

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FORM

Prestige Academy Charter School
Name of Proposed School

Jack L. Perry
Name of Contact Person

Don C. Mell III
Name of the Head of the Board of Directors

Prestige Academy Charter School
Mailing Address of Contact Person

1121 Thatcher Street Wilmington, De 19802

Charter Renewal
Proposed Opening Date

302-762-3240
Telephone Number of Contact Person

5,6,7,8
Grades for School

302-762-4782
Fax Number of Contact Person

jack.perry@pa.k12.de.us
E-mail Address of Contact Person

First Year Enrollment 300
Total Number

5,6,7,8
First Year Grade Span

Second Year Enrollment 315
Total Number

5,6,7,8
Second Year Grade Span

Third Year Enrollment 315
Total Number

5,6,7,8
Third Year Grade Span

Fourth Year Enrollment 315
Total Number

5,6,7,8
Fourth Year Grade Span

Note: If this application is approved by the Department of Education and State Board of Education, with or without amendment, the final approved application and any amendments and conditions will serve as the approved charter for the school. Once granted, a charter cannot be modified without the approval of the Secretary of Education (see **14 Delaware Code, Section 511**).

Enrollment Breakdown by Grades

List the enrollment per grade for each of the first four years of school operation for a new charter application or the proposed enrollment for a renewal or modification application beginning with the current year. Please indicate the school year (example 2011-2012) in each of the boxes below.

First Year Enrollment (2011-2012)

Grade	Number
5th Grade	50
6th Grade	101
7th Grade	88
8th Grade	61
Total 1st Year Enrollment	300

Second Year Enrollment (2012-2013)

Grade	Number
5th Grade	50
6th Grade	100
7th Grade	90
8th Grade	75
Total 2nd Year Enrollment	315

Third Year Enrollment (2013-2014)

Grade	Number
5th Grade	50
6th Grade	100
7th Grade	90
8th Grade	75
Total 3rd Year Enrollment	315

Fourth Year Enrollment (2014-2015)

Grade	Number
5th Grade	50
6th Grade	100
7th Grade	90
8th Grade	75
Total 4th Year Enrollment	315

As an introduction, describe the proposed charter school in one page or less. Include the specific grades to be served, target population (if any), school size, location (i.e., name of city or county), founding group, school focus or special educational approach, and any other descriptive information (e.g., parental involvement) that will provide a context for the remaining narrative in this application. For renewals and modifications, please update this information if necessary. Otherwise, indicate that this information remains unchanged from your last application. If this is your first renewal or modification using the on line application, please supply this information in its most recent form from either your latest renewal, modification or original application. Please follow the same process for all of the sections of this application.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School is the result of a vision of a committed group of local professionals, educators, business and community leaders, as well as child and neighborhood advocates. All Founding Board members were dedicated to the mission and vision of a college preparatory middle school education for young men in Delaware, and have remained uncompromising about academic achievement. The Founding Board included Delaware certified teachers, parents, and community members with deep experience in education, business, finance, management, fundraising, diversity issues, and community and organizational leadership. The goal of this group was and remains to provide a safe, well-disciplined, achievement-oriented middle school where boys in grades 5-8 can learn, master, and apply foundational skills and content knowledge in the core subjects, and develop the strong character necessary for success in school and in life. We provide the choice of a college preparatory, single gender middle school to Delaware families.

Prestige Academy Charter School opened in 2008 with 103 boys in grade 5. In year two (2009-2010), we served 177 boys in grades 5 and 6, and in year three (2010-2011), we served 247 boys in grades 5-7. In year four (2011-2012), we currently serve 300 boys in grades 5-8. Our original charter was approved to serve up to 432 boys in those grades. We believe that decreasing our enrollment target will allow us to maintain a small school size, critical for the needs of our population, and will ultimately best serve our students and our academic goals. Our core mission and school design remains unchanged. Within a single gender environment, and utilizing a data-driven instructional model, we expect all students to perform at or above grade level as measured on standards-based external and internal assessments. Central to our mission is the goal to graduate students fully prepared to gain admission to and succeed within college preparatory high schools and with the determination to continue on to the colleges and universities of their choice.

In order to support academic achievement, Prestige Academy Charter School provides double periods of literacy and math instruction daily, and extends the length of school days and the academic year. We also enforce strict behavioral rules. We teach, model, and require all students to develop and demonstrate Prestige Academy's REAL values: Respect and Responsibility, Excellence in Behavior, Academic Mastery, and Leadership through Service. Students wear uniforms, participate in community service, and benefit from a strong, no-excuses character education through which they are taught how to be *Prestige Men*. We involve parents as partners, and actively encourage all families to become involved in their child's education through frequent communication, home visits, parent workshops, and a signed covenant between the parent, student and school.

Our educational objectives are supported by relationships with Teach For America (which provides placement of mission aligned teachers at our school), the Achievement Network (which develops, scores, and analyzes 6-week interim assessments) and Building Excellent Schools (which provides professional development and coaching to staff and the board). To integrate technology into the curriculum, all classrooms have been outfitted with an Elmo, smart board, and LCD projector. In addition, each teacher is provided with a laptop computer.

1. Applicant Qualifications

- a. Describe the involvement of each of the Delaware certified teachers, parents, and community members who have participated in the preparation of the application and the development of the proposed school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The Founding Board of Prestige Academy Charter School brought together a highly qualified group of professionals committed to the academic and organizational success of Prestige Academy Charter School. All members were dedicated to the mission and vision of a college preparatory middle school education for the young men of Delaware. The Board included Delaware certified teachers, parents, and community members. Members of the Founding Board brought deep experience in: education, business, finance, management, fundraising, diversity issues, and community and organizational leadership. The school's lead founder and Executive Director, Jack L. Perry, was a Fellow with Building Excellent Schools¹, a national non-profit training program that prepares select individuals for leadership and success in developing and sustaining high performing urban charter schools in communities of need. Initial Board members were recruited based on their deep alignment with the school's mission and vision for an all boys' college preparatory middle school, professional expertise, and an unwavering commitment to outstanding and measurable student achievement. The Founding Board was established in the fall of 2006 and met monthly and communicated frequently to prepare the application and the multiple components of the proposed school design.

Below is the list of Founding Board members. Our original charter application contains their resumes.

- **Nnamdi O. Chukwuocha**, Associate Executive Director, Kingswood Community Center
- **Robin Lober**, History Teacher, The Charter School of Wilmington
- **Donald Mell**, Principal at mell3strategies, a government relations/public relations consulting firm
- **Rodney Merriweather**, Senior Marketing Manager, Consultant
- **Reverend Vincent P. Oliver**, Pastor, New Calvary Baptist Church, Wilmington DE
- **Jack L. Perry**, lead founder and fellow, Building Excellent Schools
- **Jason Reeves**, Tax Analyst, DuPont Corporate Finance
- **Mark Stewart**, Marketing Specialist, Delaware State Office of Management and Budgets
- **Dr. Rita Vasta**, Science Teacher, The Charter School of Wilmington

Below is the list of current Board members

- **Dana Balick**, Education/Non-profit Consultant
- **Lakiyah Chambers**, Human Resources Manager
- **Vergie Cooper**, Parent member, Trainer, Bank of America
- **Dana Davisson**, Certified Teacher/Academic Dean, Prestige Academy Charter School

¹ See Attachment A for a description of Building Excellent Schools.

- **Vandell (Van) Hampton, Jr.**, Executive Director, First State Community Loan Fund
- **Tarik J. Haskins**, Attorney, Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnell LLP
- **Anthony Hill**, Senior Executive, Barclays
- **Donald Mell**, Principal at mell3strategies, a government relations/public relations consulting firm
- **Rodney Merriweather**, Senior Marketing Manager, Consultant
- **Shaun Murphy**, Certified Teacher (to be determined)², Prestige Academy Charter School
- **Robert Ritterbeck**, Senior Executive, Independence Energy
- **Dr. Rita Vasta**, Educational Associate, New Castle County Vocational Technical Schools

This application for renewal was completed by the staff of the Prestige Academy Charter School working in conjunction with the Board of Directors. All major policy changes and reviews of school performance as reflected in this application have been reviewed and, to the extent required, approved by the Board of Directors.

- b. Describe how the group that participated in the development of the application came together and if there are any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, business, non-profit organizations, or any other entities or groups. If any consultants or contractors were enlisted to help prepare this application, identify them, describe their qualifications, and indicate the areas where they provided information and assistance. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The Board of Directors and staff of Prestige Academy Charter School participated in the development of this charter renewal application. There are no partnership arrangements with other schools, educational programs, non-profit organizations, or other entities or groups.

- c) List the names, the places of residence, and the phone numbers of the founding board of directors and indicate which members are teachers currently certified in Delaware, parents, and community members. Describe how the location of the founding group members is related to the proposed location of the charter school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Information regarding the founding Board of Directors is included in our original charter application. The current membership of the Board of Directors has strong connection to and deep roots within the local community through their professional work, community involvement and residence. All members are aware of the academic and developmental needs within the community, and the desire of families for unique educational options for their children. Please reference the current list of Board of Directors below and the attached Board of Director resumes for their places of residence and phone numbers.³

² Mr. Murphy’s board candidacy is being vetted by the governance committee. Dana Davisson, the current certified teacher board member, was recently promoted to Academic Dean at Prestige Academy Charter School.

³ Please see Attachment B-Current Board Member Resumes.

- **Dana Balick**, Education/Non-profit Consultant
 - **Lakiyah Chambers**, Human Resources Manager
 - **Vergie Cooper**, Parent member/ Trainer, Bank of America
 - **Dana Davisson**, Certified Teacher/Academic Dean, Prestige Academy Charter School
 - **Vandell (Van) Hampton, Jr.**, Community Member/ Executive Director, First State Community Loan Fund
 - **Tarik J. Haskins**, Attorney, Morris, Nichols, Arsht & Tunnell LLP
 - **Anthony Hill**, Senior Executive, Barclays
 - **Donald Mell**, Principal at mell3strategies, a government relations/public relations consulting firm
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 - **Shaun Murphy**, Certified Teacher (to be determined), Prestige Academy Charter School
 - **Robert Ritterbeck**, Senior Executive, Independence Energy
 - **Dr. Rita Vasta**, Educational Associate, New Castle County Vocational Technical Schools
- c. Describe the plans for further recruitment of board members of the school, especially teachers to be employed at the school and parents of students to be enrolled at the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The Prestige Academy Charter School Board’s recruitment efforts are targeted and specific, seeking members whose skills and experience best complement those of current Board members. The Board of Directors taps their personal and professional networks to enhance the efficacy of the Board and the future impact it will have on the success of Prestige Academy Charter School.⁴

In order for the Board of Directors to maintain collective experience, and with the assistance and support of Building Excellent Schools and ISDC, all members have been trained in the best practices of charter school governance and Board development. Individuals that are offered a seat on the Board are provided with our Member Expectations, which they review, agree to and sign. Upon joining, new Board members are provided with orientation materials including minutes and agendas from past board meetings, and a list of on-line and print resources for Board members, existing Board policies, By-laws, and other readings relevant to Prestige Academy Charter School. **Furthermore, members have been taken on tours of highly effective urban charter schools that serve demographic populations similar to that of Prestige Academy Charter School. We will access other professional services as needed.**

In addition to a specific focus on the critical areas of expertise outlined in section (1d) of this document, the Board and Executive Director have sought to recruit additional members to join the board with skills in not-for-profit management and fundraising, human resources, law, finance, facilities and real estate management, information technology, and marketing/public

⁴ Please see Attachment C-Board Member Orientation Materials.

relations. Any time a vacancy arises in the teacher or parent position, the Board accepts applications from all parents and teachers.

As stated in the Bylaws, the Board of Directors established and maintains a Governance Committee that is responsible for selecting new members.⁵ Staggered terms are used to encourage moderate turnover of Board Members. The Governance Committee presents nominees to the Board for selection and is responsible for providing orientation to new Board members. In addition to recruiting new members based on specific skill sets needed on the Board, the Governance Committee recruits new members based on mission and vision alignment, commitment to a single gender, college preparatory middle school education, and relevant professional expertise.

- d. Describe how the background of each member of the founding group makes him or her qualified to operate a charter school and implement the proposed educational program. Describe how the board of directors has and will maintain collective experience, or contractual access to such experience, in the following areas: (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)
 - 1) Research-based curriculum and instructional strategies, to particularly include the curriculum and instructional strategies of the proposed educational program.
 - 2) Business management, including but not limited to accounting and finance.
 - 3) Personnel management.
 - 4) Diversity issues, including but not limited to outreach, student recruitment, and instruction.
 - 5) At-risk populations and children with disabilities, including but not limited to students eligible for special education and related services.
 - 6) School operations, including but not limited to facilities management.

Response:

The members of the Prestige Academy Charter School Board of Directors are qualified to govern and operate a charter school and implement the educational program due to their collective level of professional expertise and commitment to public education in the city of Wilmington and the State of Delaware. Board members possess experience in a variety of areas which are necessary for the success of a charter school, as exhibited in their resumes and as outlined in their brief biographies. A majority of the founding members transitioned to the Board of Directors of the school providing for continuity in governance and ensuring a broad range of expertise remains in place. Specifically, that expertise encompasses:

1. Research-based curriculum and instructional strategies, to particularly include the curriculum and instructional strategies of the proposed educational program.

⁵ Please see Attachment D- Prestige Academy Bylaws.

As educators, Dr. Vasta, Dana Davisson, Shaun Murphy, and Mr. Perry have significant experience creating and implementing research-based curriculum and instructional strategies for and with students in urban settings such as in Bridgeport, CT, and in Wilmington, DE. During his Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, Mr. Perry spent one year immersed in research-based curriculum and instructional strategy training and has seen both successfully implemented at high-performing charter schools nationwide. He has also led Prestige Academy Charter School for the past three years. Dr. Vasta was a science teacher at the Charter School of Wilmington where she helped to implement a rigorous science program, is currently an Education Associate with the New Castle County Vocational Technical School, and has served on the Prestige Academy Charter School Board since its inception. Mrs. Davisson is a certified teacher and has taught English Language Arts at Prestige Academy Charter School for the past four years and was recently promoted to the position of Academic Dean for English Language Arts and Social Studies. Mr. Murphy is a certified Special Education teacher entering his third year at Prestige Academy Charter School. Mr. Murphy and Mrs. Davisson are Teach For America Alumni.

2. Business management, including but not limited to accounting and finance.

Through their MBA training and respective professions in the financial services sector, Mr. Merriweather, Mr. Ritterbeck, Mr. Hampton, and Mr. Hill are highly skilled in managing the work of start-ups, as well as in long-established corporations and retail establishments. They are expert in branding, marketing, advertising and sales, financial analysis and taxation, customer service and client relations. They also have spearheaded hiring, contracts and strategic planning for their respective businesses. Board Chair Don Mell represents his company and others at the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce functions and events, and has served on a Business and Economic Development Committee. Mr. Perry has received targeted training in managing the business facets of charter school operations, including budgets, forecasting and cash flow as part of the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship and continues to manage the current Prestige Academy Charter School budget. Our Business Manager Michelle Lambert provides ongoing technical assistance in the areas of business management, accounting, and finance as well. The Finance Committee of the Prestige Academy Board has worked closely with the Executive Director and Business Manager to ensure sound business practices.

3. Personnel management.

Through his corporate work at ING Direct, and now at Barclays, Mr. Hill has developed skills in assembling and managing employee teams. Additionally, all other Board members rose to supervisory levels in their respective careers and, collectively, have decades of experience selecting, managing and evaluating staff of varying sizes. In addition to leading staff at an alternative school for boys, Mr. Perry supervised and trained staff social workers at a therapeutic foster care program.

Specifically, Board members Mrs. Chambers, Mr. Hampton, and Mrs. Cooper add value to the board in the area of personnel management due to their collective experience managing people at the Brady Corporation, Bank of America and First State Community Loan Fund.

4. Diversity issues, including but not limited to outreach, student recruitment, and instruction.

Mr. Perry, Mrs. Davisson, Mr. Murphy, and Dr. Vasta have all worked with diverse student populations in urban areas, conducting outreach to families to provide educational, recreational and social services, and instructing youth in core curricula, the arts, the road to college, and social issues. Mr. Perry was a trainer with the Anti-Defamation League. Dr. Vasta, Mrs. Chambers, and Mrs. Cooper have experience with student and family outreach, student recruitment, and instruction through their work with Charter Schools in Baltimore and Wilmington.

