

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

1.2 Founding Group and School Leadership

14 *Del. C.* § 512(1)

Founding Group Membership [14 *Del. C.* § 512(1)]

- a. Identify the key members of the Founding Group for the proposed school. Identify *only* those individuals who will play a substantial ongoing role in school development, governance, and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school. These may include proposed Board members, school leaders/management, staff members, or other essential partners.

Explain what role each individual will play, and note which Founding Group members are certified educators, parents, and members of the community as required by 14 *Del. C.* § 512(1).

Board of Directors

Chantalle Ashford, Educator, Co-Board Chair
Dr. Teresa Berry, Educator, Co-Board Chair
Betsy Renzo, Educator & Attorney, Vice Board Chair
Katherine Cauley, Retired Professor, Secretary
Denise Snyder, Retired Educator, Treasurer
Karl Armand, Attorney, Founding Board member
Karen V. Higgins, Retired Law Enforcement Executive, Founding Board member
Amy Shepherd, Educator, Founding Board member
Brad Owens, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, Founding Board member
Dr. Joseph Kim, Family Physician, Board Member
Diaz Bonville, Community Outreach Coordinator, Board Member
Stacie Burton, Community Outreach Coordinator, Board Member
Derick Dailey, Attorney, Board Member
Jonathan Edwards, Financial Professional, Board Member

Principal Advisory Board Members

Bryan A. Stevenson, Attorney & Founder of the Equal Justice Initiative
Dr. Howard Stevenson, Professor, University of Pennsylvania (Racial Empowerment Collaborative) & Founder, Lion's Story
Christy Taylor, Educator & BASSE Founding Group

School Launch Partner

Kirsten Croner, Educator, School Launch Partner, and Future Dean of Academic Excellence

Executive Director

Dr. Julius Mullen, Executive Leader and Nonprofit Manager, Executive Director

Director of Development

Crystal Timmons-Bryant, Nonprofit Consultant, Director of Development

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

Founder

Alonna Berry, Educator & Consultant, Founding Board Chair

- b. Explain the Founding Group’s collective qualifications for establishing a high-quality charter school in Delaware and in assuming stewardship of public funds. Address the following in your response.
- Experience and/or involvement in K -12 public education system;
 - Experience in the design and operation of a charter school (if the school has closed or is slated for closure, non-renewal, or dissolution, describe the circumstances that led to such closure, non-renewal, or dissolution);
 - School leadership, administration, and governance;
 - Research based curriculum and instructional strategies that will ensure that all students meet or exceed the expectations of the Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics-and Next Generation Science Standards);
 - Business management, including but not limited to Delaware financial and accounting systems and the funding procedures for Delaware charter schools;
 - Personnel management;
 - Diversity issues, including but not limited to outreach, student enrollment, and instruction;
 - At-risk populations and children with disabilities, including but not limited to students eligible for special education and related services; English language learners; migrant/homeless students; and other at-risk populations that the school intends to serve;
 - School operations, including but not limited to charter school funding/finance, school bus transportation, facilities management, and school lunch/breakfast programs, and health and safety; and
 - Parent and community engagement.

Required Experience	Founding Members
<p>Experience and/or involvement in K -12 public education system:</p> <p>Nine of our founding members have experience working in K-12 public education, with seven members having specific experience in Delaware public schools. These members have been teachers, school leaders, school-based staff, instructional coaches, special service coordinators, department chairs, and the Delaware Department of Education employees. Five of those listed are certified by the State of Delaware as school leaders or teachers (these are noted with an *).</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford* Dr. Teresa Berry* Dr. Katherine Cauley Diaz Bonville Kirsten Croner* Derick Dailey Betsy Renzo Denise Snyder* Christy Taylor</p>
<p>Experience in the design and operation of a charter school:</p> <p>Mrs. Croner was a teacher at Prestige Academy in Wilmington, DE, which closed due to low enrollment numbers in 2016. During her time as Teach For America staff, Mrs. Croner had monthly contact with charter school leaders to help develop and coach their teachers. Ms. Snyder was the</p>	<p>Kirsten Croner Betsy Renzo Denise Snyder</p>

