



# Technical Assistance Session New Charter School Applicants

Wednesday, December 8, 2021, 3:00 p.m.

## *DDOE Mission*

*To empower every learner with the highest quality education through shared leadership, innovative practices and exemplary services.*



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Welcome and Introductions

Provide your elevator pitch on how your proposed school will provide an innovative and exemplary educational option for Delaware students and, educationally disadvantaged students, in particular.



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Session Objectives
- III. Review Critical Areas of Charter School  
Development
- IV. Questions
- V. Resources



# Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

1. Understand critical refinements to enhance their draft applications.
2. Gain a better understanding of serving students with disabilities.
3. Receive answers to specific questions about the application and the review process.



# What Delaware Students and Families Need



Delaware  
Department of Education



# What Delaware Students & Families Need

***“To be effective stewards of the sector, our top priority must be to ensure that charter schools are high-performing, fiscally-responsible options accessible to all families.”***

**Missouri Charter Public School Association**



# What Delaware Students & Families Need

## Legislative Intent

Delaware's Charter Schools were created to **improve student learning**; encourage use of different and **innovative or proven school environments** and **teaching and learning methods**; provide parents and students with improved measures of school performance and greater opportunities in choosing public schools within and outside their school districts; and to provide for a well-educated community. – 14 Del. Code, § 501



# What Delaware Students & Families Need

- Most education systems are not preparing all students for the future demands of college, career, and the global economy.
- The system is particularly broken for low-income students, providing them fewer opportunities and producing weaker results.





Is your plan innovative enough?



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Innovative Educational Program

## What is the innovation?

*An **Innovative School** is a public **school** that approaches education from a new perspective. Although there are many types of **Innovative Schools**, they all share a set of common characteristics: **Bold**, **creative** and **innovative** educational ideas. ... High level of educational experimentation.*

– Washington State



# What Delaware Students & Families Need

## *Innovation*

- Does your team understand the needs of your target community?
- Is your proposed educational program truly innovative?
- What will your proposed school offer to students that the current system does not provide currently?
- Does your team have the capacity to structure a high performing organization that others can learn from?



# Needs Assessment

***Due Diligence Process-*** is there a documented need for the proposed school in the proposed location?

*A needs assessment is “a comprehensive evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of targeted student populations, with the expressed goal of determining how best to build on strengths and improve areas of weakness in order to enhance student learning.”*

*-New York Charter School Center*



# Roadmap for Charter School Development

## Planning Phase: 2 years

### 1. Exploration Process

- State laws, policy environment
- Assessing the need
- Visit charter schools
- Conduct research
- Community Engagement
- Target community

### 2. Initial Design Process (3-6 months)

- Engage with community
- Form Core Design Team
- Articulate Initial Vision
- Nonprofit and tax-exempt status
- Initial Plan: Major design areas
- Prospectus for community
- Identify possible facilities
- Identify start-up funding sources



# Roadmap for Charter School Development

Planning Phase: 2 years

## 3. Major Design Areas (6-12 months)

- Education Plan (Curriculum, Assessment, etc.)
- Organization Plan (Governing Body, Board Composition, etc.)
- Business Plan (Budget, Financial Management, etc.)

## 4. Applying for the Charter

- Draft
- Review, Review, Review



# Roadmap for High Quality Charter School Development

## 5. DOE Review Process (4 months)

- Charter School Accountability Committee Meetings
- Public Hearings

## 6. Pre-Operations/Start-up (18 Months)

- Student Recruitment  
Recruit & hire staff
- Transition Founding Board to Governing Board
- Board Governance Training
- Facility



# Critical Areas of the Application



Delaware  
Department of Education





# Serving Students with Disabilities

## Exceptional Children's Resources



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Education Plan



Delaware  
Department of Education

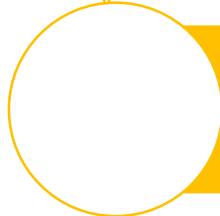


# Education Plan Students with Disabilities

**Describe how the school will ensure that all students will have equitable access to the curriculum?**



Provide a clear description of the school's special education model.