5. At-risk populations and children with disabilities, including but not limited to students eligible for special education and related services.

Mr. Perry, Mrs. Davisson, Mr. Murphy, and Dr. Vasta have considerable experience working directly with students at risk of academic failure, struggling with emotional or behavioral issues, diagnosed with learning disabilities and/or living in poverty in urban environments. Their education, social work training and careers helping families and children have prepared them to work effectively with at-risk populations.

6. School operations, including but not limited to facilities management.

As a past faculty representative to the Board of the Charter School of Wilmington, Dr. Vasta worked on maintenance and program planning projects. Mrs. Chambers was a member of the founding Board for a charter school based in Baltimore, Maryland and assisted with school operations and facility management. Mr. Perry was responsible for many aspects of school operations at the alternative school he led prior to opening Prestige Academy Charter School. In addition, Prestige Academy Charter School Board members worked closely with Building Excellent Schools to develop, implement, and improve school operations procedures and policies.

Current Board members Don Mell, Rod Merriweather, Dr. Rita Vasta and Jack Perry have demonstrated competency, governance and oversight for school operations, and facilities management through their work on the Prestige Academy Charter School Board of Directors the past four years.

2. Form of Organization

Identify the name of the organizing corporation, date of incorporation, and names of the corporation's officers and the office held by each. Attach a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation and a copy of the bylaws of the corporation. The bylaws must be consistent with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 29 Delaware Code, Chapter 100 (related to public bodies, public records, and open meetings) and provide for representation of the school's teachers and parents of students on the board of directors. The by-laws must demonstrate that the applicant's business is restricted to the opening and operation of charter schools, before school programs, after school programs and educationally related programs offered outside the traditional school year. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy is the name of the organizing corporation. The Certificate of Incorporation was filed on December 11, 2006.⁶ The Bylaws contain a statement that Prestige Academy "business is restricted to the opening and operation of charter schools, before school programs, after school programs and educationally related programs offered outside the traditional school year."⁷

Officers: Don Mell, Board Chair, Dr. Rita Vasta, Vice Chair, Rodney Merriweather, Treasurer, Van Hampton, Secretary.

⁶ Please see Attachment E-Certificate of Incorporation.

⁷ Please see Attachment D-Prestige Academy Bylaws.

3. Mission, Goals and Educational Objectives

- a. Describe the purpose, mission, goals, and core philosophy of the proposed school. Indicate how the mission, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the legislative intent of 14 Delaware Code, Section 501, and the restrictions on charter schools set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School was founded in order to provide a challenging academic curriculum for middle school-aged boys. The curriculum based on Delaware’s educational standards and curriculum objectives provides support for those above, at, or behind grade level. Our mission is to prepare young men in grades 5-8 for admission to and success in demanding college preparatory high schools. In a highly structured, achievement-oriented school culture, Prestige Academy Charter School students develop a strong academic foundation in the core subjects and the REAL values necessary for success: Respect and Responsibility, Excellence in Behavior, Academic Mastery, and Leadership.

Prestige Academy Charter School challenges our students through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum that focuses on mastery in the core subjects of reading, writing and math while emphasizing the importance of strong character and leadership through service to the community. Frequent interim assessments drive instruction in all of our classrooms and students receive the daily academic support needed outside of traditional classroom time as part of the school’s extended day program.

From 2008 to 2011, we utilized the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) interim testing to measure student growth. During our weekly professional development meetings, teachers discuss the improvement plans for individual students and their instructional action plans to address student growth. We no longer use the NWEA MAP assessment due to the increased rigor of the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), along with use of the Achievement Network interim assessment testing, which we administer every five weeks. The Achievement Network interim assessment is our primary tool used to drive rigor and address student needs. Based on recent DCAS growth in math and ELA, and the alignment to the Common Core standards, we believe that the Achievement Network assessments are an effective and valuable tool for the teacher and student to be successful.

Through a partnership with the Charter School of Wilmington (CSW), special education students along with some regular education students receive weekly tutoring for 60 minutes. The 1-1 or 1-2 pairing with the Prestige Academy Charter School students allow CSW students to review specific objectives as well as preview other skills. This gives our students an opportunity to learn about high school and to see that what they are learning is applied in future educational settings.

Outside of traditional classroom instruction, we use athletics, music, art and other extracurricular activities to develop teamwork and encourage creativity. In 7th grade, we begin the application process to college preparatory high schools with our students and families. It is important to

provide this necessary support as students consider this very important decision. As we prepare for our first graduating class of 8th graders in June 2012, we will continue to work with students and families to increase their opportunities to choose and attend a great high school.

- b. Describe the methods of internal evaluation that will be used by the board of directors to ensure that the school is meeting its stated educational mission and objectives. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The Board of Directors regularly reviews an agreed upon set of benchmarks monthly and annually including DCAS goals, staff and parent satisfaction surveys, mission specific events, compliance audit results, year-to-date financial reports, and regulatory compliance.

Academic Performance: Prestige Academy Charter School uses several tools for student evaluation. From 2008-2011 we used NWEA MAP testing as a formative assessment to direct, shape, and inform subsequent instruction and evaluate teacher and student growth. During academic year 2010-2011 we phased out NWEA MAP due to the implementation of the DCAS. Since the 2009-2010 academic year we have utilized the Achievement Network for our 5-6 week interim assessments. The Achievement Network assessments are aligned to the Common Core standards and directly inform professional development for teachers and the remediation strategies chosen after results are analyzed. Interim assessment testing and DCAS results are reviewed at the Academic Achievement Committee every two months and reviewed in public session twice a year with the Board of Directors.⁸

Parent Satisfaction: Prestige Academy Charter School conducts a bi-annual Parent Survey. The results (both qualitative and quantitative) of the survey are reviewed in the Academic Achievement Committee and by the Board of Directors. These results are shared with the rest of the school community.

Staff Satisfaction: Two (2) faculty surveys are issued during the school year. Results are reviewed at the Academic Achievement Committee meetings and with the Board of Directors. Follow up is completed by the Board of Directors and school administration.

- c. Describe the procedures the school will use to ensure compliance with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Section 506, related to enrollment. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School conducts enrollment for new students prior to the April 1 deadline. The student rosters are electronically submitted to the Department of Education (DOE) through eschool plus. Prestige Academy Charter School requires new students to complete a commitment form that includes a statement that, *"I understand that my child is required to remain in this charter school, in the absence of any condition constituting good cause, for at least one school year."* This letter is kept in the student's permanent file.

⁸ Please see Attachment F-Academic Achievement Committee Meeting Minutes.

This form is signed prior to the student's initial year of attendance at the charter school, is kept on file at the school and made available for inspection to DOE officials or representatives from the public school district in which the student resides. After a student's initial year of enrollment, families must complete a re-enrollment form by the established deadline to confirm their child's intent to return to Prestige Academy Charter School for the following school year or their seat may be forfeited.⁹

⁹ Please see Attachment G-Student Application Form and Re-enrollment Form.

4. Goals for Student Performance

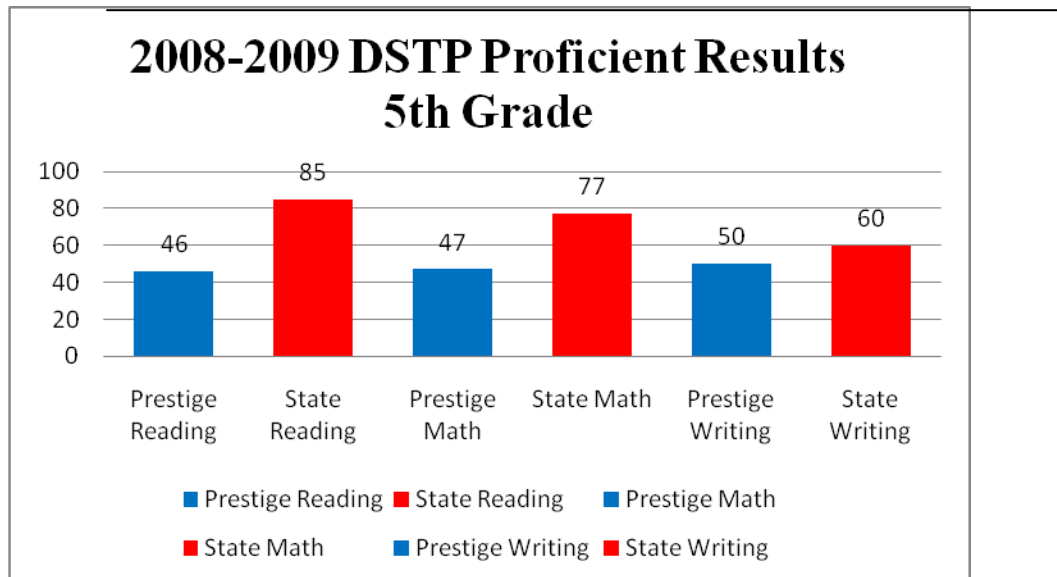
- a. List the specific student performance goals in math and reading by grade for students disaggregated by grade and ethnicity for the initial four years of operation and describe the assessment instruments that will be used to measure whether students meet or exceed those goals. (Renewals/Modifications – show and discuss the results during the current period as necessary.)

Response:

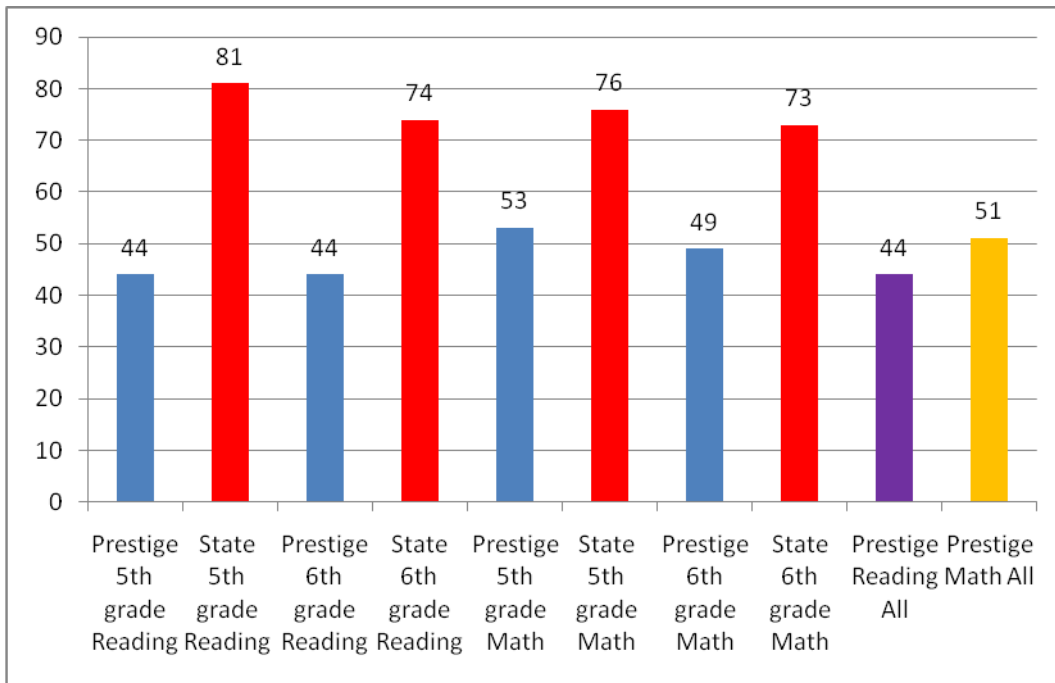
In addition to the Delaware State Testing Program (DSTP), and DCAS, Prestige Academy Charter School has used the NWEA MAP assessment and interim assessments from the Achievement Network to drive student mastery and to provide a picture of student growth over the course of the year and over multiple academic years. Prestige Academy Charter School serves a population that is over 96% African American and male. This has been the case since the school opened in 2008 therefore disaggregating performance goals by grade and ethnicity does not result in strong comparative data. Provided below is an analysis of Student Performance Goals, Results and references to supporting documents for the 2008-2011 school years.

2008 - 2010 DSTP Results Summary

On average, Prestige Academy Charter School 5th graders entered our school performing academically at the 3rd grade 8 month level in reading, math, and writing according to the NWEA Map Assessment. The challenge of middle school academic preparation is evident, as is the need to close an ever-widening achievement gap for black and Latino boys as well as other low income boys. Below is a summary of DSTP results from 2008 through 2010.



2009-2010 DSTP Proficient Results 5th and 6th Grade



Overall Trends for DSTP 2009-2010. In 5th grade reading, the passage rate was 44%, in 5th grade math, the passage rate was 53%. This represents a 2% decrease in 5th grade reading and a 6 point increase in 5th grade math according to 2009 scores. The 6 point increase in math came when the state passage rates decreased 1 point. There is still a gap that exists between the state and these scores; it is 31 points in reading and 23 points in math.

In 6th grade the passage rate was 44 percent in reading and 49 percent in math. Passage rates on the 6th grade DSTP statewide are lower than 5th grade, with passage rates of 74 percent in reading (compared to 81% in grade 5) and 73 percent in math (compared to 76% in grade 5). The gap between our scores and the state is 1 point lower in reading and 1 point higher in math compared to 5th grade. Last year the gaps for this group in 5th grade were 39 points in reading and 30 points in math. For an analysis of scholars who have been at Prestige for two years, see the section entitled “Scholars at Prestige for Two Years”.

2009 Overall Disaggregated Results by Grade, Race, and Ethnicity

	Race	N	Percent Proficient
5 Math	African American	80	47.5
	Hispanic	3	33
	White	1	0
5 Reading	African American	80	48
	Hispanic	3	33
	White	1	0

2010 Overall Disaggregated Results by Race

5 Reading	African American	65	58
	Hispanic	5	20
5 Math	African American	65	51
	Hispanic	5	0
6 Reading	American Indian	1	0
	African American	100	56
	Hispanic	4	75
	White	3	67
6 Math	American Indian	1	100
	African American	100	51
	Hispanic	4	75
	White	3	33

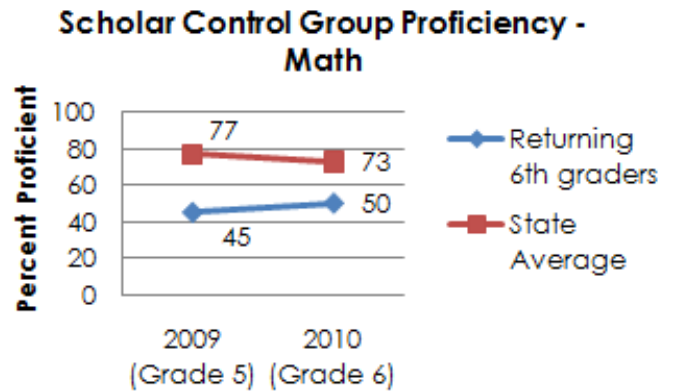
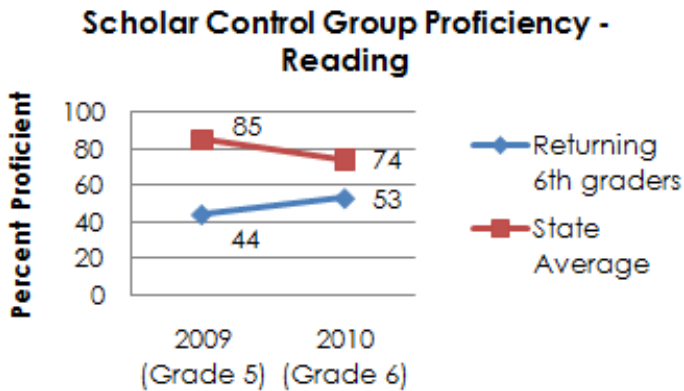
Given the small N in this disaggregation, no comparisons between racial subgroups are drawn.

In addition to traditional class, teacher, and grade level groups, it is also important to review DSTP results for certain control groups of scholars. The two discussed here are retained students, and scholars who have been at Prestige Academy Charter School for their fifth and sixth grade year.