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

<p>special education coordinator at Sussex Academy. Mrs. Renzo has specific experience as an executive specialist in Aspire Public Schools, a charter school management organization with 35 charter schools and over 1200 employees in California and Tennessee.</p>	
<p>School leadership, administration, and governance:</p> <p>Dr. Berry is the school leader of the New Directions Learning Academy in Dorchester County, MD; she is also certified to serve as a superintendent. Ms. Shepherd is the Director of Diversity and Inclusion at the St. Anne’s Episcopal School in Middletown, DE; she also serves on their school leadership team. Mrs. Croner has a degree in school leadership and is certified to be a school leader in Delaware. Dr. Joseph Kim served as a board member of the former Jefferson School. He also manages a foundation and is on the Nanticoke Hospital Board. Mrs. Snyder was the special education coordinator at Sussex Academy. Ms. Renzo served in an administrative role at Aspire Public Schools; she also has a master’s in educational leadership, policy, and organization from Stanford University. As a Teach For America staff member Mrs. Croner worked directly with school leaders, both traditional and charter. Mr. Dailey and Mr. Armand both serve the Board’s governance committee, applying their expertise as attorneys to our Board’s policy creation and implementation. Ms. Ashford is currently pursuing a degree in educational leadership and policy at American University.</p>	<p>Karl Armand Chantalle Ashford Dr. Teresa Berry Kirsten Croner Derick Dailey Dr. Joseph Kim Betsy Renzo Amy Shepherd Denise Synder</p>
<p>Research-based curriculum and instructional strategies that will ensure that all students meet or exceed the expectations of the Delaware Content Standards:</p> <p>Ms. Ashford has a master’s in the art of teaching, specifically English Language Arts from the Relay Graduate School of Education. Both Mrs. Croner and Mrs. Snyder have master’s degrees in elementary education from Wilmington University and Salisbury University, respectively. Dr. Berry has a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction from Delaware State University. Dr. Katherine Cauley has over thirty years of experience in curriculum development, specifically in service learning and community-based education, has conducted research and is extensively published in these areas. All five of these members have experience in leading and coaching teachers in research-based curriculum and instructional practices.</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Dr. Teresa Berry Kirsten Croner Denise Snyder Dr. Katherine Cauley</p>
<p>Business management:</p> <p>Dr. Berry has experience managing school-based budgets and requests as a school leader. Several of our founding members have executive leadership experience, running large-scale organizations like hospitals (Dr. Kim), small businesses (Mr. Owens and Ms. Taylor), nonprofits (Dr. Stevenson and Mr.</p>	<p>Karl Armand Dr. Teresa Berry Derick Dailey Dr. Joseph Kim Brad Owens Bryan Stevenson</p>

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

<p>Stevenson), foundations (Dr. Kim), and law firms (Mr. Stevenson). Mr. Dailey is the chief of the financial litigation unit as a U.S. attorney for Delaware. Mr. Armand serves as the national contract manager for Comcast, specializing in contracts with schools and libraries. Ms. Timmons-Bryant has over 28 years of business management skills that has been in both in Corporate American as a regional manager for a larger retail chain as well as 15 years in Non-Profit Management. Her leaderships experiencing has been focused on training and development for several organizations in a Human Resources capacity and audit compliance. Dr. Mullen has over 15 years as a nonprofit executive for Children & Families First managing million-dollar contracts from local, state and federal funding sources. His role primarily involved overseeing school based MTSS services at varying levels.</p>	<p>Dr. Howard Stevenson Christy Taylor Dr. Julius Mullen Crystal Timmons-Bryant</p>
<p>Personnel management:</p> <p>Several of our founding members have experience managing teams in the education, criminal justice, nonprofit, financial, and healthcare sectors, as well as personnel selection, management, and evaluation.</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Dr. Teresa Berry Diaz Bonville Kirsten Croner Jonathan Edwards Karen Higgins Dr. Joseph Kim Brad Owens Betsy Renzo Amy Shepherd Denise Snyder Bryan Stevenson Dr. Howard Stevenson Dr. Katherine Cauley Dr. Julius Mullen Crystal Timmons-Bryant</p>
<p>Diversity Issues</p> <p>Mr. Stevenson’s, our school’s namesake, Equal Justice Initiative, has several projects focused on educating the American public about the history of racism in our country. Dr. Stevenson’s work focuses on building personal and professional development skills in managing racial trauma in education spaces. Dr. Berry is a member of the Dorchester County School Equity Committee. Ms. Shepherd is the Director of Diversity and Inclusion at the St. Anne’s Episcopal School in Middletown, DE. Mrs. Renzo served on the Diversity Committee at Wilmington Friends Independent School in Wilmington, DE. Ms. Ashford and Mrs. Croner have developed and facilitated diversity, equity, and inclusion professional development for novice educators at Teach For America. Ms. Ashford has served as a teacher contractor to the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit and the Educator Support Team at the Delaware Department of Education, focusing</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Kirsten Croner Amy Shepherd Betsy Renzo Bryan Stevenson Dr. Howard Stevenson Dr. Julius Mullen</p>

