and Spring NWEA MAP assessment. The target is 1.15 years of academic growth (annualized over a 179 day school year) in math and reading from first week of school to the last week of school.

In addition to the goals outlined by DOE, the EastSide Board and school leadership have identified a list of other performance goals (See Appendix XVIII).

c) Provide detailed information on the school's plan for any changes or improvements to its facility for the five years of the next charter renewal term. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the proposed facility improvements.

We lease our facilities for \$1 per year from our affiliated 501(c)(3) foundation. Since we do not receive any government funding for facilities, we rely on the foundation to raise funds for any facility improvements. During the last 8 years our foundation has raised more than \$8 million, \$5.5 million of which we used to upgrade our facility.

While our classrooms do not reflect the high-priced modern design that our students deserve, they are large, comfortable, and safe. If we had the funds we would improve the lighting and window systems in our classrooms to improve the working and learning environment. However, in order to make those improvements the Wilmington Department of Licenses and Inspections has informed us that we will be required to take certain steps to bring our 1960's facility up to 2014 Code. Those Code improvements would cost about \$1.5 million and therefore are almost cost prohibitive. Since these current Code requirement issues would not improve the working and learning environment and are not necessary for safety, this is not a high priority for us.

We have recently completed a new EastSide Early Learning Academy to accommodate 66 Pre-K students. The acquisition, installation and equipping of these modular facilities cost

approximately \$825,000 which our foundation paid for with grants raised from charitable benefactors.

We are considering the expansion of the Early Learning Academy to add a birth to 3 program to feed into our Pre-K classes. Any such expansion would likely be paid for with charitable grants.

We have a study of our capital facilities needs that is currently being reviewed and updated. This plan identifies deferred maintenance items and provides an early warning for property expenditures that should be made. We do not have any significant deferred maintenance issues that are pressing in the near term.

d) Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates the school administration.

The Board conducts an annual evaluation of the Head of School which covers all areas of School operations (see below). Until July of this year certain of our finance and other non-academic functions have been performed by an outside provider. As of July 1, 2014 we have created an internal position of Director of Operations who will be responsible for all non-academic functions so that they will now all be performed in-house (See Appendix XIX). The Chair of our Finance Committee has led the Board's establishment of annual goals for the Director of Operations (as agreed with the Director) and will lead the Board's annual review of his performance. The Board does not specifically review the performance of any other administration members other than to the extent their performance might impact on the evaluation of the Head of School's performance.

e) What policies and procedures are in place to evaluate the school leader on an annual basis?

The Board's Executive Committee, on an annual basis, in concert with the Head of School, determines annual performance goals for the Head. These goals are then considered by and approved by the Board. These goals cover academic, organizational and financial performance with specific focus on matters that might be of particular interest from year to year (e.g., achieving certain student retention and enrollment targets). The Head's performance is then evaluated at the end of the year based on these goals which are used as part of an incentive compensation plan. Please refer to Appendix XVIII for an overview of the Head of School's performance goals.

f) Identify the school's plan to ensure the effectiveness of its Board of Trustees, including governance training and new member induction.

The Board is actively involved through Board and Committee meetings in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities to oversee the operation of the School. The monthly meeting agendas include regular dashboard reports of key academic, attendance and discipline data and are otherwise designed to keep the Board well informed about activities and developments at the School. Our Finance/Citizens Budget Oversight Committee maintains a particularly close watch over financial matters. Average meeting attendance of our 21 member Board has been about

65% for the last three years. All new Board members upon election to the Board receive a corporate governance orientation training session with the Chairman of the Board. Most Board members recently attended a combination Board retreat/formal corporate governance training program conducted by the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement. All Board members have satisfied all background check requirements and most have attended the DOE conducted financial training although some new members have not yet been able to schedule that because of the infrequency with which it is offered. All expect to have completed this financial training requirement by the end of this fall. We expect to repeat the retreat/corporate governance training sessions every three years and otherwise maintain this compliance record going forward.

g) Describe the school's process for succession planning including identification, development and retention of school leaders.

Our bylaws provide for 3 year staggered terms and term limits of up to 9 consecutive years to ensure a regular infusion of new Board members while at the same time ensuring continuity of institutional knowledge. A member who terms out can return to the Board after one year's absence. Executive Committee members stay particularly closely involved to be able to assume leadership in the event of an unexpected vacancy at the top. Otherwise the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee work together to put a succession plan in place in time to give the new leader an opportunity to properly prepare for leadership of the Board. The Nominating Committee maintains a matrix of Board members' capabilities and representations to ensure that we always have a diverse Board with all appropriate competencies and constituent representations.

The Head of School's duties include the training and grooming of administrators to advance in assuming administrative responsibility. Succession planning for the Head of School includes having a contract that provides at least nine months' notice of an intended departure and sufficient time to search for a new leader, including consideration of in house candidates.