Retained Students. Of the students who were retained in 5th grade from 2009 - 2010, 100% passed math and 80% passed reading. This is an increase of 40% in math and 60% in reading. Their scores on each DSTP test are contained below:

Retained Students	2009 Math	2010 Math	2009 Reading	2010 Reading
Student 1	3	3	1	1
Student 2	3	3	3	3
Student 3	3	3	2	3
Student 4	1	3	2	3
Student 5	1	3	1	3

2009 – 2010 Results: Scholars at Prestige Academy Charter School for Two Years (Grades 5 and 6). While scholars still have ground to make up, returning sixth graders showed tremendous progress, closing in on the state average by 20 points in reading (from 41 points to 21 points) and 9 points in math (from 32 points to 23 points). At this pace, these scholars who continue at Prestige into their 8th grade year are on pace to perform at the state average.



Overall Trends on DSTP and DCAS. Despite many successes, there is still significant work to be done. The following trends sum up our results:

- Overall passage rates are still below the state average, but are closing and are smaller than gaps from last year.
- Few scholars are exceeding the standard, a number we need to increase.
- Special education passage rates were significantly lower than regular education passage rates.
- Students who have been at Prestige Academy Charter School for two years are closing the gap with the state average at a significant pace.
- Retained students saw significant success on the DSTP compared to last year's results.

Below is an analysis of the 2010-2011 DCAS testing results:

Table 1. GROWTH: Instructional Score Growth Compared to State and Subgroup Averages

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Pt Change
5 Reading DOE	724	747	765	41
5 Reading Prestige	692	720	730	38
5 Reading AA State	700	722	740	40
5 Reading White State	742	766	785	43
5 Math DOE	706	730	763	57
5 Math Prestige	679	712	751	72
5 Math AA State	681	703	734	53
5 Math White State	722	749	784	62
6 Reading DOE	745	758	778	33
6 Reading Prestige	720	736	763	43
6 Reading AA State	717	732	749	32
6 Reading White State	766	778	799	33
6 Math DOE	732	757	776	44

6 Math Prestige	708	743	763	55
6 Math AA State	704	724	744	40
6 Math White State	751	778	797	46
7 Reading DOE				
7 Reading Prestige	765	783	790	25
7 Reading AA State	741	755	763	22
7 Reading White State	783	805	811	28
7 Math DOE				
7 Math Prestige	764	782	800	36
7 Math AA State	741	758	773	32
7 Math White State	779	799	818	39

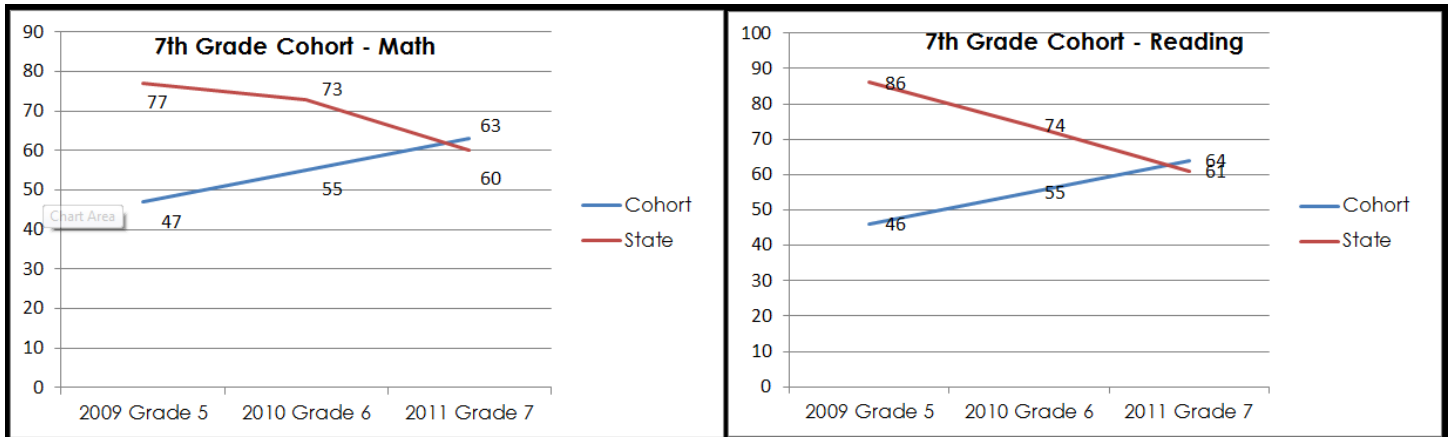
The data shows that Prestige Academy Charter School students outgrew the state average in 5 of 6 possible math and reading areas. Further, Prestige Academy Charter School students outgrew the highest performing subgroup in the state (“White Students”) in 5 of 6 categories as well.

DCAS Data by Grade, Race, and Ethnicity

	Race	N	Percent Proficient
5 Reading	Hispanic	3	67
	Asian	1	100
	African American	64	41
	White	1	100
	Multiracial	1	100
5 Math	Hispanic	3	0
	Asian	1	100
	African American	64	61
	White	1	100
	Multiracial	1	100
6 Reading	Hispanic	5	60
	African American	87	57
6 Math	Hispanic	5	60
	African American	85	51
7 Reading	Hispanic	3	33
	African American	61	68
	White	1	100
7 Math	Hispanic	3	67
	African American	61	56
	White	1	100

*This table is included for reporting purposes only. Given the small N for each subgroup besides African American, there is no analysis based on this graph alone.

ACHIEVEMENT: Proficiency Rates of Students Attending Prestige for More Than 2 Years



These graphs display our 7th grade cohort's proficiency rates compared to the statewide proficiency rates over the last three years. For example, in 7th Grade Cohort – Math, 47% of Prestige Academy Charter School 5th graders were proficient compared to 77% of the state. As you can see from the graph, by seventh grade, Prestige Academy Charter School students who have attended our school since fifth grade are outperforming the state average despite significant gaps when entering Prestige Academy Charter School.

With respect to the NWEA MAP assessments, students have been tested at the beginning and end of the year. The test was administered during the school's first two years of operation. During the 2010 – 2011 school year, only incoming students were tested. The results were used for the purposes of classroom placement as well as a measure of growth. These students were tested again at the end of the year to show their growth over the course of the 2010 – 2011 school year. Given the implementation of the DCAS that provides a growth measure, the NWEA MAP assessment will no longer be utilized.

Students at Prestige Academy Charter School were tested during the following windows each year:

2009 Fall - Summer

2010 Fall - Spring

2011 (New Students only – Summer to Spring)

Since growth analysis is only available from fall to spring on the NWEA website, a Teach For America-developed NWEA MAP tracker¹⁰ analyzing beginning of the year to end of the year growth by individual students was used to draw conclusions on the results of students.

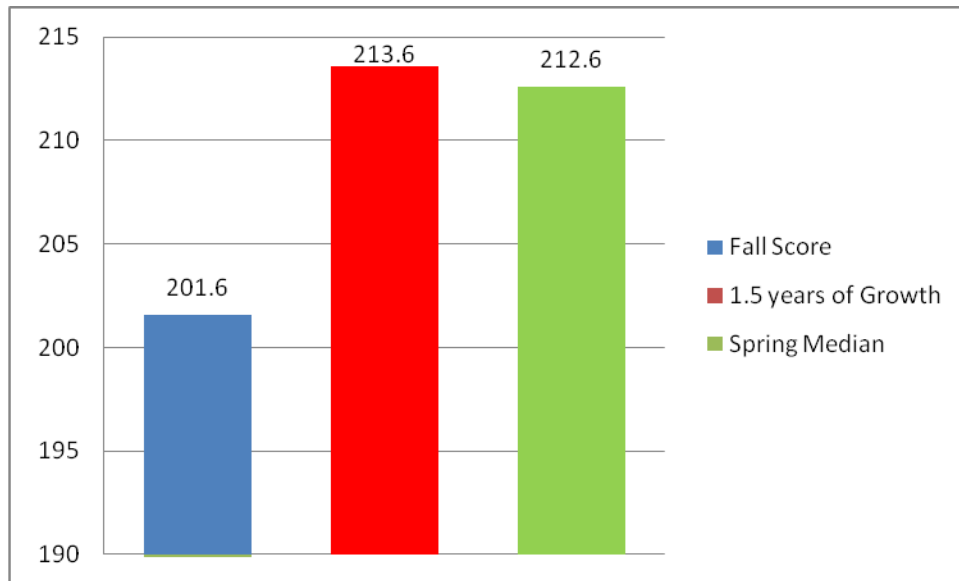
¹⁰ Please see Attachment H-Teach For America NWEA Tracker.

The NWEA MAP performance goals and results in math and reading are described below.

NWEA MAP Results 2008-2009

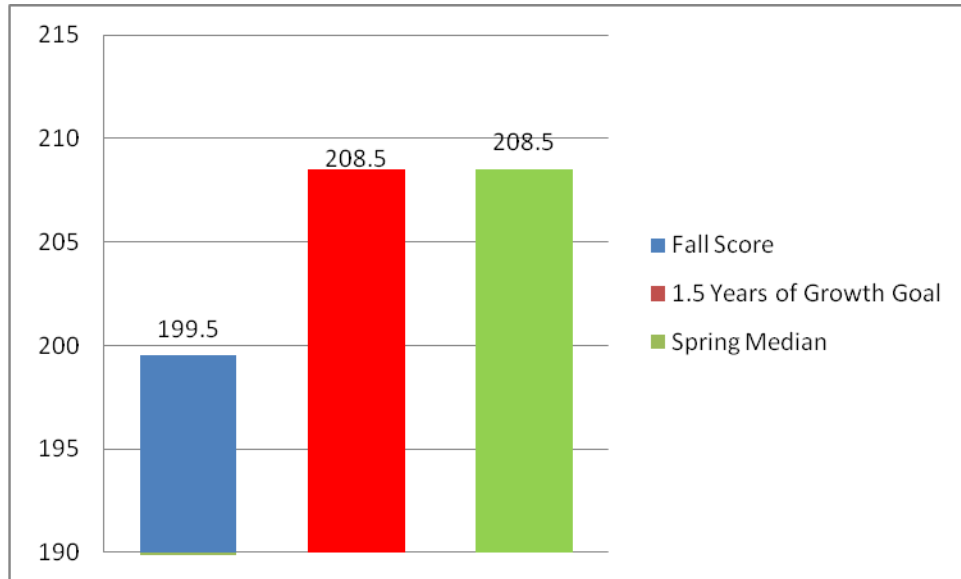
While students did not meet the state average on the DSTP in 2009, they did show significant growth on the NWEA MAP assessment.

2008- 2009 MAP Math Results for Grade 5



Math: Students began the year with an average score of 201.6, representing a grade level average of 3.8 (3rd grade, 8th month). Typically, a student who scores 201.6 during fall testing will score 209.6 at the end of the year. We set a goal that students should display a growth of 150% and should therefore average a 213.6 at end-of-year testing, representing growth of 1.5 years. The average score students achieved at the end of the year was 212.6 or 91.25% of the goal. A 212.6 represents an average grade level of 5.2 or 5th grade, 2nd month. This represents an overall average growth of 1.4 years during the 2008-2009 school year.

2008 – 2009 MAP Reading Results for Grade 5



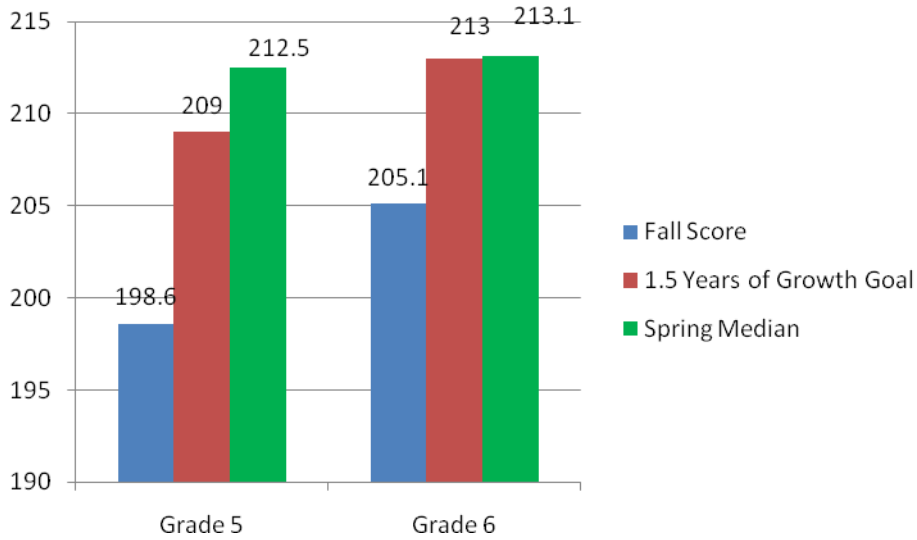
Reading: Students began the year with an average score of 199.5, representing a grade level average of 4.0 (beginning 4th grade). Typically, a student who scores 199.5 during fall testing will score 205.5 at the end of the year. We set a goal that students would display 150% of growth and would average a 208.5 at end of year testing, representing growth of 1.5 years. The average score students achieved at the end of the year was 208.5, representing 1.5 years of growth. A 208.5 represents an average grade level of 5.5 or 5th grade, 5th month. This represents an overall average growth of 1.5 years in one year.

Language Usage: Students began the year with an average score of 198.0, representing a grade level average of 3.5 (3rd grade, 5th month). Typically, a student who scores 198.0 during Fall testing, will score a 204.0 by the end of the year. We set a goal that students would display 150% of growth and would average a 207.0 at end of year testing, representing growth of 1.5 years. The average score students achieved at the end of the year was 211.9 or 154% of the goal. A 211.9 represents an average grade level of 5.8 or 5th grade, 8th month, representing 2.3 years of growth during the 2008 – 2009 school year.

NWEA MAP Results 2009 – 2010

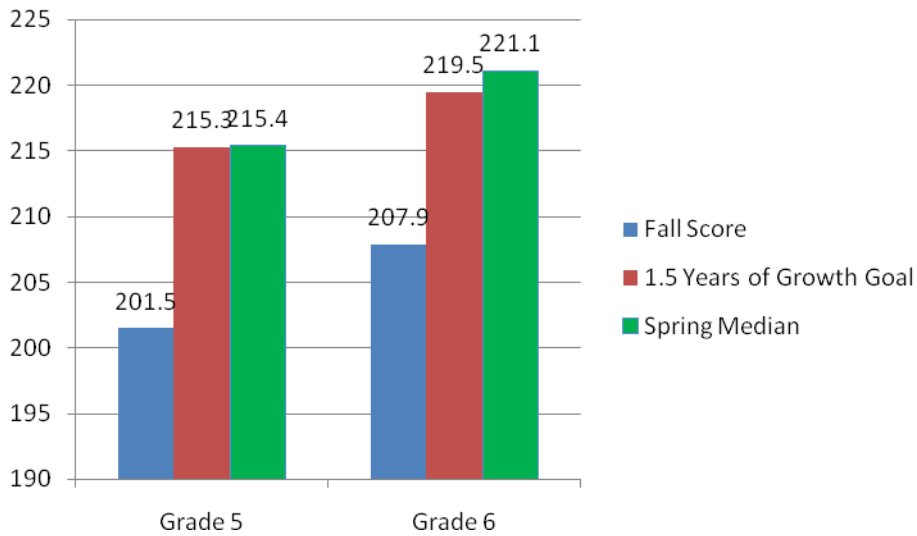
Prestige Academy Charter School set a school wide goal that our students would grow on average, 1.5 years in reading and math. **This exceeded the goal of the objective above.**

2009 – 2010 MAP Reading Results



Reading Results. During the 2009 – 2010 school year, our students met the growth goal of 1.5 years in both 5th and 6th grade. Sixth grade scholars grew 1.6 years in their reading ability, and 5th grade scholars grew 1.9 years in their reading ability.

2009 – 2010 MAP Math Results



Math Results. During the 2009 – 2010 school year, our students met the growth goal in both 5th and 6th grade. Sixth grade scholars grew 1.8 years in their math ability and 5th graders grew 1.5 years in their math ability.