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

<p>on teacher diversity and culturally competent instructional practices; she is currently pursuing her educational doctorate in educational leadership and policy with a focus in antiracism, equity, and inclusion. Dr. Mullen was trained by Social Current’s which is a national platform focused on infusing diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices across organizational landscape. He also launched an agency-wide diversity task force at Children & Families First, developed a strategic plan and lead implementation.</p>	
<p>At-risk populations and children with disabilities and other at-risk populations that the school intends to serve:</p> <p>Ms. Ashford, Dr. Berry, Mrs. Croner, and Mrs. Snyder are certified special education teachers. Mrs. Croner minored in special education at Wilmington University while pursuing her master's in elementary education. Mr. Bonville has experience working with English language learners as a former employee of the Indian River School District (IRSD). Both Mrs. Snyder and Mr. Bonville have experience working with special populations of students through the Transitioning our Toddlers to School program in IRSD. Ms. Renzo has experience working with special populations of students at the Eastside College Preparatory School in Palo Alto, CA—a tuition-free private school for would-be first-generation college students. Dr. Berry’s current school leadership position is at New Directions Learning Academy, an alternative school for at-risk students. Dr. Mullen has extensive experience in working with children, parents and families who have been exposed to traumatic events. He has trained thousands of professionals, community members, parents and youth on the prevalence and impact of trauma on neurological development and brain functioning. Julius has been the driving force behind many statewide efforts to integrate trauma informed care within a variety of systemic structures. He’s also written two children books focused on brain science and diversity for parents and professionals who support kids who are stressed with trauma and mental health challenges.</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Dr. Teresa Berry Diaz Bonville Kirsten Croner Betsy Renzo Denise Synder Dr. Julius Mullen</p>
<p>School operations:</p> <p>Several of our founding Board Members have a plethora of experience at every level of K-12 education. Experiences include working at a charter management company to building principal, classroom teacher, Director of Diversity, school librarian, human resources, and budget management. Ms. Ashford, Dr. Berry, Mr. Bonville, Mrs. Croner, Dr. Kim, Ms. Renzo, Mrs. Shepherd, and Mrs. Snyder collectively have participated in a national fellowship focused on rural schools and operations, written dissertations on topics related to school operations and actively created school opening and closing procedures, school safety and security policies, and have managed funding/finance, bus transportation, and school lunch and breakfast distribution.</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Dr. Teresa Berry Diaz Bonville Kirsten Croner Dr. Joseph Kim Betsy Renzo Amy Shepherd Denise Snyder</p>

**The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership**

<p>Parent and community engagement:</p> <p>Many BASSE Board Members are active community members and volunteers across the state of Delaware, with specific affiliations in Sussex County. Mr. Bonville and Ms. Burton both work full-time as community outreach specialists for state and federal government entities. Additionally, Dr. Kim, both a parent and a local physician, engages with parents and families daily through his medical practice in Laurel, DE. Ms. Ashford currently serves as a classroom teacher in Sussex County and regularly engages with students and families in various settings. Ms. Shepherd currently shares as the hair of community engagement for BASSE and effectively supports, plans, and markets various parent outreach and coordination events. Ms. Timmons-Bryant has worked in engaging community members in several different avenues throughout her career as well as on a personal level. Ms. Timmons-Bryant has actively help engage the community to rally around several mission driven focus such as the hunger studies done by Feeding America, Summer and After School Food Service sites for the underserved population in high at-risk populations, to community dinners that served anyone in need. She has helped engage community members to sit on boards that created change in the communities and help bring diversity in several aspects to create a cohesive impact for the community. Dr. Cauley has specific experience with community academic partnerships integrating educational, health and social services for families and children to ensure success in school, as well as access to health care, food, housing, and transportation, and employment support. Dr. Mullen has received national, state and local recognition for leading a parent-driven grass roots mentoring organization in Sussex County. He was able to galvanized parents, community leaders and educators to provide whole-child support for over 200 marginalized youth. His most prized outcome came in the form of impressive high school and post high school impact. Consequently, 100% of youth graduated from high school and 96% of youth graduated from college, attended college, enlisted in military and/or employed gainfully for at least two years.</p>	<p>Chantalle Ashford Diaz Bonville Stacie Burton Dr. Joseph Kim Amy Shepherd Crystal Timmons-Bryant Dr. Julius Mullen Dr. Katherine Cauley</p>
---	--

- c. Describe the Founding Group’s ties to and knowledge of the proposed school community.
- Summarize each person’s experience, qualifications, and affiliations that will be directly relevant to developing a high-quality charter school that reflects the school’s mission and vision. Explain why each individual was chosen to participate in this Founding Group.
 - Explain how and why the Founding Group decided to form a school in Delaware.

