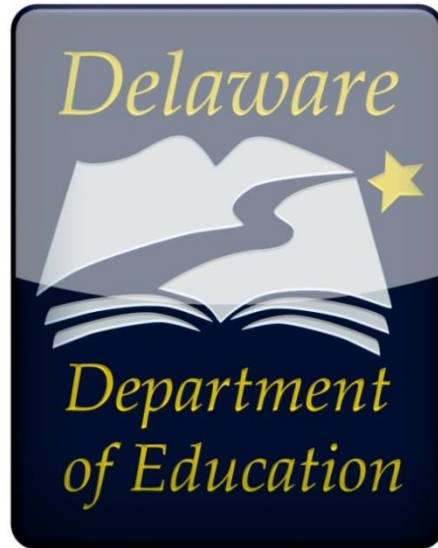


# CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## Gateway Lab School

**RENEWAL APPLICATION  
FINAL REPORT**

CSAC Final Meeting: December 2, 2019  
CSAC Final Report Published: December 6, 2019

By September 30, 2019, Gateway Lab School submitted an application to renew its charter. Consideration of this application is in accordance with the applicable provisions of 14 *Del. C.* § 514A and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275. Written renewal application guidance is provided by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) on its website. The renewal application template developed by DDOE is aligned to measures and targets within the Performance Framework, which outlines the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all Delaware charter schools are evaluated. The evaluation of the school's performance as measured by the Framework is a major component of the decision on the renewal application. The decision on the renewal application is based on a comprehensive review, guided, in part, by the following three questions:

1. Is the academic program a success?
2. Is the school financially viable?
3. Is the school organizationally sound?

This report serves as a summary of the strengths, areas of follow-up, and/or concerns identified by members of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) during their individual reviews of the charter applicant's renewal application, Performance Review Reports, Annual Reports and Performance Agreements and during the CSAC meetings.

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on December 2, 2019:

**Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee**

- Chuck Longfellow, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee, Associate Secretary, Operations Support, DDOE
- Susan Keene Haberstroh, Director, Student Support, DDOE
- Tiffany Green, Education Associate, Educator Support, DDOE
- Catherine Oravez, Education Associate, Operations Support, DDOE
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Academic Support, DDOE
- Susan Veenema, Education Associate, Academic Support, DDOE
- Chuck Taylor, Retired Head of School, Community Member
- Gregory Fulkerson, Education Associate, Academic Support, DDOE

**Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)**

- Darryl Parson, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee, Delaware Department of Justice
- Leroy Travers, Lead Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Finance Office, DDOE
- Jennifer Roussell, Administrative Assistant, Operations Support

**Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)**

- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter School Network
- Audrey Noble, Vice President, Delaware State Board of Education

**Representatives of Gateway Lab School**

- Joyce Henderson, Board President
- Catherine Dolan, Head of School
- Dorcell Spence, Financial Contractor
- Marlin White, Principal

## Discussion

Dr. Longfellow stated that an initial public hearing was held on November 13, 2019 and the CSAC Initial Meeting was held on October 29, 2019. He added that the CSAC Initial Report was issued on November 7, 2019. The school submitted a timely response to the CSAC Initial Report.

Dr. Longfellow noted that the CSAC had requested the following information:

Dr. Longfellow stated at the initial meeting on October 29, 2019, the CSAC identified areas that required a response and/or additional information from the school. This information included:

1. Evidence that the following areas fully met expectations when reviewed by the Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development (CIPD) workgroup:
  - English Language Arts (ELA)
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Visual and Performing Arts
2. A plan on how to recruit students and teachers as they expand the grades levels.
3. An explanation as to how the mission was developed and any processes in place to ensure that “mission creep” does not happen in the future.
4. A major modification application for a mission change, if the mission is changing.

Dr. Longfellow asked if there were any questions, comments, or feedback related to the supplemental information that the school submitted.

Dr. McCrae noted that the CIPD Workgroup had reviewed the school’s revised science, social studies, visual and performing arts, math and ELA submissions and concluded that the revised submissions meet approval.

Ms. Dolan explained that the school would not be submitting a major modification to change the school’s mission.

Dr. Noble referenced Gateway’s to work with AIM Institute for Learning and Research as part of their professional preparation, and specifically, the school’s plan to hire AIM’s interns as teacher. Dr. Noble asked if they will be qualified as special education teachers in Delaware. Ms. Dolan explained that they would only be hired if they were qualified as special education teachers. Dr. Noble asked what percentage of the school’s teachers were certified. Mr. White explained that he did not know the exact percentage, but that the school meets State of Delaware guidelines.

Dr. Noble asked what the role of the Board is when dealing with the “mission creep” issue explained in the initial meeting. Ms. Dolan explained that the mission belongs to the Board. Ms. Dolan explained that she implements the policies that the Board puts into place. Mrs. Henderson clarified that the Board has a strategic plan in place and that they ask for a dashboard of information that Gateway’s administration submits this to the Board.

Dr. Longfellow asked if there were additional questions.

Dr. Noble recommended that the Secretary of Education commit to a close monitoring of the enrollment of the future kindergarten through second grade expansion at Gateway.

### **Conclusion**

Dr. Longfellow then asked if there was a motion to recommend that this applicant meets the standard for charter operations under the charter school law and therefore its charter should be renewed for a five-year term beginning July 1, 2020 with or without conditions. The motion was made and seconded to recommend approval without any conditions and was carried. There was one abstention, Dr. Fulkerson, who did not attend the CSAC Initial Meeting.

Dr. Longfellow reminded the applicant that the CSAC's recommendation is just that; a recommendation to the Secretary of Education on the renewal application.

### **Next Steps:**

- On or before December 6, 2019, the CSAC will issue a Final Report, which will include its recommendation on the Renewal Application.
- The public comment period ends on December 13, 2019.
- The Secretary of Education will announce her decision at the December 19, 2019 State Board of Education meeting and seek the assent of the State Board, if necessary.