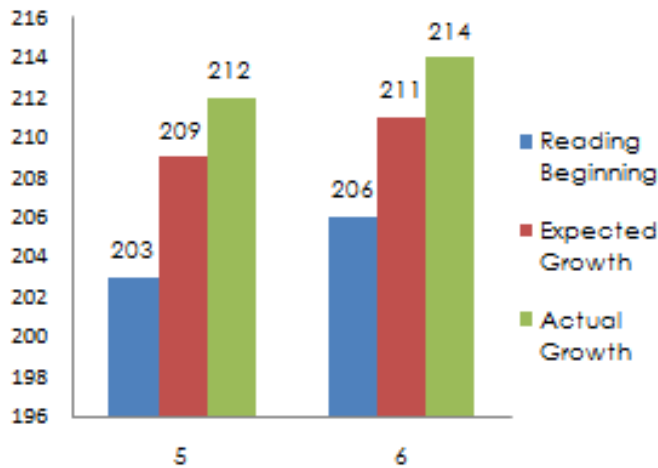
Prestige Academy 2010 – 2011 MAP Growth

During the 2010 – 2011 school year, only incoming students were MAP tested to determine their skill level. They were tested again at the end of the year for purposes of a growth analysis for incoming students at Prestige Academy. Please see Terra Nova testing below for overall student body results.

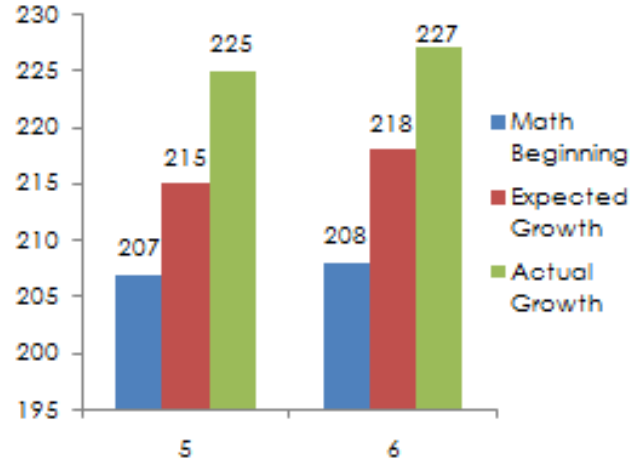
Incoming Student Beginning and End of Year RIT Scores

Grade	Math Beginning	Math End of Year	Years Growth	Reading Beginning	Reading End of Year	Years Growth
5	207	225	2.7	203	212	1.7
6	208	227	2.8	205	214	1.9

Reading Expected v. Actual Growth



Math Expected v. Actual Growth



As shown in these graphs, incoming students at Prestige Academy Charter School made significant growth in all content areas, growing over 2 years in 5th and 6th grade math and over 1.5 years in 5th and 6th grade reading. This significantly outpaces the national average, with students growing on average one grade level during one school year.

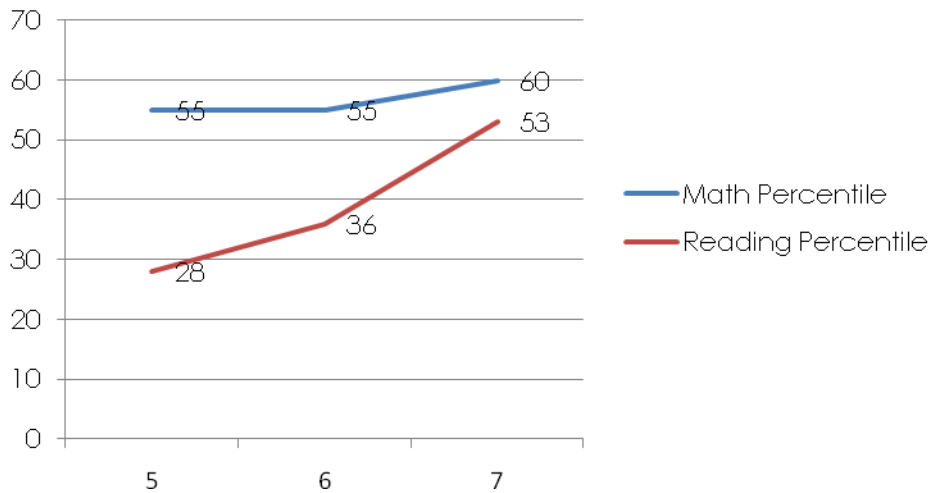
Terra Nova results from the 2010 - 2011 School Year

During the 2010 – 2011 school year, Prestige Academy students also took the Terra Nova as part of their Spring 2011 testing cycle. During this test, students performed in the following way:

Student Body Results on the Terra Nova

Grade	Math Percentile	Reading Percentile
5	55	28
6	55	36
7	60	53

2010 - 2011 Terra Nova Results



These results show display the success of Prestige Academy’s program – despite the similar demographics of each grade level, students score in a higher percentile the longer they have been at Prestige Academy. While 5th graders begin at just the 28th percentile in reading, 7th graders are outperforming the average on this test, scoring at the 53rd percentile by grade 7.

- b. List the specific measurable performance targets for each student performance goal for each year of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) for the initial four years of the charter. (Renewals/Modifications – Update this section to make it current.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School is closing the achievement gap with its students in reading and math. Despite our first class of 5th graders displaying a 30-percentage point proficiency gap in math and a 40-percentage point proficiency gap in reading, these students are now outperforming the state average per the results outlined above.

Prestige Academy Charter School has increased the percentage of students’ proficient on the DCAS in every content area in every grade level with the exception of 5th grade reading in the 2010 – 2011 school year. The 2010 gains on the DSTP bucked the state average of decreased performance as described in section 4A. Also, 2011 gains were seen despite the rising expectation for proficiency represented by increased cut scores for the DCAS described in section 4A.

During the 2010 – 2011 school years Prestige Academy Charter School saw a significant increase in the percentage of students scoring advanced on the DCAS as well as proficiency gains greater than or equal to the state average in every content area in every grade level in a fall to spring analysis. Our students also outgrew the highest performing subset of students in the state – white students – in some areas and nearly doubling the growth of this subset in some cases. The two exceptions to this result were 5th grade reading and 7th grade math, only underperforming the state average by 2 scale points and still equaling or exceeding the state’s proficiency growth from fall to spring.

- c. List the assessment tools that will be used including the DSTP, standardized, formative, benchmarks, or performance assessments. Describe why these particular assessment instruments have been selected and provide the timetable indicating when those instruments will be used. (Renewals/Modifications – Provide original documentation, the results of these assessment tools and discuss the results.)

Response:

During our first three years, Prestige Academy Charter School utilized the DSTP (2009, 2010) DCAS (2011), NWEA MAP computerized assessment, and Achievement Network interim assessments as whole school assessment tools. NWEA MAP was selected for its ability to provide reliable, nationally normed information concerning student growth in math and reading. While NWEA MAP provides a strong measure of a student's growth, it does not provide objective level results for analysis to provide direct, specific and immediate remediation and challenges for scholars. The Achievement Network interim assessments provide specific feedback every 5-6 weeks on objective level trends and individual student performance so that the school can create remediation tailored to specific student needs.

The 2010 – 2011 school year was Prestige Academy Charter School's second year utilizing these interim assessments from the Achievement Network. In addition to their ability to give teachers a model of truly rigorous skills and test items for students, they provide a wealth of data, giving Prestige Academy Charter School the ability to compare itself to some of the highest performing charter schools in neighboring Washington, D.C. These assessments also served as the guiding resource for tutoring identification, DCAS "most wanted" tutoring and skill remediation during Saturday Academy. Saturday Academy is a targeted during program provided twice a month to support our most struggling students. Prestige Academy Charter School's results increased dramatically from Year 1 – Year 2 in using the assessment.¹¹

- d. Renewals/Modifications Only - Include a copy of the current signed Performance Agreement between the school and the Secretary of Education. Describe in detail the performance of the school on each of the objectives in the Performance Agreement. Place particular focus on the school's academic performance, including evaluation results from the DSTP and other measures. Discuss highlights and concerns.

Response:

The Performance Agreement covering years 2008-2012 is included.¹² For a discussion of Prestige Academy Charter School's performance on the Performance Agreement objectives, please see 2009 and 2010 Annual Performance Reports.¹³ Details on our school's academic performance, including evaluation results and highlights/concerns from the DSTP, DCAS, NWEA MAP and Achievement Network are noted in section 4A and Attachments I-L.

¹¹ Please see Attachment I-Achievement Network Synthesis.

¹² Please see Attachment J- Prestige Academy Charter School Performance Agreement 2008-2012.

¹³ Please see Attachment K- Prestige Academy Charter School Annual Performance Report.

- e. Renewals/Modifications Only - Provide the charter Performance Agreement for the renewal period. Include a list of proposed measurable performance objectives with specific measurable targets for each year of the charter renewal period.

The Performance Agreement for school years 2012-2013 to 2016-2017 is provided.¹⁴

¹⁴ Please see Attachment L-Prestige Academy Charter School Performance Report 2012-2017.

5. Evaluating Student Performance

- a. Describe the process of how student evaluation information will be used to improve student performance. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School’s entire academic calendar is structured around specific data analysis. It is the backbone of our educational program. There is targeted support not only at the student level, but at the teacher level as well. This creates an environment in which students know exactly where they have gaps in skills so that they can become drivers of their own learning and so that teachers can quickly identify the specific skills students need to increase their mastery.

The assessments used for specific data analysis are:

- Achievement Network interim assessments
- Standards aligned teacher-created assessments
- DCAS
- Exit slips
- Student projects

After each assessment is administered, the administrative team reviews the results and guides all staff through critical data analysis to create specific remediation plans to target student misunderstanding. If the data elicits whole school trends the leadership team works to create whole school answers to gaps in mastery. If low mastery exists within a grade level, grade level teachers work together to support mastery. Finally, if trends are related to a particular teacher, that teacher is supported through specific skill development and support such as one on one coaching, videotaping and peer observation to increase skill.

- b. Describe the corrective action that will be taken when students do not meet performance expectations. (Renewals/Modifications Only - Describe how analysis of student evaluation information on the DSTP and other measures is used to guide instruction and improve student performance. Give examples from the current charter period of instructional change which has led to improved student performance.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School closely monitors student performance and progress through a variety of approaches. These approaches include but are not limited to differentiated instruction, Response To Intervention (RTI), the use of our Learning Support Team, an extended day and year and tutoring. Specific measures taken to provide support to students are summarized below.

Summer School: Summer School provides additional support to students who did not master enough grade level content during the school year to be promoted to the next grade. This gives them an additional opportunity to master that material and to be promoted to the next grade for the following school year. Classes are taught by full time Prestige Academy Charter School staff or volunteers and contain 4 – 12 students each.

Saturday Academy: Saturday Academy occurs throughout the school year and is designed to support students failing one or more content area class or struggling significantly in content mastery. These classes are held every first and third Saturday of the month, are staffed by Prestige Academy Charter School teachers, and utilize a small class size to give individual attention to every student during every Saturday Academy.

Skill Based Tutoring: On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, students are tutored in Math and English Language Arts. All staff is utilized during this time to provide specific, small group remediation based upon that student's most recently available interim assessment data.

Special Education Supports: Students who qualify by having an IEP or 504 plan are given accommodations through push in and pull out services to meet their individual needs and increase their academic mastery. They also participate in the supports identified above.

Wednesday Whole Group Tutoring¹⁵: After the second administration of the DCAS, students who are not growing at the rate they need to be in a fall to winter analysis to achieve proficiency on the spring DCAS—are targeted for specific skill intervention both during school as well as during an additional block of time when every adult in the building is working to tutor those identified scholars in grade level skills. Every week during these months, students stay at school on Wednesdays from 1:00 – 3:00 to receive this additional small group tutoring.¹⁶

- c. If the proposed school requests and receives a waiver for an enrollment preference for students at risk of academic failure, then describe the expected performance of each student on the Delaware Student Testing Program in each grade during the initial four year charter period. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

NOTE: The applicant must agree and certify in the application that it will comply with the requirements of the State Public Education and Accountability System pursuant to 14 Delaware Code, Sections 151, 152, 153, 154, and 157 and Department rules and regulations implementing Accountability, to specifically include the Delaware Student Testing Program (Regulation 275, Subsection 4.2.1.1).

Further, the application must include certification that the proposed school's mean student performance on the Delaware Student Testing Program assessments in each content area will meet or exceed the statewide average student performance of students in the same grades for each year of test administration. Applicants with enrollment preferences for students at risk of academic failure may request a waiver of this requirement in the application (Regulation 275, Subsection 4.2.2).

Response:

Not Applicable

¹⁵ Please see Attachment M-Wednesday Tutoring Letter.

¹⁶ Please see Attachment N-Wednesday Tutoring Skills Sheet.

6. Educational Program (For new applications Phase I requirements should be addressed in the initial application which is due on or before December 31 and Phase II requirements will be submitted within 120 days of conditional approval by the Delaware State Board or by September 30 one year before the opening of the school.)

- a. Provide a scope and sequence document for required content areas for proposed grades to be served over the first four years of the school charter. (See sample document <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/schools/charterschools/Resources.shtml>) For new applicants, this is a Phase I requirement. Renewal and modification applicants only, please include the following:

Units required in (i) below with duration of instruction.

Alignment of instruction to state content standards for required content areas for grades served by the charter school.

Alignment of instructional strategies to formative and summative assessment measures for required content areas for grades to be served by the school.

Response:

Scope and Sequence documents for ELA, math, science, social studies, art, music, and physical education are included.¹⁷

- b. Provide a statement defining likely curriculum basis in each of the following areas (for new applicants this is a Phase I requirement, renewal and modification applicants must complete all sections):

Mathematics

English Language Arts

Science

Social Studies

World Languages (Renewals Only)

Visual & Performing Arts (Renewals Only)

Health Education (Renewals Only)

Physical Education (Renewals Only)

Response:

For all content areas listed above, Prestige Academy Charter School relies on the Common Core standards to drive the scope and sequence of all content areas served. When Common Core standards for a particular subject or content area do not exist, the school relies on Delaware state standards to drive curriculum and instruction.

- c. Provide a signed memorandum of understanding with the Science coalition, the Mathematics coalition, and the Social Studies coalition if chosen. For new applicants this is a Phase I requirement. Renewal and modification applicants attach the updated information as it has changed from your last renewal or original application.

¹⁷ Please see Attachment O- Scope and Sequence and Sample Units of Instruction Documents.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School has been a member of the Science coalition for the past three years. We have requested the 2011-12 memorandum of understanding from the Science coalition and have not received it to date.¹⁸

- d. Provide a statement of plans for additional academic support for at risk students. For new applicants, this is a Phase I requirement. For renewal and modification applicants, please provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Please see the response to question 5B. The strategies are employed to help students traditionally identified as “at risk” as well as students displaying low levels of mastery in any content area. Our extended school day, extended school year, and focus on math and reading ensure increased individual attention, a fuller scaffolding of content, the ability for peer tutoring, web based remediation and assessment and multiple ways to present information as a way to further support these students.

- e. Provide a list of courses at grades 9-12 with sufficient detail to meet the state requirements for graduation and any and all Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways courses. (secondary only) For new applicants this is a Phase I requirement. For renewal and modification applicants, please provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Not applicable.

- f. Provide the Teacher to student ratio for the school. For new applicants this is a Phase I requirement. For renewal and modification applicants, please provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Grade 5 = 1:18

Grade 6 = 1:25

Grade 7 = 1:29

Grade 8 = 1:20

- g. Provide a description of the unique features of the school’s educational plan including differentiated instruction, special materials and use of technology to serve the intended population of the school. For new applicants this is a Phase I requirement. For renewal and modification applicants, please provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School’s educational program is designed to provide a college preparatory environment for all students. We do this through an extended school day, extended school year, specific remediation for struggling students, daily homework help, and daily skill

¹⁸ Please see Attachment P-Science Coalition Signed Memorandum of Understanding.

based tutoring. In addition to these academic tools, we provide mentoring services and extracurricular activities to support our students' success. This program is achieved through rigorous instruction and adherence to our REAL Values:

Respect and Responsibility
Excellence In Behavior
Academic Mastery
Leadership

Schedule: The school day at Prestige Academy Charter School runs from 7:30 AM through 4:00 PM providing a focus on math and reading, daily time for tutoring, homework help and extracurricular activities.