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence was founded during a Stevenson family kitchen table conversation discussing the needs of the Sussex County community, especially for students. Following the conversation, a diverse group of Sussex County community members was convened to help design and support the school. From the beginning, the school's vision was inspired by the work of Delaware

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence

Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

native Bryan Stevenson, the school's namesake, who is a prolific social justice activist and attorney. Mr. Stevenson says, "You have to find ways, no matter what your field of study, to get proximate to people who are suffering, to get closer to people who are excluded, to go into the parts of the community that other people say you shouldn't go to...proximity is a pathway through which we learn the kind of things we need to know to make healthier communities."

Mr. Stevenson's theory of proximity, combined with BASSE's founders' experiences with the Rural School Leadership Academy (RSLA), gave them the understanding that schools must be co-created and co-designed with the community, not on its behalf. Based on these experiences, three major challenges became clear: a rural ecosystem often fosters gaps in innovation, lacks proximate access to social services, and limits access to opportunities for the students and families that live in them. This inspired the founding group to focus particularly on community collaborations and partnerships in developing BASSE. The path to a strong and healthy community is complex and requires deep collaboration at every point. Consequently, as the Board of Directors for BASSE was expanded and finalized, an Advisory Board was established, formal partnerships with the community began to be established, and a broad group of supporters joined the effort of creating a new and innovative community school that will lead to increase proximity and progress for our students and the Sussex County community at large.

Consequently, the governing structures of BASSE intentionally reflect the diverse demographics of Sussex County, wherein two-thirds of the traditional school districts in the County, over fifty percent of the students are students of color. Hence, the BASSE Board of Directors' membership, for example, is two-thirds people of color. Additionally, because representation from across the State of Delaware is critical to the long-term success of our school, providing valuable resources to people, funding, and networks, sixty percent of the Board is from or currently lives in Sussex County, and the other forty percent of the board lives and works in Kent or New Castle County. Each founding group member was selected based on their alignment with the school's vision and mission and the contributions they can make to the school's success as reviewed in their specific qualifications, listed in the chart above. For everyone involved in the founding and ongoing work of establishing BASSE, the focus is on ensuring that a free public school is available in Sussex County to provide countless opportunities for students to learn through a community-focused, service-learning lens coupled with academic rigor in the formal classroom. In keeping with the work of the school's namesake, students will be provided work and service experiences that will ensure students' knowledge of their community's needs and challenges, and assets, helping them to navigate and innovate across those spaces successfully. Combined with a rigorous academic curriculum, BASSE will offer students a unique chance to explore, achieve, and positively impact their school and community.

- d. Provide, as **Attachment 1 (Founding Group Résumés and Biographies)**. Include full résumés (including contact information) and professional biographies (brief narratives) for the individuals named. Label each document with the individual's affiliation with the proposed school.

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

Principal/Founding Group, School Leader, and School Leadership Team [14 Del. C. § 512(1)]

Background [14 Del. C. § 512(1)]

Explain the circumstances and motivations that brought the Founding Group together to propose this school.

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence is named in honor of Bryan Stevenson, a prolific social justice activist and lawyer from Milton, Delaware. Mr. Stevenson often talks about the notion of proximity in his work. “Proximity is a pathway through which we learn the kind of things we need to know to make healthier communities.” By “getting proximate,” or closer, to the needs of the community, one can see problems for what they are and create sustainable solutions. The founders know the path to a strong and healthy community is complex and requires deep collaboration at every point. Therefore, a small group of community members, living in or with close ties to Sussex County and Mr. Stevenson, came together to determine what proximity means for the rural Sussex County community. Through collaboration, it was determined that the rural ecosystem fosters gaps in innovation, a lack of coordinated social services, and limited access to opportunities.

The BASSE founding group wants to ensure that a free public school is available in Sussex County to provide countless opportunities for students to learn through a community-focused service-learning lens and academic rigor. Students will be provided work and service experiences that will give students the knowledge of their community needs and challenges, hopefully inspiring their innovation in those spaces. Combined with a rigorous academic curriculum, BASSE will offer students a unique chance to explore, achieve, and positively impact their school and community:

Principal/School Leader, Founding Group, and School Leadership Team [14 Del. C. §512 (1)]

1. If the Principal/School Leader candidate has been identified:
 - a. Explain why this individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission and goals. Summarize the proposed leader’s academic and organizational track-record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates the leader’s capacity to design, launch, and manage a high performing school. If the School Leader has never run a school, describe any principal leadership training programs that the proposed leader has completed or is currently participating in. (**Note!** Also provide, as **Attachment 2**, the qualifications, résumé and professional biography for this individual).
 - b. Provide specific data that demonstrates strong evidence of the school leader’s ability to effectively serve the proposed target population.

