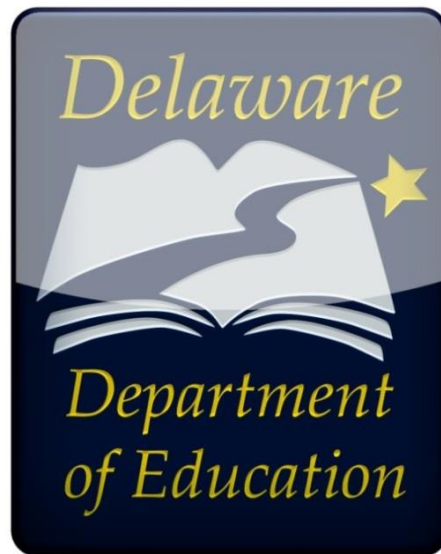


CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Sussex Academy Charter School

**RENEWAL APPLICATION
FINAL REPORT**

CSAC Final Meeting: November 27, 2017
CSAC Final Report Published: December 1, 2017

By September 30, 2017, Sussex Academy Charter School submitted an application to renew its charter. Consideration of this application is in accordance with the applicable provisions of 14 *Del. C. Ch. 5*, including § 514A, and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275. Written renewal application guidance is provided by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) on its website. The renewal application template developed by DDOE is aligned to the measures and targets within the Performance Framework, which outlines the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all Delaware charter schools are evaluated. The evaluation of the school's performance as measured by the Framework is a major component of the decision on the renewal application. The decision on the renewal application is based on a comprehensive review, guided, in part, by the following three questions:

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

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

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on November 27, 2017:

Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee

- David Blowman, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Associate Secretary, Operations Support, DDOE
- Karen Field Rogers, Deputy Secretary, DDOE
- Debora Hansen, Education Associate, Academic Supports
- Tracey Neugebauer, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources, DDOE
- Charles Taylor, Head of School, Providence Creek Academy
- Seher Ahmad, Data Fellow, Performance Supports

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Delaware Department of Justice, Counsel to the Committee
- Denise Stouffer, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Finance Office, DDOE

Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)

- Donna Johnson, Executive Director, Delaware State Board of Education

Representatives of Charter School

- Patricia Oliphant, Director, Sussex Academy Charter School
- Allen Stafford, Director, Sussex Academy Charter School
- Jen Scott, Vice President, Board of Directors, Sussex Academy Charter School
- Susan Mitchell, President, Board of Directors, Sussex Academy Charter School

Discussion

Mr. Blowman stated that an initial public hearing was held on October 16, 2017 and the CSAC Initial Meeting was held on October 24, 2017. He added that the CSAC Initial Report was issued on October 30, 2016. The school submitted a response to the CSAC Initial Report on November 14, 2017.

Mr. Blowman stated that the purpose of the CSAC Final Meeting was for the CSAC to continue its review of the Renewal Application, probe any areas of concern through a discussion with the applicant, and to issue a recommendation on the renewal application to the Secretary of Education.

Mr. Blowman asked each member if they had any concerns or questions or if there were any additional information that the members needed from the school. No committee member expressed any concerns, asked any questions or requested additional information from the school

Mr. Blowman strongly encouraged the school to continue to pursue their outreach to at-risk student populations. Ms. Johnson also encouraged the school to continue with their outreach programs.

Ms. Hansen offered the continued support of the Department as Sussex Academy continues to develop their curricula.

Ms. Oliphant shared that all of the Department recommendations and suggestions have helped Sussex Academy in their reflection of best practice and continuous improvement process.

Conclusion

Mr. Blowman requested a motion to recommend renewal of the charter of Sussex Academy Charter School for a 10 year term beginning on July 1, 2018. The motion was made and seconded to approve the recommendation and was carried unanimously.

Mr. Blowman reminded the applicant that the CSAC's recommendation was just that: a recommendation to the Secretary of Education on the renewal application.

Next Steps:

- The CSAC will provide the school with a Final Report no later than December 5, 2017.
- A second public hearing will be held on December 5, 2017 at the J.W. Collette Education Resource Center, Conference Rooms A&B, 35 Commerce Way, Dover.
- The public comment period ends on December 8, 2017.
- The Secretary of Education will announce her decision at the next State Board of Education meeting to be held on December 14, 2017.