Weekly REAL Reports: Every week a detailed account of students' grades, homework completion and behavior are sent home for parents to be signed and returned to the school. This increases communication to and from the parents and clearly reinforces for students the specific actions that lead to deductions and additions in their REAL values. The points earned and lost on this REAL report earn students field trips, access to the REAL store (Prestige Academy Charter School's school store) and special privileges in class and throughout the school.

Weekly whole school professional development: Every Wednesday from 1:30 – 4:00, teachers and staff come together for targeted skill development and data analysis. This allows teachers to identify grade wide and school wide initiatives to target specific skills, content areas and behaviors from students.

Common planning time: During each school day, teachers who teach the same content area have 90 – 100 minutes of common planning. This enables teachers to connect grade level partners and across grade levels and content areas to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of curriculum and cultural and procedural practices.

Interim Assessments/ Data Days: Prestige Academy Charter School administers 4 common assessments in grades 5 – 8 math and reading. These assessments are aligned to the Common Core standards and are created by the Achievement Network. The Achievement Network coaches and trains administrators and teachers at Prestige Academy Charter School throughout the year to enact Paul Bambrick Santoyo's *Driven by Data* strategies to clearly target student misunderstanding through:

1. School calendar - created around the existence of these interims.
2. Data Days – whole school data analysis following each interim
3. Action Plans – plans that analyze student misunderstanding and identify explicit next steps to reteach material that was not initially mastered
4. Remediation/ Tutoring Plans – explicitly skill based – never driven by incomplete work or make up time

A Goal Setting Template¹⁹ and Data Action Plan Template²⁰ are included as examples of data analysis and takeaways from data days.

Technology: Our school has implemented a series of technology-based programs and materials to address the wide variety of instructional needs of our students. We have implemented the use of SmartBoards and Elmo Video Cameras. We also use a variety of: IXL.com (mathematics), Read180, Accelerated Reader (reading quizzes), Achievement Network (online analysis of interim assessments), BrainPop (all subjects), and triand.com (released test items).

- h. For new applicants, provide plans for professional development that outlines the initial three year approval span for the school with one year benchmarks. This is a Phase I requirement. For renewal and modification applicants provide plans for ongoing, high quality professional development for staff for the duration of the charter renewal as it varies from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School provides significant amounts of professional development to increase every teacher's skill and ability to help students.

Summer Professional Development: New teachers spend three weeks in the summer learning the "Prestige Way," practicing with real classroom scenarios, familiarizing themselves with the Common Core standards, planning their year, setting up their classrooms, and preparing for new student orientation. Returning teachers spend two weeks preparing during this time.

Excellent School Visits: Seeing excellence in practice is the best way for teachers to be able to replicate that in their own classrooms. Teachers conduct excellent school visits (Achievement Preparatory, Washington D.C. and E.L. Haynes Charter School, Washington D.C. in 2010 – 2011) to see it in action. Past visits have included trips to Excel Academy (Boston), KIPP Lynn (Lynn, MA), Achievement First Crown Heights (NYC), Achievement Preparatory (Washington D.C.) and KIPP Philadelphia Charter School (Philadelphia, PA).

Weekly Whole School Meetings: Every Wednesday from 1:00 – 4:00, teachers and staff come together for targeted skill development and data analysis. This allows teachers to identify grade wide and school wide initiatives to target specific skills, content areas and behaviors from students.

Data Days: Data Days follow each administration of interim assessments. During this time teachers analyze student test results down to the question in order to identify small and whole group takeaways, resulting in school-wide and teacher specific action plan for re-teaching, remediation and re-assessment of their students in order to increase mastery. The skills that teachers learn during this time transcend the whole day professional development, permeating their classroom with a critical eye toward student data that they would not have had otherwise.

¹⁹ Please see Attachment Q- DCAS Goal Setting Template.

²⁰ Please see Attachment R-Data Day Action Plan Template.

Classroom Observation: Classroom observations for the purposes of feedback are of critical value to administrators and teachers at Prestige Academy Charter School. Through observations of teachers, their observations in classrooms, videotaping and practice execution teachers learn to execute specific skills with greater precision thereby increasing their proficiency in their classroom.

- i. Provide three units of instruction for Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Visual & Performing Arts, World Languages, Health Education & Physical Education at each grade cluster in which the school intends to serve students. For new applicants, this is a Phase II requirement. For renewals and modifications provide updated information as it may differ from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Please see Attachment O for curricular samples.

- j. Provide a description of major curricular resource adoptions for Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. For new applicants this is a Phase II requirement. For renewal and modification applicants provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Please refer to Attachment I-Achievement Network Synthesis and section 6G.

- k. A detailed chart showing alignment of instruction to standards. This is a Phase II requirement and for new applicants only.

Response:

Not applicable.

- l. Provide a detailed description of how instructional strategies and formative and summative assessment strategies will be aligned. This is a Phase II requirement and for new applicants only.

Response:

Not applicable.

- m. Provide a detailed description of how the alignment will enhance student learning. For new applicants this is a Phase II requirement. For renewal and modification applicants provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

All instruction at Prestige Academy Charter School begins by mapping backwards from the Common Core and Delaware state standards.²¹ Teachers create units and weekly lesson plans

²¹ Please see Attachment S-Prestige Academy Charter School Curriculum Manual.

that incorporate a variety of teaching methods to accommodate all learning styles. Student mastery at Prestige Academy Charter School is assessed formatively at multiple frequencies through the class, day, week and year. Class level examples of assessment checks include a daily “Do Now,, independent practice and exit slip (components which exist in all classes daily) as well as checks for understanding throughout the lesson including use of dip sticking techniques (i.e. fist to five, thumbs up or down), visual checks for mastery (“Show me which answer you got in sign language, a, b, c, or d?”), or proof of student work in the middle of class. Students are also assessed on a daily basis through morning work – a skill review that students begin as soon as they enter the building in the morning. Finally, students are assessed using unit assessments, book projects, classroom presentations, text assessments, projects and journaling, allowing for multiple ways for a student to demonstrate mastery of a given skill or topic.

- n. Provide a copy of the school calendar and master instructional schedule. For new applicants this is a Phase II requirement. For renewal and modification applicants provide updated information as it may vary from your last renewal or original application.

Response:

Please see provided school calendar.²² Please see provided instructional schedule.²³

- o. Provide a copy of Career and Technical Education pathway and course approval documents. (secondary only) This is a Phase II requirement and for new applicants only.

Response:

Not Applicable.

²² Please see Attachment T-Prestige Academy Charter School Calendar.

²³ Please see Attachment U-Prestige Academy Charter School Master Schedule.

7. Students with Special Needs

- a. Describe how the school will be in full compliance with current federal and state statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities, including but not limited to: evaluation, re-evaluation, accommodations, and employment of certified special education teachers prior to the admission of students. The plan must provide for a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities and include a continuum of educational placements for students with disabilities.

Response:

Our Philosophy

At Prestige Academy Charter School, we believe that all students can excel regardless of disability. Our goal is to provide an academic environment that prepares all boys for admission to and success in college-preparatory high schools and academically rigorous colleges and universities. Prestige Academy Charter School complies with all applicable state and federal statutes, including Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974. Students who have been identified as having special needs receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Students with disabilities are educated along with their peers in the general education environment to the extent appropriate and as informed by each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). For students with a disability, their educational program is provided in accordance with the DOE Administrative Manual for Services for Exceptional Students (AMSES). Prestige Academy will not discriminate in its admission or enrollment practices against students having or being suspected of having disabilities. Prestige Academy Charter School follows an extensive Response To Intervention (RTI) process, which provides for increasing levels of intervention and additional instruction for students who do not respond to the general instruction. After the RTI process has been exhausted, the school team works with parents to consider further evaluation and identification of students with disabilities. Special needs determinations are based upon timely and recurring evaluations of qualified professionals. Special education students will be re-evaluated at least once every three years.

Our IEP Team

Within the boundaries of legal compliance, Prestige Academy Charter School's structured academic environment aims to minimize the impact of disabilities on students' learning processes and maximize students' opportunity to learn at high levels. Approximately 12% of enrolled students are students with a mild to moderate disability. We have incorporated supports for students with disabilities into our school plan, and our staffing and budgeting plans allow for three full-time special education teachers certified through the Delaware Department of Education. The special education teacher is charged with overseeing learning interventions and supports for all students, including those with learning disabilities. Special education personnel work closely with the Academic Deans to coordinate with any outside resources (speech therapist, nurses, etc.) as required through IEP recommendations. For each student referred to as a child with a disability, Prestige Academy Charter School appoints a team consisting of Special education personnel, Academic Dean, faculty member(s) who teach the student, and the child's parents/guardians.

Identification of Students with Disabilities

In order to identify students with learning disabilities, Prestige Academy Charter School looks to existing IEPs and regularly seeks to train teachers and administrators to carefully monitor individual student performance. For example, weekly staff meetings and frequent progress reports allow teachers, administrators, and parents to monitor and discuss the academic and social progress of each student. If students demonstrate that they are not meeting the appropriate expectations of academic or social progress—this can be addressed in a timely fashion. A flow chart is provided as a general outline of how teachers and administrators are trained to respond to different issue areas.²⁴ For all academic concerns, there are school-wide ongoing academic supports that include Homework Club, daily tutoring and our Scholarship Saturday program. For all social/behavioral concerns, there are school-wide ongoing social/behavioral supports that include community circles, and strong school-home communications. In addition to built in social supports we also have targeted supports for our scholars who exhibit high rates of social difficulties as reported by teacher concerns, referrals, and low REAL scores. Targeted supports include time set aside on Wednesdays to provide explicit and directed instruction in social skills, alternative responses to frustrating situations, and group activities in which scholars are able to model and practice replacement behaviors.

If a student continues to struggle academically or behaviorally, even with the supports and strategies put in place through the pre-referral process, the school will request a family's permission for evaluative testing. In situations in which we have determined that an evaluation is necessary, Prestige Academy Charter School staff will issue a request for testing. This request will: (1) provide the reasons for the referral, including any applicable test results, reports, or records; (2) outline interventions taken prior to the referral under the Pre-Referral Process; and (3) describe the content of any parental involvement in the Pre-Referral Process. A copy of this request, along with the procedural safeguards notice, will be sent to the student's parents. If such testing should indicate the presences of a disability, and that student is identified as requiring special education services, we will with the IEP team write an IEP and follow the steps below to support that student's academic progress.

Ongoing school-wide IEP supports will include learning techniques incorporated into every classroom to help all students achieve, regardless of disability, as well as training and professional development for *all* teachers on how to recognize and support children with learning disabilities without alienating them.

Implementation of IEPs

If a need for an IEP has been indicated by the IEP Team reviewer, Prestige Academy Charter School's special education personnel and the school's leadership team will oversee the implementation of the required services by our trained and certified staff or properly licensed consultants or contractors. All staff receives annual and ongoing training and support in the implementation of modifications, accommodations, and other supports outlined in each of their students' IEPs.

²⁴ Please see Attachment V-Special Education Flow Chart.

Review, Re-Evaluation, and Revision of IEPs

With parental consent and support, Prestige Academy Charter School will seek to re-evaluate students and consider revising an IEP if we do not believe that the current IEP allows the student free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Each IEP will be reviewed at least once in each school year and each student will be re-evaluated at least every three years. We plan to remain vigilant about student growth so that we are ensuring that our support is appropriate to meet the required needs.

Assessment of Students with Disabilities

Ongoing assessment of student progress is essential to our school design. Students with IEPs take all state, national, and internal assessments except in cases in which the student's IEP states that he cannot participate in such assessments. In these cases, alternative assessments will be administered as required by law. We will make every effort to ensure that any student with an IEP has a set of assessments as part of the IEP that will enable us to measure their academic progress and be responsive to their academic needs.

Reporting of Information Related to Special Education

Prestige Academy Charter School will provide an annual report as required, which includes: the number of students with disabilities we serve; the nature of each student's disability; and each student's placement and educational setting.

- b. Renewals/Modifications Only - Discuss how the school has resolved any administrative complaints.

Response:

We have had one administrative complaint filed and substantiated by the Department of Education since our opening in 2008.

On or about May 14, 2009, a family filed a complaint with the DOE alleging violations of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and corresponding Delaware law with respect to Student. The complaint alleges Prestige Academy, a Delaware charter school, violated state and federal regulations concerning the provision of a free, appropriate public education to Student.

After the investigation, the Department issued its letter of findings concerning the complaint filed against Prestige Academy Charter School. The DOE found the student's IEP and behavior plan to be appropriate, tailored to the student's needs, and well-written. The DOE confirmed that we included the parent in the meeting and received input from her, as well as the student. Several of the students' teachers were involved and helpful in developing the IEP.

The DOE, however, found a few violations of federal regulations implementing the IDEA related to procedural requirements and school discipline rules for special education students. As a result of the findings we were placed on the following corrective action plan.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

As a result of the Department's investigation, the Department directs the School to take the following corrective actions:

Compensatory Instruction

1. The School shall provide six (6) instructional hours of one on one compensatory services to Student for each of the three days Student was suspended out of school with no services on April 21st, 22nd, and May 14th. Thus, the School shall provide a total of eighteen (18) hours of compensatory services to Student.
2. If the School deems it appropriate, the School may satisfy part or all of Student's compensatory service hours by reimbursing Parent for any private tutoring already paid for and subtracting those instructional hours from the total compensatory hours owed.
3. Or, the School may satisfy compensatory service hours through a private tutoring arrangement (if reviewed and approved by the School) or through School personnel providing such services to Student, as long as the schedule and location of services are agreed to by Parent.
4. By **October 1, 2009**, the School shall provide to the Department a schedule which details the manner such compensatory instructional hours will be delivered to Student in a written statement signed by Parent and the School. The instructional hours should be based on Student's areas of academic need as identified in his IEP
5. If the School and Parent cannot agree on how the compensatory services will be delivered, either the School or the Parent shall notify the Department.

Staff Training on IDEA Requirements

6. By **October 15, 2009**, the School shall provide a minimum of a two hour training session to all School administrators, special education staff, and teachers at the School on:
 - (a) the requirement to provide an evaluation summary report to parents of children who are evaluated for eligibility for special education and related services under the IDEA and Delaware law, including how to complete the evaluation summary report, and the provisions it must contain as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 300.111. (A copy of the Department's evaluation summary report form and the January 2009 technical assistance memo to special education directors is available on the Department's website at www.doe.k12.de.us);
 - (b) the requirement to obtain informed written consent from the parent of a child before conducting a special education evaluation, including the definition of consent as 34 C.F.R. § 300.300, and that consent to a special education evaluation must be voluntary on the parents' behalf and not conditioned on a child's admission to school;
 - (c) the requirement to locate, evaluate, and identify children with disabilities who are in need of special education pursuant to the procedures outlined in 14 DE Admin Code § 923.11.0, and how disciplinary protections of the IDEA and state law apply to children with disabilities and children who are not yet determined eligible for special education services.
7. By **November 1, 2009**, the School shall provide the Department with written confirmation the training described in Paragraph # 8(a) through (c) was provided to staff, including a list of the staff who attended the training, the date(s) and time(s) the training was provided; a written description summarizing the specific topics discussed at the training, and a description of who provided the training. The School shall also provide the Department with copies of any written

material the School distributed to staff in connection with the training described in Paragraph #8(a) through (c).

All of the corrective action requirements listed above were completed by the specified deadlines.

- c. Complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Response:

All children attending Prestige Academy Charter School are afforded an equal education opportunity. We do not deny an education on the basis of any disability. A 504 plan is developed in accordance with regulations for all students identified as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. The 504 includes current educational level, accommodations for the disability, dates for initiation of service, anticipated duration of service, and evaluation criteria. The classroom teachers work closely with the parents to monitor the effectiveness of 504 accommodations.

- d. Complying with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School has established a non-discrimination policy that no person shall be subject to discrimination in educational programs, services or activities based on race national origin, gender, age, or disability in accordance with state and federal laws. This policy is contained in the Student Code of Conduct and Employee Manual.

- e. Complying with Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972.

Response:

All children attending Prestige Academy Charter School are afforded an equal education opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, political belief, disability status, or any other consideration made unlawful by applicable federal laws. Prestige Academy Charter School operates and complies with the Federal Amendment to Title IX legislation effective November 24, 2006 allowing the existence and establishment of single sex schools.