BASSE has established a partnership with Jounce, INC to identify and incubate a school leader during our planning year. This program will give our school leader hands-on experience working in Delaware charter schools, learning from other Delaware school leaders, and coaching teachers. Please review the role and job description here.

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence

Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

Kirsten Croner is the founding instructional leader for The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence. Kirsten joins BASSE bringing with her 11 years of education experience, having held various leadership positions. Kirsten completed her School Leadership certification through Wilmington University in 2013, allowing Kirsten to serve in an administrative role within any Delaware school. Kirsten is currently working with Jounce Partners to develop as a school leader, working with various schools in Delaware and Pennsylvania, training teachers and administrators to better serve their respective schools and school communities. In addition to Kirsten's current role as School Launch Partner with Jounce Partners, Kirsten also brings two years of leadership experience, having served as the Manager of Teacher Leadership Development with Teach For America Delaware from 2017-2019. In that role, Kirsten worked with novice teachers, serving in under-served communities, to become teachers who focused on student-led classrooms, using data to guide instruction, and working with families to serve the school community best. During Kirsten's years in the classroom, she served as a general educator, special educator, a case manager, and held numerous committee positions within various schools. As a teacher, Kirsten co-authored the math portion of a charter renewal application, co-wrote middle school math curriculum, revised middle school math curriculum to meet the specific needs of students classified as Special Education, and assisted in rewriting 5th-grade math curriculum.

2. If the candidate is not yet identified, summarize the Board and/or other Founding Group members' academic and organizational performance record and provide specific evidence that demonstrates the Board's ability to effectively serve the proposed target population.

Not Applicable

3. Who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis immediately after approval to lead development of the school? How will this person be compensated prior to the school receiving per-pupil funding?
 - Executive Director: This position will be fully funded through individual giving and grants.
 - Director of Development: This position will be fully funded through individual giving and grants.
 - School Launch Partner-Jounce Partnership: This position is 60% funded through Jounce Partners. BASSE is responsible for the remaining 40%, which will be funded through individual giving and grants.
 - Community Outreach Coordinator: This position is made possible through a partnership with Public Allies. This full-time 10-month employee's total cost is partially funded through Public Allies, a federally funded program. BASSE will fund the remaining portion through individual giving and grants.
4. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team (beyond the School Leader). If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions and provide, as **Attachment 3**, the qualifications, résumés, and professional biographies for these individuals. If these positions are vacant, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment and hiring.

The Director of Development will be responsible for planning, organizing, and directing all BASSE fundraising, including meeting prospective donors and supporters continually to establish

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence

Section 2 - Founding Group and School Leadership

effective communications with them; growing a major gifts program including identification, cultivation, and solicitation of major donors; overseeing grant seeking including research, proposal writing, reporting requirements, prospect research, fundraising database, and gift recognition programs; building the planned giving program with a focus on deferred gifts such as bequest expectancies; directing the annual fund program, including mailings and annual fundraising drives, and capital campaigns and other major fundraising drives; coordinating special fundraising events; and making public appearances/accept speaking engagements to share information about BASSE.

Our Director of Development, Crystal Timmons-Bryant, has worked in Nonprofit for over 15 years, building and maintaining grassroots relationships with funders, social service partners, community, faith leaders, elected officials and others throughout the state. Over the last seven years building her business consulting for nonprofits, she helped improve the quality of life for all Delawareans by focusing on improving community outcomes in education, income, and health.

The Executive Director will report to the Board of Directors and will manage and support the development of the Academic Head of School, Development Director, Community Outreach Coordinator, and other staff. They are responsible for all state and federal regulatory compliance, fiscal solvency, and managing external relations for the school, all internal affairs of the school, and are ultimately responsible for school climate, educational outcomes, staff excellence, and student success.

Our Executive Director, Dr. Julius Mullen, comes to BASSE with over two decades of education experience, executive leadership, non-profit management, and behavioral health expertise. A native of Sussex County, Julius brings a unique set of skills, knowledge, and background which align perfectly with the fundamental mission of BASSE - proximity. Dr. Mullen has embraced the concept of proximity throughout his professional and personal journey. He has earned a portfolio of credentials and experiences propelling his ability toward getting proximate or closer to solving real challenges impacting many students and families in Delaware. He has served as the chief clinical officer for Children & Families First for the last ten years, primarily overseeing an array of education services.