



November 18, 2019

Charter School Accountability Committee
Delaware Department of Education
01 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901-3639

Dear CSAC Committee,

Thank you for your service to Delaware parents in oversight of the charter schools and ensuring the welfare and education of school age children who attend charter schools.

As an unbiased outside observer who just worked with the Gateway Lab School (GLS) Board in a strategic planning process, I would like to offer my insights and data about what I discovered during this process.

The Board conducted year over year surveys of teachers and parents to gather a clear sense of areas of strength and potential areas of concern. The Teacher surveys reflect that the school culture and atmosphere has improved significantly between the 2017-18 and 2018-19. This appears to be in large part due to the impact of the school leadership by Head of School Catherine Dolan and Principal Marlin White. The GLS Board was also recognized by approximately 75% of the teachers as being active and having the right level of involvement. Consider what is revealed in the data about improvement in some of the key categories measured.

- Teacher satisfaction with career choice at GLS – 15% increase overall toward the positive with 95% overall having some degree of satisfaction (19% increase in “Very Satisfied” category).
- Interactions between staff (school culture) – 18% increase in “Very Satisfied” with 100% expressing satisfaction.
- Effectiveness of school leadership (ED, Principal, Special ED Director) – 30% increase in “Very Effective” category.
- Optimism of teachers about returning to GLS – 27% increase in “Absolutely Optimistic” category.
- 78% of all categories show improvement from 2017-18 to 2018-19.

While there was a significant drop in parent participation in the parent’s survey from year to year, 90% of respondents were satisfied with the services their child is receiving. The survey showed a need to improve communication with the parents and was impetus for communication objectives in the

strategic plan. This survey also reinforced the board's decision to strengthen processes to ensure fidelity to curriculum, fidelity to instructional techniques and fidelity to responsive classroom principles.

Regarding plans for future improvement and impact, the current strategic plan which was submitted to the board for approval included key measurable outcomes with appropriate targets by year to meet or exceed the DOE Academic Framework. The strategic plan includes identification of the data source and the processes for monitoring progress toward each year's goal and identifies the responsible parties for accountability.

I hope that you find this information helpful as you proceed through the charter renewal process for Gateway Lab School.

Sincerely,

Paul Stock

Digitally signed by Paul Stock
DN: cn=Paul Stock, o=Delaware Alliance
for Nonprofit Advancement, ou,
email=psstock@delawarenonprofit.org,
c=US
Date: 2019.11.18 08:13:11 -05'00'

Paul Stock
Executive Vice President
Excellence Academy

September 19, 2019

2306 Rockwell Rd.

Wilmington, DE 19810

Greetings Ms. Draper,

From a conversation I had with Ms. Rose Wooten, a former colleague, I desired to examine the educational process given to students at Gateway. I found her report of participation in the care and teaching of students intriguing. I wanted to learn more.

I appreciated being escorted through Gateway Lab School. I was impressed with your dedication to educate young people who too often are underserved, the students which are overwhelmed in the regular classroom with too many students. Often these regular classrooms have a teacher assistant as you have but the child is distracted with too many voices. Gateway Lab School has purposed itself to teaching students with learning disabilities and the student who needs extra attention which I believe are all students. The number of human resources that Gateway Lab School have on site in support for their students, leaves me in awe, as it is a small school without the support of tax dollars.

To you, Ms. Dolan and the staff thank you for a day of inspiration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gwendolyn Y. James". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Gwendolyn Y. James

IMAC Educational Chair

Network Director Delaware's Educators for Christ

Sponsored by Christian Educators Association International



MACINTYRE ASSOCIATES
Nonprofit Development Consultants

November 14, 2019

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Donna Melton**

To whom it may concern:

In 2014 we received a call asking if we worked with clients on Board and leadership development. The call was from Gateway Lab School, at the time a group seeking a new approach to student learning within the charter school framework.

We met with school leadership and conducted board and staff leadership workshops and met with them over the next several months. We were impressed with several things:

- The student was the primary focus.
- Parents were involved
- The arts were a path to learning
- Everyone knew everyone
- The leadership was intentional about their responsibility
- The faculty had an amazing capacity for teaching in this special environment.

Over time leadership changed and while we were saddened to see the decline, we are gladdened to see the original intensity of leadership return as well as the focus on the school's mission and vision. We will be working again with Gateway Lab School on leadership and organizational development. After an overview session the first topic to be examined will be succession planning.

The school provides a special learning environment to a special child. We have every confidence in their current and future success.

Sincerely,

Bonny Anderson, MSS
Managing Director