- f. Having certified special education teacher(s) providing services for students with disabilities.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School employs certified special education teachers to manage all facets of the student identification, evaluation, and placement process including writing and delivering of services per student IEPs.

8. Economic Viability

- a. List the staff positions and indicate the full-time equivalence for each position for the first four years of school operation. Include position descriptions for each job title. (Renewals/Modifications – Update this section to make it current.)

Response:

A list of staff positions is provided.²⁵ Position descriptions are provided.²⁶

- b. List all positions ***NOT*** employed by the board of directors. Where there is intent to hold a contract, provide a contract or template of intended contractual relationships. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The School Psychologist and Speech Therapist are contracted, and thus not employed by the board of directors.²⁷

- c. Identify the amount and source of funds that will be needed to acquire (purchase or lease) the facilities and ready them for school opening. Describe the plan for obtaining these funds. Describe the financial plan for facilities to accommodate all the students for the total enrollment for the initial four years of the charter. Indicate whether the site will be purchased or leased. Identify the date by which the school's board of directors will have direct control of the site either through a signed lease agreement or a signed purchase agreement. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School purchased a site in July 2009 that contains sufficient space to accommodate the total enrollment of the school. The school obtained a loan from The Reinvestment Fund Inc. and the Board of directors assumed direct control of the site through the Prestige Academy Foundation that technically owns the facility. A current debt schedule is provided.²⁸

- d. Identify who will own the school facilities. In the event that the school closes or (if applicable) the management agreement with any contractor terminates, describe what will become of the facilities and any debt owed on those facilities. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

The Prestige Academy Foundation, a separate entity, owns the school facilities. In the event that the school closes, Prestige Foundation would work with its lenders and seek to convert the building to other uses (such as another school), or attempt to sell the facility to pay off its existing debt.

²⁵ Please see Attachment W-Staff Positions.

²⁶ Please see Attachment X-Position Descriptions.

²⁷ Please see Attachment Y- Contract for Speech Therapist and School Psychologist

²⁸ Please see Attachment Z-Amortization Schedule.

- e. List each contract necessary for the school to open and the specific dates on which those contracts will be finalized and signed. Contracts may include: equipment, bus and food services, related services such as speech therapy or occupational therapy for special education, financial operations, leases of real and personal property, the purchase of real property, the construction and/or renovation to real property, and insurance. THESE CONTRACT AMOUNTS MUST ALSO BE ITEMIZED IN THE BUDGET SHEETS. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

NOTE: Contracts for bus and food services are required by Regulation 275, Subsection 4.4.4 to be in place by August 1st of the year in which the school proposes to open and by August 1st of each year thereafter. Contracts for the lease or purchase of real property, and/or the construction and/or the renovation of improvements to real property must be in place sufficiently far in advance so that the applicant might obtain any necessary certificate of occupancy for the school premises no later than June 15th of the year in which the school proposes to open.

The application must include a complete and balanced budget for the proposed school in the approved format for the planning year and the first four years of school operation. THE METHOD BY WHICH AMOUNTS ARE CALCULATED MUST ALSO BE DESCRIBED. The budget spreadsheet is located at the following link:

<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/schools/charterschools/files/new%20charter%20budget%20worksheets%20sample%20blank.xls>.

NOTE: All State and Local revenue estimates can be done by accessing the on line spreadsheet for New Charter School State and Local Fund Estimates located at the following link: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/schools/charterschools/files/Revenue%20Estimates.xls>. Should you have questions in accessing, completing or understanding this spreadsheet please contact Scott Kessel, Education Associate for Charter School Finance at (302) 735-4040. These revenue estimates will be used to complete the on line budget worksheets located at the following link: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/schools/charterschools/files/new%20charter%20budget%20worksheets%20sample%20blank.xls>. Estimates for federal program revenues may be obtained from Mrs. Tammy Korosec, Education Associate for Federal Accounts, who can be reached at (302) 735-4040. Information about the Federal Charter School Support Program startup funds may be obtained from Julia Webster, Charter Schools Office, who can be reached at (302) 735-4020. Estimates for state, local and federal program revenues will be based on the assumptions which the applicant makes regarding the numbers of students anticipated at each grade, the numbers of students anticipated from various districts, the anticipated special education classifications of enrolling students, and the qualifications of teachers hired by the school. These revenue estimates must be viewed with caution since the assumptions upon which the applicant may have based them may change as students actually enroll and staff is hired.

The applicant must consult Scott Kessel regarding online forms for revenue projection at 302-735-4040 or skessel@doe.k12.de.us.

Response:

Contracts include: bus and food services, related services such as speech therapy or occupational therapy for special education students, the purchase of real property, custodial services and insurance. Prestige Academy Charter School contracts will include those for the school facility

mortgage, bus transportation, custodial services, accounting services, IT Services and food services. See provided contracts.²⁹ Please see attached Budgets.³⁰

- f. List all start-up costs projected for the twelve-month period prior to school opening. List the source(s) of funds to cover these costs and include details on amounts provided by each source. (Renewals/Modifications – Not Applicable.)

Response:

Not Applicable.

- g. List other intended sources of revenue in addition to the state and local funds. Should loans be included, list the source and terms of the intended loan(s) as well as projected payment schedules for the life of the loan. Should fundraising be included, explain activities in detail to also include collection and deposit methods. Describe the process by which funds will be deposited into the school's state account. If a state account is not used, describe where the funds will be deposited to ensure that all school funds are available for audit by the State Auditor's Office upon request. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School hired a full time Fund Development Director in August 2011 to raise additional funding through grant requests as well as through corporate and individual fundraising campaigns. These funds will be deposited into a local WSFS account with a full accounting, which will include funding restriction tracking and consolidation in the annual financial statement. Records are available for review upon request.

- h. Describe the school's intended contingency finance plan if enrollment falls below the projections as presented in this application. Include details of cost determination. List the minimum number of students the school can enroll each year to remain economically viable. (Renewals/Modifications – Update this section to make it current.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School would have to maintain the enrollment as detailed on the budget sheets to provide the richness in academic rigor that we want to provide. While fewer students may be economically possible, any decrease in funds from the current level (whether due to decreased enrollment or by regulation or statute) would negatively impact the quality of our programs. If enrollment were to fall below projection we would consider a variety of scenarios: (1) Cutting positions that do not directly impact the classroom. (2) Delaying building maintenance and investments in technology. (3) Aggressively pursuing grants and private funding through the hiring of a dedicated Development Director (hired). The minimum number of students required for enrollment is as shown in the attached itemized budget sheets.

²⁹ Please see Attachment AA-Contracts.

³⁰ Please see Attachment BB-Budgets.

9. Administrative and Financial Operations

- a. Provide the plan for managing the financial operations of the school in accordance with the State Budget and Accounting Manual and Title 29, Chapter 69 (in the areas of accounting, payroll, purchasing, compensation, retirement, and benefits management). Specify which individuals will have direct responsibility in each of these operations to also include internal controls for budgeting and financial management. Additional website references: <http://budget.delaware.gov/accounting-manual/account-manual.shtml>.
(Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School has engaged Michelle J. Lambert CPA LLC as business manager to provide financial management support to the school including accounting, payroll, purchasing, and benefits management. In addition to these services, Michelle J. Lambert CPA LLC (the firm) provides internal control, policy and procedure review and financial reporting. The firm works directly with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors to make recommended changes and updates to the schools internal control environment along with the day-to-day approval and reconciliation of accounting and payroll transactions.

The Executive Director determines all staff compensation, which is submitted to the Board of Directors for final review and approval. The Board of Directors determines the compensation of the Executive Director. A written accounting policy and procedure manual is available for review upon request.

- b. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors including how the board of directors will ensure oversight of the school. The board is ultimately responsible for the administrative and financial operations of the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

The Board works diligently to sustain the school design for Prestige Academy Charter School and fully supports the college preparatory and academically rigorous school plan detailed in this renewal application. Their terms are staggered and the process is further clarified in the Prestige Academy Charter School By-laws.

The Board of Directors currently consists of eleven (11) dedicated Board members. Any additional members who join the Board of Directors will supplement skills or expertise already represented and will demonstrate a strong commitment to providing the highest quality education to Prestige Academy Charter School students. The Board of Directors has four (4) officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. It includes a minimum of four (4) standing committees: Academic Achievement, Governance, Finance, and Fund Development. The Board delegates management of the school to the Executive Director, who reports directly to the Board and is responsible for the daily operation of the school.

The Prestige Academy Charter School Board of Directors conducts school business in a public forum in meetings held monthly. All financial and other data is made available for public review via our website. The school's Board is responsible for the following:

- Hire of, set compensation for, and evaluation of the Executive Director
 - Approval of the annual operating budget
 - Review of financial reports
 - Compliance with all state and federal regulations
 - Establishment of school performance indicators and measurement of school performance
 - Strategic Planning
 - Establish and maintain community support for the school
 - Plan capital expenditures
- c. Describe the internal form of management to be implemented at the school, including any plans to contract with an outside group to manage any portion of the educational, administrative, and/or financial operations of the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School operates under the leadership of the Executive Director, an employee of Prestige Academy Charter School. All other school employees report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

- d. Describe how teachers and parents will be involved in decision-making at the school. Provide details and not just a restatement of the question indicating that teachers and parents will be involved. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Delaware State Law requires that the Prestige Academy Board of Directors contain at least one parent of an enrolled student and one certified teacher employed at the school. In addition to complying with charter school law, we have formed the Parent Staff Leadership Council (PSLC), a school council comprised of teachers, parents and leadership staff. The council meets monthly and encourages parent involvement in the life of the school and the furtherance of the school mission. The PSLC is active in many aspects of the school including fundraising efforts and community events. Additionally, parents provide valuable input via bi-annual surveys. Each family signs the school covenant outlining the responsibilities and role of the staff, parents and students of Prestige Academy Charter School. In addition to the parent that sits on the Board of Directors, parents have access to the Board of Directors through email, telephone, and Board of Director monthly meetings.

Teachers have numerous opportunities to be involved in decision-making at Prestige Academy Charter School. Each week, teachers meet as grade level and content area teams to provide input, share concerns, and brainstorm solutions. In addition, teacher leaders head groups that help guide decisions relating to our instructional and behavioral program.

Faculty and staff meet with parents on committees with specific objectives, such as the “crisis response team”, which is commissioned to review and improve the school's emergency response plan. Finally, a teacher serves on the Board of Directors and teachers are invited to serve on the PSLC, a school-wide leadership group comprised of parents and staff described above.

- e. List the criteria and timeline to be used in the hiring of teachers, administrators, and other school staff. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

At Prestige Academy Charter School, we recruit, train, and support the highest quality faculty and staff. We begin the process of identifying the faculty and staff needed to carry out our mission by casting a wide net into the current applicant pool beginning in December and continue until all hiring is complete in August.

We take a local and national approach for recruiting teachers. Nationally, we tap the alumni networks of colleges and universities and Teach for America alumni, post openings in local papers, on our web site and in education journals, on www.idealists.org and www.monster.com, and the services of national search firms such as Carney, Sandoe, & Associates. Locally, we recruit at the colleges and universities within the state including the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, and Wilmington College. Board members also distribute job openings to educators and leaders within their networks to help identify potential faculty and staff.

The Executive Director and Academic Deans share the responsibility of reviewing applications, interviewing, and making offers to potential candidates. All final decisions for hiring are made by the Executive Director. The office manager assists with the scheduling of interviews and mails all follow-up materials. The school ensures the quality of the staff through the use of the following five-step process for selecting and hiring the most qualified candidate. Throughout the process, teachers are evaluated on planning, experience, content knowledge, critical thinking, respect and humility, communication, professionalism, motivation, ability to motivate others and responsibility.

- **Step I:** Candidate submits an application, resume, and cover letter.
- **Step II:** Executive Director and Academic Deans separate candidates into three categories: (1) very strong; (2) good; and (3) weak. Very strong and good candidates are scheduled for a 15-minute phone interview immediately.
- **Step III:** If a candidate does well during the phone interview, we then ask teacher candidates for a sample lesson plan and, if feasible, set up a time to view teacher candidates in their classrooms or ours. For administrative positions, we may ask for additional documentation pertinent to their application. If the candidate has potential but would not be an appropriate hire at the time, we will put them in the “applicant hopper,” an internal database of

individuals who, after more experience teaching or with additional training, may be a possible hire in the future.

- **Step IV:** If the lesson plan or supplemental material and sample lesson demonstrates that the candidate is strong, we will then request references, transcripts, and writing samples. If we are still unsure about the candidate’s potential for success at Prestige Academy Charter School, we may ask for additional material such as another lesson plan or a follow-up interview or put them into the “applicant hopper.”
- **Step V:** If candidates have gone through the entire process successfully, we will make them an offer of employment. This offer is contingent upon a background check and reference check.
 - f. Describe how the school will recruit Delaware certified teachers. If the school hires any non-certified teachers describe how the school will meet the teacher certification requirements of the Delaware charter law. Describe the procedures that will be used to ensure that any non-certified teachers that are hired are participating in an alternative certification program, if available. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

In addition to the recruitment strategies and procedures outlined in Section 9E, Prestige Academy Charter School participates in job fairs, is a recruiter on Teach Delaware and seeks to hire Delaware certified teachers or those who qualify for the State’s Alternative Route to Certification Program (ARTC). We currently have (3) teachers enrolled in the ARTC program. The Executive Director and Academic Deans ensure that all information pertinent to certification is tracked in the DEEDS system. All information required to either confirm or obtain the status of teacher certification is inputted into the DEEDS system in a timely manner.

- g. Describe the human resource policies governing: salaries, contracts, hiring, and dismissal that will be in place for all positions at the school. Please provide a copy of your proposed employee handbook. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Teachers and staff are hired based on qualifications for desired positions and are required to sign one-year, at-will contracts. Teachers are paid a competitive salary based on current average salaries of teachers in the Red Clay Consolidated, Christina, Colonial and Brandywine School Districts. Salary is based on experience and education. The Prestige Academy Charter School Employee Manual further outlines human resource policies.³¹

- h. Describe how the school will incorporate the **Delaware Performance Appraisal System** into its teacher and staff evaluations. Provide detailed descriptions and not just a restatement of the question stating that you will comply. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

³¹ Please see Attachment CC –Employee Manual.

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School will evaluate teachers and specialists using the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS) II. As a statewide system, DPAS II establishes consistent educator and student performance expectations and outcomes across all schools as do we at Prestige Academy Charter School. We will adhere to all components of the DPAS II. Novice teachers will have at minimum, two announced observations and one unannounced observation while experienced teachers will have one announced and unannounced observation.

DPAS II will enable the Prestige Academy Charter School administrative team to support professional growth by helping to identify areas for growth and opportunities to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge. At our school, our professional development activities/opportunities include four distinct areas, all of which are designed to strategically support our school's mission and unique school design.

(1) Summer Staff Orientation

For three weeks prior to student arrival, staff participate in training on school-wide procedures, culture, and the effective development of standards-based curriculum and assessments. This helps to ensure that all staff members are prepared to deliver a culture of achievement and high expectations. Staff review school scenarios and participate in role plays, have common readings they discuss and relate to the school's mission and educational program, articulate grade and department level expectations, and articulate school-wide measures of success.

(2) Weekly Staff Support

Each Wednesday from 1:30pm-4:00pm staff meets to review student achievement data, discuss classroom practices that have led to success, and share lesson plans and assessments. Under the leadership of the Executive Director and Academic Deans, staff continues aligning expectations around behavior and academic performance and reviews individual student progress to ensure that all necessary supports are actively and effectively in place. Teachers are also responsible for communicating with families regarding their student's ongoing academic and behavioral progress.

(3) Frequent Professional Development Days in the School Calendar

During dedicated days throughout the calendar year, staff visits high performing charter schools that have informed Prestige Academy Charter School's school design, and will continuously look to improve on the delivery of the highest quality instruction for our students. Staff also analyzes teaching videos, share peer observations, and work to continuously improve specific details of the school's educational program.

(4) Continuous Feedback on Instruction and Assessment

The Executive Director and Academic Deans conduct classroom walkthroughs daily, and provide ongoing support and guidance to teachers in the development of their craft. The administrative team leads data analysis for all interim assessments, and supports teachers in the creation of action plans to support effective re-teaching, spiraled curriculum review, and individual tutoring as needed. In addition, we provide training in areas that have specific significance to the staff such as differentiated instruction.

DPAS II supports continuous improvement of instructional practice and student outcomes by helping administrators and teachers monitor professional growth and student improvement. Because we believe that instructional decisions must be based on data, student performance must be monitored frequently. Teachers must monitor performance and make good on the opportunities to try new tools, methods, and approaches to enhance learning and instruction. We utilize the Achievement Network interim assessments every 5-6 weeks to ensure that we are accurately monitoring student achievement. Pre and post assessments meetings are scheduled with the administrative team and teachers in order to drive instructional planning, tutoring, Saturday School, and other relevant decision making.

DPAS II assures that we are developing quality teachers in every classroom by helping administrators and teachers select credible evidence to evaluate teacher performance. Administrators use this evidence to make important decisions such as:

- Recognizing and rewarding effective practice
- Recommending continued employment and/or career growth opportunities
- Recommending strategies and/or activities that will enhance teacher effectiveness
- Developing a plan to improve teacher performance
- Beginning dismissal proceedings

As a result of the appraisal process, the administrative team will develop and support relevant and timely recommendations and/or expectations for teachers and specialists. If a teacher does not improve or follow through with expectations and /or receives a rating of unsatisfactory, an improvement plan will be developed consistent with DPAS II regulations giving clear guidelines and a reasonable amount of time for improvement to take place. If improvement is not demonstrated after appropriate support has been given, dismissal proceedings may ensue following the DPAS II process in conjunction with Prestige Academy Charter School's policies for dismissal of an employee.

- i. Describe how the school will be held accountable to the parents of children at the school. Provide detailed descriptions and not just a restatement of the question stating that the school will be held accountable to the parents of children at the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School is held accountable to the parents of children at the school by involving parents as partners. While remaining steadfast to our mission to prepare young men for demanding college preparatory high schools, we are receptive to the comments and suggestions of students, parents, and other stakeholders. We demonstrate accountability to the parents of Prestige Academy Charter School students in the following ways:

- The Board of Directors includes a parent representative.
- Board meetings are open to the public.

- All students and parents are invited to respond to annual school surveys that solicit feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of academics, enrichment activities, school responsiveness, etc. We work aggressively to get completed surveys back, consider deeply their results as we grow the school into the future, and then make that information available to other stakeholders.
 - We encourage parents to visit the school and observe classes and community meetings.
 - We maintain direct access for parents and students to school faculty and staff through cell phones, voicemail and e-mail addresses.
 - Staff is required to respond to parent phone calls/emails within 24-48 hours and log this communication into our database.
 - Parents, students and the Prestige Academy Charter School administration sign a school contract before the beginning of school.
 - The Board Chair and or another Board member(s) make themselves available to discuss academic and or behavioral issues with parents regarding their son's experience at Prestige Academy Charter School with the goal of making that experience a positive and productive one for the student and his future.
- j. If the board of directors is contracting a portion of the operation of the school to an outside group, identify the group, describe the relationship between the group and the board of directors, and list the services the outside group will be providing. A copy of the management agreement between the board of directors and that group must be included with the application. The management agreement must be consistent with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 5. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School does not contract out services for management of school operations other than those services listed in section 8B of this application. This contract includes Michelle Lambert, CPA for business management.

- k. If an outside group will be used to manage any portion of the school's educational, administrative and/or financial operations, the applicant must also provide: Verification the outside group is authorized to do business in the State of Delaware, a complete list of all other schools (regardless of location) with which the outside group has contracted and the locations of those schools. The list must include all schools with which the outside group contracted but is no longer managing, a summary of student performance on the appropriate state assessment of each school the outside group has managed, a complete list of all past and any pending litigation against that group or submit a statement that there has been none and that none is pending. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School contracts with the public accounting firm of Michelle J. Lambert CPA LLC to provide accounting and payroll support services. The business and CPA

license of the accounting firm for verification of authorization to do business in Delaware is provided.³² The accounting firm also works with Kuumba Academy located at 519 N Market St, Wilmington, DE 19804. There are no past or current pending litigation against the accounting firm.

- m. Describe the plan (including timetable) to be used for recruiting students. Describe how the school will publicize its program and admission procedures. Describe how the school will recruit a sufficient number of students to be financially viable. You must convincingly demonstrate that the school will be able to attract enough students to make the school financially viable. Signatures of potentially interested parents and student in the community, feasibility studies are possible methods of demonstrating interest. While these methods are good indicators the committee may review other sources of information in making its determination. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Elementary schools in Delaware serve children in grades K-5 and middle schools serve grades 6-8. Prestige Academy Charter School’s 5th -8th grade middle school configuration is based on a conscious decision to catch boys as early as possible in an attempt to slow the “fourth grade slump” that affects so many low-income students.³³

Prestige Academy Charter School’s Board and leadership team understand the challenge we have encountered recruiting potential students to our school, specifically in fifth grade. Many parents struggle with the decision to take their children out of what would be their final year of elementary school in order to place them in our fifth grade class. While we are currently drawing a significant percentage of boys from districts serving the City of Wilmington, we will continue to strive to meet our enrollment goals.

Prestige Academy Charter School utilizes a variety of marketing efforts to provide the widest dissemination of information about the school as possible. Our marketing activities include: informational sessions and public presentations; appearances on local T.V. and radio shows; placement of ads in community newspapers and other print publications. Additionally, the creation of community partnerships and direct mail campaigns afford us the opportunity to connect with students and families throughout the Wilmington community, and greater New Castle County. In the past two years, we have seen a slow increase in the number of families enrolling from the Dover and Middletown areas. The provided Recruitment Activities Chart outlines some of our student recruitment activities.³⁴

Prestige Academy Charter School holds open enrollment annually for new students. Each year in October, Prestige Academy Charter School initiates recruitment activities outlined in the

³² Please see Attachment DD-Business License for Michelle Lambert.

³³ The Fourth Grade Slump describes a significant achievement gap between students of low-income and middle-income families. Whether using results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, local standardized testing, or informal classroom assessment, this achievement gap becomes more evident by fourth grade and increases as children get older.

³⁴ Please see Attachment EE- Recruitment Activities Chart.

Recruitment Activities Chart attached. We enroll students in 5th and 6th grade and will fill seats as necessary in the 7th grade. Our Open Enrollment period in which we accept new student applications is October 1 through January 2. Families may request an Admissions Packet from the school in person, by phone, fax, email, or they may complete and download an application from the school website. The deadline for submission of applications is January 2.

- n. List all the admissions preferences authorized by this statute the school will use. If more than one preference will be used, describe how the various preferences will be employed together. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School admits a new cohort of 5th grade and 6th grade boys on a seat available basis. Based upon the rigors of our academic program, we rarely anticipate enrolling students after 6th grade. We do reserve the right to fill 7th grade seats in our discretion.

If an applicant to the school is at risk of failing his current grade, or parents/guardians wish for their child to repeat his current grade, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of this possibility, as this will affect the grade to which the student applies. Ultimately, the school reserves the right to make a decision if retention is appropriate when entering the school. A student applying to enter the 7th grade, for example, may be placed in 6th grade. Decisions on grade placement will be made up to the end of September of the student's first month. Given that curricula vary from school to school, all students offered slots for entrance into the 5th, 6th and 7th grades will be required to take a diagnostic exam in the spring or summer. The diagnostic exam will be used—in conjunction with prior school records and performance—to determine the possibility of repeating the current grade. Some students admitted may be required to attend a summer session including possible academic instruction and orientation.

Prestige Academy Charter School complies with the admission preferences set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506 and employs admission preferences in the order listed below.

- i. Students who have a specific interest in the school's focus on educating boys.
- ii. Siblings of students already enrolled in the school, provided that any siblings seeking priority meet the requirements for the school. (Sibling shall be defined as biological or adoptive and stepsiblings residing in the same household of the custodial parent, foster children residing within the same household of the custodial parent. Stepsiblings living in different households are not considered for a sibling preference. Same grade siblings will be treated as two separate students applying, rather than as a single unit. Enrolled students are guaranteed admission the following year provided appropriate grade is available and intent to enroll form is submitted by the deadline.
- iii. Children of the school's founder, founding Board of Directors, current Board of Directors, and current staff, so long as they constitute no more than 5% of the school's total student population. The list of the Founding Board of Directors will be maintained by the Board, and preferences otherwise shall be determined by the Board of Directors subject to Department of Education regulations.

As part of the application process, Prestige Academy Charter School requests that parents/guardians of new students complete a school application for enrollment. In addition, Prestige Academy Charter School requests that parents/guardians participate in at least one information session with the Executive Director or his/her designee to discuss the mission, vision, school design and philosophy, and expectations of students, parents, and staff. This session will allow parents to make an informed choice for their child regarding attendance at the school. After the parent has decided that Prestige Academy Charter School is a good fit for their child, they will attend additional information sessions as part of the enrollment process to further clarify and explain school's expectations, policies and procedures.

- o. If the proposed school will give admissions preference to children of the school's founders, describe how the school will identify the founders and how the preference will be used in the enrollment process. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Founding Board Members' children are given priority enrollment preference at Prestige Academy Charter School so long as the member's child meets all admission requirements. All preferences are applied after all the names are drawn from the lottery. The Prestige Academy Charter School Founding Board Members are:

- Nnamdi O. Chukwuocha
- Robin Lober
- Donald Mell
- Rodney Merriweather
- Reverend Vincent P. Oliver
- Jack L. Perry
- Jason Reeves
- Mark Stewart
- Dr. Rita Vasta

- p. Describe the plan for selecting students if more students seek admission than space allows. If a lottery is used, describe how it will be conducted. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Applications are accepted throughout the enrollment period as detailed in the Recruitment Activities Chart and all information is collected in a central database. Our application deadline is January 2. Date of receipt is tracked and all parents are notified of the application receipt. If we are under-subscribed on this date, we will enroll all students and continue to enroll students on a rolling basis until we reach our target goal. If the school receives more applications for enrollment than seats are available by January 2, Prestige Academy Charter School will conduct a public lottery in order to identify admitted students and prioritize the waiting list. The pool of applications will be sorted according to admissions preferences referenced in statute and listed above. Families will be informed at the time they complete the application that on January 11 or the second Tuesday in January, Prestige Academy Charter School will invite a member of the

community to select names out of the lottery should a lottery be warranted. All families will be notified on January 12 of their child's status, either earning a seat or their placement on the waitlist. All families will be required to accept enrollment by January 24. The Executive Director or his/her designee will carefully maintain the waitlist. Students will be contacted from the top of the list and contacted using allowable preferences as seats become available. The wait list will be carried over to the next year and families will be contacted provided the child is eligible for admission to grades currently enrolling.

- q. Provide the timetable for the school's application and admissions process. Demonstrate how it is consistent with the timetable set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 4, for the public school choice program. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

In accordance with 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 4, for the public school choice program, Prestige Academy Charter School will plan the school lottery to directly correspond with the second Tuesday in January deadline for application to the school.

Open Enrollment Period: October 1-January 2

Application submission deadline: January 2

Public Lottery: January 11, Second Tuesday in January

Applicants Notified of Admission: End of January

Local Districts Notified: April 1

- r. List in detail the administrative tasks that will be undertaken between approval of the charter and school opening. Describe the tasks, how they will be accomplished, who will accomplish them, and the timetable by which they will be accomplished. The list of activities should be thorough and not generalized. The more detail provided in the list of activities indicates a well thought out proposal. (Renewals/Modifications – Not Applicable)

Response:

Not Applicable.

10. Insurance

Describe the types and limits of insurance coverage that the school plans to obtain and when it plans to have them in effect. If the school is contracting with an outside company to manage the school, the application must include a description of the insurance for the school and the board of directors, including the source of funds to purchase the insurance. The proposed costs for the coverage must be reflected in the budget worksheets. The applicant should contact the Insurance Coverage Office at (302) 739-3651 for further information on liability protection for public schools in Delaware. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

NOTE: If a charter is granted to the applicant, a copy of the Certificate of Insurance must be submitted prior to the opening of the school.

Response:

Please see provided Insurance Certificate.³⁵

³⁵ Please see Attachment FF-Insurance Certificate.

11. Student Discipline and Attendance

- a. The application must include a draft “Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual” that includes the school rules and guidelines governing student behavior. The manual must describe student rights and responsibilities and the plan the school will follow to discipline students. Describe how the manual will be distributed to parents and students prior to students applying for enrollment at the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Parents are provided with information from the Students and Family Handbook and Code of Conduct during open houses and during the admissions process. Upon acceptance, but prior to enrollment, parents are provided with the Student and Family Handbook and Code of Conduct.³⁶

- b. Describe how discipline will be handled with students with disabilities. Describe how the school will report inappropriate behavior to affected parents, the Department, and when necessary, to law enforcement agencies. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes as well as a discussion of discipline issues you may have had and the general discipline climate in your school.)

Response:

In addition to the policies of the Prestige Academy Charter School Code of Conduct, we handle discipline of students with disabilities in accordance with the policies found in the DOE Administrative Manual for Services for Exceptional Students (AMSES). The student’s IEP team may be immediately involved in determining the appropriateness of special education services and possible behavioral manifestation determination decisions. Prestige Academy Charter School will report inappropriate behavior to parents through both verbal and written notification. All reports to agencies will be written. DOE regulations will also be followed relating to the reporting of crimes to the appropriate authorities.

- c. Describe the plan the school will follow to ensure compliance with 14 Delaware Code, Section 4112, regarding the reporting of school crimes. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

The Student Code of Conduct is distributed to parents/guardians, students, staff, board members and other interested individuals. The school maintains written records of infractions to the Code of Conduct. These records contain data about the incident, perpetrator(s) and victim, and disposition of the incident. All incidents reportable under 14 DE Code, Section 4112 are reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency by telephone at the time of the offense, and when appropriate, to the Department of Education. If a question exists regarding whether an offense is reportable, the school contacts the police agency to discuss it. In addition, the Executive Director will likewise advise the Board of Directors of such incidents in a timely manner.

³⁶ Please see Attachment GG-Student and Family Handbook.

- d. Describe the attendance policies of the school. Describe the level of attendance that will be required of the students each year. Describe the actions that will be taken to ensure that students meet those levels of attendance. Describe how the attendance policies will be distributed to each student at the beginning of each school year. (Renewals/Modifications – Discuss any attendance anomalies you may have had here. If the committee is aware of any such issues they will request this information.)

Response:

The attendance policy is included in the Prestige Academy Charter School Student and Family Handbook and Code of Conduct and is distributed to all families prior to enrollment. We believe that our strict adherence to this policy is the reason that we saw above 95% attendance at our school last year. Section B on our Attendance Policy and Section C on Incomplete Days are outlined below:

B. Attendance Policy

Given the fast pace and high rigor of Prestige Academy’s curriculum, missing one day at Prestige can have a detrimental effect on a student’s learning. Regular attendance is required. Poor attendance is not tolerated. Parents are expected to ensure that their child is in school; please do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illness. Excessive absences will be considered a violation of the School- Student-Family Accountability contract. We ask that families not schedule vacations or non-emergency appointments during school time. Families should take advantage of 1:00pm dismissal on Wednesday, as well as half-days and vacations, to schedule appointments and travel.

All student absences, including illness, suspension, appointments, and vacations, count as absences. Prestige Academy does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. If a student exceeds 15 absences in a school year, Prestige Academy Charter School reserves the right to retain the student. Exceptions are made for court-mandated appearances with proper documentation and religious observances. Additionally, students are afforded rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (“Section 504”), the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) should their absences be related to a disabling condition. Other rare exceptions may apply.

In order to help ensure that students do not exceed 15 absences, Prestige has certain support policies in place. They are detailed below:

- At 5 student absences, the school will contact the family in writing.
- At 10 student absences (or five absences within the first academic quarter), the administration will require a meeting with the student’s family, during which an Attendance Pledge will be established aimed at ensuring attendance patterns improve.
- At 12 student absences, the administration will require a family meeting to discuss violation of the Attendance Pledge.
- The school reserves the right to retain any student who exceeds 15 absences.

Students who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission.

In cases of truancy, Prestige Academy Charter School may report the student and/or family to certain state agencies or file an official complaint with the court. According to Delaware Code (Title 14, Chapter 27), all students under 16 are expected to be in school. All students under the age of 16 will be expected to comply with these laws and the school will follow procedures set out in Delaware Code (Title 14, Chapter 27) if the student does not comply with the law. In cases of truancy, the Executive Director (or her/his designee) will investigate the situation. Prestige Academy Charter School operates in compliance with the Department of Education's (DOE) requests and requirements, which can include mandated reporting of truancy to appropriate state agencies.

Prestige keeps accurate records of attendance and will make the records available for inspection by the DOE as needed. All questions regarding student attendance and attendance records should be directed to the school's Administrative Assistant.

If a student is absent for the first five days of school, or at least ten consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain his absences, that student may lose his seat at Prestige Academy and may be considered un-enrolled from the school.

C. Incomplete Days: Lateness and Early Dismissal

At Prestige, if a student does not complete a full school day, he is assigned an Incomplete Day. If a student is not in his assigned seat by 7:50am, for any reason, he is assigned an Incomplete Day. If a student is dismissed early, for any reason, he is assigned an Incomplete Day. If a student arrives late and leaves early, this counts as two Incomplete Days.

Incomplete Days due to traffic, medical appointments, family emergencies etc., are not excused. Prestige may excuse Incomplete Days in cases of court-mandated appearances, disability-related appointments and religious observances, if proper documentation is provided. Please use Wednesday afternoons, half days and early dismissals as times to schedule medical and other appointments.

Late students must check in at the main office before reporting to class. Students leaving early must check in with the main office before leaving.

Excessive Incomplete Days are not tolerated. In order to ensure that students show up on time and do not leave early, Prestige has certain support policies in place. They are detailed below:

- Every 5 Incomplete Days count as one absence in the Prestige attendance policy.
- Weekly REAL Reports will include updated attendance information for your reference.

If a student needs to be sent home due to a behavioral infraction, a parent/guardian must come to the school, meet with a member of the Administrative team, and remove the student from school grounds. Incomplete Day consequences apply in cases of suspension. Students being sent home for behavioral infractions will not be dismissed unless the parent or guardian has

physically come to the school (please see Code of Conduct for more details), unless certain rare exceptions apply.

12. Health and Safety

- a. Describe the procedures that will be implemented to ensure the health and safety of the school's students, staff, and guests. List the staff (i.e., nurse) who will be hired or contracted to ensure that the school will provide a safe and healthy environment. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes. Also discuss any health and safety issues you have had here. If the committee knows of any they will ask specific questions regarding those issues.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School has a full-time nurse who ensures that all students have physical examinations prior to enrollment, administers medications and medical treatments according to instructions from the students' physician, and treats minor injuries and contacts parents when more serious injuries occur. The nurse maintains student health records, ensures that immunizations and TB screenings are current, and serves on IEP teams when necessary. Routine vision, hearing and orthopedic screenings are conducted in compliance with federal and state regulations.

The school conducts health-related education for parents and students around topics such as puberty, ADHD, and how to respond to certain medical conditions. The school also contracts with a consulting school psychologist and refers necessary matters to outside counseling agencies that look after the emotional health of our students.

The school office manager also serves as cafeteria manager to ensure that student meals are nutritionally adequate. The school contracts with a cleaning company and maintenance company to keep the building and grounds in safe and good repair and to maintain necessary information on all cleaning products and other chemicals used in the building.

The School has a crisis management plan which is distributed to all employees. School employees are instructed in the school's lockdown and evacuations procedures and participate in monthly emergency evacuation drills.

- b. Describe the process that will be used to ensure that:
 - Students have physical examinations prior to enrollment
 - Required immunizations are in compliance
 - Medications and medical treatments are administered in accordance with Delaware Code
 - Screenings for health problems are administered correctly
 - Student health records are monitored and maintained
 - Emergency care for known and unknown life-threatening health conditions is administered
 - Ensuring health representation on IEP teams when students' needs require such.

Response:

- 1) Ensuring that students have physical examinations prior to enrollment.

Proof of a student's recent physical examination and immunizations are collected at the time of enrollment. The information is reviewed, maintained, and monitored by the school nurse, and is maintained as part of the student's health record.

2) Required immunizations are in compliance

All persons working at the school, including school employees, substitutes, student teachers, volunteers, contract employees (including bus drivers) shall provide documentation of a Mantoux tuberculin skin test or show proof of being tested within the past 12 months during the first 15 working days of employment or school entry. Written documentation of screening following the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines may be provided for students in lieu of the skin test. Volunteers should be screened for tuberculosis using the DOE Health Questionnaire for Volunteers. Proof of a student's recent physical examination and immunizations are collected at the time of enrollment. The information is reviewed, maintained, and monitored by the school nurse, and is maintained as part of the student's health record.

3) Medications and medical treatments are administered in accordance with Delaware Code

The school nurse administers medications and all medical treatments in accordance with the Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations, and any other appropriate governmental regulations or professional guidelines.

4) Screenings for health problems are administered correctly

The school nurse conducts an active screening program for vision, hearing, orthopedics, postural/gait, etc. as prescribed in the Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations.

5) Student health records are monitored and maintained

The school nurse monitors and maintains student health records and forwards the required documentation of services to the DOE.

6) Emergency care for known and unknown life-threatening health conditions is administered

The school nurse and Prestige Academy staff utilize universal precautions when offering emergency treatment to students and staff. We also comply with the Memorandum of Agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities of child abuse reporting.

7) Ensuring health representation on IEP teams when students' needs require such.

The school nurse serves as a member of the IEP team when medically related issues are discussed. The school nurse also provides relevant medical information during the evaluation process.

c. Describe the plan the school will use to ensure that criminal background checks will be made

on the school's employees prior to hire. Identify the staff member that will have the responsibility for ensuring background checks are completed. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

All employees, and Board members (by February 2012), are required to submit to a state and federal background check, and a child protection registry check. The results are kept in the personnel file of each employee. The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that criminal background checks have been completed on all employees. Any findings are brought to the attention of the Executive Director.

d. Identify where the school will be located (include county location and any other location specifics). Describe the site and how it will be suitable for the proposed school to include health and safety considerations. Describe how access to the building will be controlled. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School is a two story building, approximately 43,000 square feet, located in New Castle County, 1121 Thatcher Street Wilmington, Delaware 19802. In addition to 22 regular classrooms, the school has a library/mentoring room, dedicated classroom space for science, special education, and a multi-purpose room used for physical education, lunch, and other school activities. Prestige Academy Charter School maintains a security system that includes controlled access through magnetic readers on main entry doors, door alarms, camera system, and burglar alarms. All visitors to the building must enter through the front entrance. Only employees with magnetic reader badges may enter in the front door during school hours without being buzzed in.

e. Describe how the facility is in full compliance with all applicable building codes for public schools and is accessible for individuals with disabilities. Describe any renovations of the facility and provide a schedule for that renovation. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School is in full compliance with all applicable building codes and is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

f. Describe building maintenance practices which will provide a reasonable assurance of a safe school environment for students, staff, and visitors. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School contracts with a cleaning and maintenance company to handle cleaning and minor and major repairs. The cleaning personnel follow a rotating schedule to ensure that all areas are kept clean, safe and free of debris, and that requires them to note and address any issues present in the building or on the grounds.

- g. What location and facilities will be used for Physical Education? What further safety issues will this add, and how will they be addressed? (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Physical Education classes are held in the multi-purpose room or outside on the playground. These spaces are designed for physical activity and, therefore, present no extraordinary safety issues.

- h. Describe how students will be transported to the school. Provide intended contract language for the transportation methods chosen (whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof). (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School contracts with Advanced Bus Transportation that provides transportation to students in grades 5-8. Currently, six buses are provided. Approximately 95% of our students ride the school bus.

- i. Describe how students who reside outside the district in which the school will be located will be transported to the school. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School provides bus transportation to and from designated hub stops for students residing beyond walking distance from the school.

- j. Describe how special needs students will be transported if specialized transportation is required by the IEP. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

All Prestige Academy Charter School students are provided the same opportunities for transportation.

- k. Provide the plan for oversight of school transportation operations, e.g., route planning, bus stop selection, drivers/aides, coordination with contractors if used, school bus discipline. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School contracts with Advanced Student Transportation who provides primary oversight for school transportation operations, including route planning and bus stop selection. The Dean of Students and Families and the Executive Director are directly responsible

for addressing school bus discipline and working with the drivers to maintain safe environments on the school bus. The Executive Director maintains the driver files and works with the contractor on contract issues.

1. Describe the plan for providing meals to students, including students eligible for free and reduced lunch. If the school participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast programs and it intends to contract for meals, identify the contractor and describe the services to be provided. List the estimated annual costs per student for food services.
(Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School provides an opportunity for students to have breakfast and lunch every day. All lunches are prepared off-site then heated and served by Prestige Academy Charter School cafeteria staff in strict accordance with the USDA and Board of Health guidelines.

- m. Describe how the school will comply with the requirements of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for eligible students, if the school participates in the program.
(Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast programs and meals are provided by Revolution Foods. We comply with Regulation 275, Subsection 4.4.4 which requires a contract be in place by August 1st of the year in which the school proposes to open and by August 1st of each year thereafter. At the beginning of each school year, Prestige Academy Charter School requires enrolled families to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch application. The school determines eligibility of families in accordance with federal guidelines. Prestige Academy Charter School maintains complete and accurate records of meals and claims made under the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. The meals are prepared off-site and delivered on a daily basis where they are heated prior to serving. We provide a refrigerator for short-term milk and beverage storage. We comply with and meet USDA nutrition requirements, including dietary guidelines, and recommended daily allowances.

13. Student and School Data

- a. Describe the process and procedures the school will follow to comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and implementing federal and Department of Education regulations regarding disclosure of student records. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Student data and records are kept in the administration office and are secured from public access. Access is limited to school personnel and given only for the legitimate purpose of providing educational services to the student. The school does not release any student data or records (other than data identified as "directory information") to third parties without express written consent of the student's parents or guardian, or unless otherwise required by lawful process.

- b. Describe the plan for the timely transfers of student and school data to the Department of Education. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes.)

Response:

Prestige Academy Charter School enters appropriate student data into e-school plus and DELSIS as required by the Department of Education. Attendance and discipline data is entered on a daily and weekly basis by designated staff to ensure compliance.

14. Management Companies

The board of directors shall annually certify to the Department, on a form provided by the Department, that prior to the payment of any fees or other sums to any management company employed by the board, the board shall ensure that sufficient revenues of the school are devoted to adequately support the school's proposed educational program. Such form of certification may require documentation of all actual or proposed expenditures by the school. Failure to provide sufficient funds to adequately support the school's proposed education program shall be grounds for revocation of the school's charter. A management company may be a company that manages any aspect of the school to include administrative and financial functions as well as the educational process. Provide with this application a copy of the contract to include detailed descriptions and delineation of responsibilities between the school and the management company. (Renewal/Modifications – provide original documentation and any changes)

Response:

Not applicable. Prestige Academy Charter School is not operated by a management company.

ASSURANCES

The Board of Directors of this charter school assures that the school will:

- 1) Be in full compliance with **14 Delaware Code, Chapter 5** and **14 DE Admin Code, Section 275 in the Regulations of the Department of Education**.
- 2) Not discriminate against any student in the admissions process because of race, creed, color, sex, disability, or national origin or because a student's school district of residence has a per student local expenditure lower than another student seeking admission.
- 3) Not operate in a sectarian manner or include religious practices in its educational program.
- 4) Participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program and meet the requirements for school accountability as described in state law.
- 5) Manage the school within all State administrative and financial systems listed in **14 Delaware Code, Section 512 (9)** including accounting, payroll, purchasing, retirement, and benefits. All school funds will be managed through the school's accounts set up in the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS).
- 6) Initiate and maintain direct communication with other public and nonpublic schools to assure efficient notification and transfer and exchange of records.
- 7) Update the application to incorporate any modifications and/or conditions identified as pre-conditions to final approval by the Secretary of Education and State Board of Education as set forth in its written decisions; and operate the program in accordance with the content of the updated and approved charter granted by the Department of Education and State Board of Education. The school's board of directors will not implement any modifications to the charter school program or operation without the express written consent of the Department of Education.
- 8) Notify the Department of Education in writing within 30 days when the school's administrative head or any member of the board of directors change.
- 9) Provide the Department of Education with copies of all the policies and by-laws of the school and the school's board of directors and inform the Department in a timely manner when by-laws change.
- 10) By the first day of instruction each school year, ensure that all teachers meet the certification requirements of the Delaware charter law and are properly listed in the PHRST and DEEDS programs.

- 11) Employ only staff who have complied with the requirement of having a successful criminal background check and report to the Department of Education by September 1 of each school year that the school is in full compliance with state law related to this requirement.
- 12) Cooperate fully with Department of Education requests for reporting information and activities related to monitoring the school's compliance with the charter and applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- 13) Comply with the provisions for a Performance Agreement, as required by the Secretary of Education.
- 14) Distribute copies of the Department's **Frequently Asked Questions About Delaware Charter Schools/Parent Guide to Delaware Charter Schools** to all parents seeking to enroll their child(ren) as well as to parents of enrolled children.
- 15) Conduct all meetings of the board of directors in a manner consistent with the Freedom of Information Act, especially the legal requirements of **29 Delaware Code, Sections 10002, 10003 and 10004**.
- 16) The Board of Directors will include a member who is a certificated teacher employed by the school and a member who is a parent of a student currently enrolled in the school, consistent with **14 Delaware Code, Section 512(1)**.
- 17) Comply with the requirements for reporting school crimes as described in **14 Delaware Code, Section 4112**.
- 18) As required by 14 Del. C. § 506, maintain on file a written statement signed by the parent or guardian of each enrolled child acknowledging that the child will attend the charter school for at least one complete school year.
- 19) Advise any person or entity offering a loan to the school that debts of the school are not debts of the State of Delaware and that neither the State nor any other agency nor instrumentality of the State is responsible for the repayment of any indebtedness.
- 20) Annually certify to the Department, on a form to be provided by the Department, that prior to the payment of any fees or other sums to a management company employed by the board, the board will ensure that sufficient revenues of the school are devoted to adequately support the school's proposed educational program.
- 21) Participate in all training offered by the Department of Education to charter schools prior to the opening of the school.
- 22) Establish a student application and admissions process that will enable the school to provide the local districts in which the students reside with a preliminary roster of students for the subsequent year on or before April 1 each year.

- 23) Ensure that by April 1 each year the school has enrolled at least 80% of the total authorized number of students and that it has notified each school district of information about enrolled students.
- 24) Complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- 25) Comply with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- 26) Comply with Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972.
- 27) Have certified special education teacher(s) providing services for students with disabilities.
- 28) Ensure that students have physical examinations prior to enrollment.
- 29) Ensure that required immunizations and screenings (lead, TB) are in compliance.
- 30) Administer medications and medical treatments, including first aid.
- 31) Screen for health problems (vision, hearing, postural/gait, etc.)
- 32) Monitor student health and maintaining health records.
- 33) Ensure emergency care for known and unknown life-threatening health conditions.
- 34) Ensure health representation on IEP teams when student's needs require such.
- 35) 14 Delaware Code, Section 511 (1) states that all applications for a charter shall contain an affirmative representation by the applicant that, no later than June 15 immediately preceding the authorized opening date of the school, the applicant shall secure a Certificate of Occupancy, either temporary or final, for the premises in which the school is to be located; provided that any temporary Certificate of Occupancy must permit occupancy at the premises by school staff and students for school purposes. If the charter is approved and the charter holder shall subsequently fail to obtain the necessary Certificate of Occupancy as required by this section, the opening of the school shall be delayed by one year from the date previously authorized by the approving authority and the charter shall be placed on probation subject to the terms and conditions imposed by the Department of Education with the consent of the State Board of Education. No waivers are available for this requirement.
- 36) The school must participate and receive training in the use of the Department of Education's Pupil Accountability system E-School Plus.
- 37) The school must intend to comply with all additional curriculum regulations including 501, 502, 503, and 525 and any other curricular regulations.