Clearly describe how the Problem Solving Team will implement MTSS to meet the needs of the whole child.

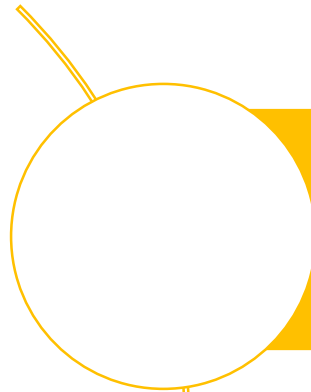


Explain how special education staff will be utilized in order to create a continuum of supports for students with disabilities.



# Education Plan Students with Disabilities

**Describe how the school will ensure that all students will have equitable access to the curriculum?**



Determine what on-going professional learning opportunities will be provided to general education and special education teachers to ensure that high quality instructional materials are used with supports for all students during tier-1 instruction.



Outline a master schedule that will allow for content planning and collaboration between the general education and special education teachers.



# Serving Students with Disabilities



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Serving Students with Disabilities

## Ways to Serve Students with Disabilities

Timely Evaluations

Deep knowledge of  
Special Education  
Policies, Procedures, and  
Procedural Safeguards

Standards Based IEPs

Universal Design for  
Learning

Implementation of MTSS

Adequate Related  
Service Professionals

Checks and Balances for  
Internal Compliance of  
Special Education  
Policies and Timelines

Specially Designed  
Instruction



# Serving Students with Disabilities

## Parent Engagement

### Parent Information Center of Delaware

- Resource for Parents
- Parent Mentor Program

### Parent Councils

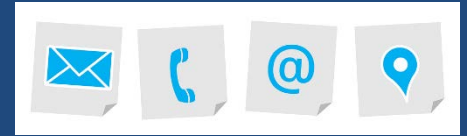
- Advocates for Students with Disabilities
- Collaboration with School Representatives

### Parent Involvement in the IEP/MTSS Process

- Ongoing Parent Input
- Two-Way Communication



# DDOE Contacts



Mary Ann Mieczkowski  
Director, Exceptional Children Resources  
[Maryann.Mieczkowski@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Maryann.Mieczkowski@doe.k12.de.us)  
302.735.4210

Joyce Leatherbury  
Educational Associate, Exceptional Children Resources  
[Joyce.L Leatherbury@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Joyce.L Leatherbury@doe.k12.de.us)





# Governance Plan

## What is the innovation?

- Principles of board effectiveness (board training)
- Board recruitment (expertise and diversity)
- Beacons of uncompromising **Integrity**
- Policy making and oversight (e.g. bylaws)



# Staffing Plan

## What is the innovation?

- Leadership
- Staff recruitment and selection
- Teacher certification and qualifications
- Professional Development
- Staff evaluations



# Raising Student Achievement

## What is the innovation?

- Improved Performance Measures
- Do you understand the State Assessment and Accountability system?
- What best practices have worked elsewhere? (research)



# Student Recruitment

## What is the innovation?

- Marketing/Advertising – what will attract families to your school?
- Understand the needs of your target population



# School Culture & Climate

## What is the innovation?

- A positive, focused school culture will shape your charter school and provide a foundation upon which learning can occur.
- Parents want safety first.
- Schools are sometimes located in unhealthy communities



# Operations and Systems

## What is the innovation?

- Facilities
- Transportation
- Food Service
- Security



# Budget and Finance

## What is the innovation?

- Unit Count System
- Delaware systems (e.g. First State Financials, Pension system, etc.)
- Start-up funding



# Community Engagement

## What is the innovation?

- The needs of today's students are beyond the capacities of many schools (opioid crisis, poverty, trauma)
- Build and demonstrate community support (social media presence)





# Charter School Review Process

## The review process is designed to assess:

- Need / Demand – knowledge of target community
- Capacity
- Readiness
- Benefits to students, families, and community



# Accountability Committee





# Questions



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Resources

- [\*\*NCSRC New School Development Toolkit\*\*](#)
- [\*\*MCPSA New School Development Guide\*\*](#)
- Highly Effective Charter School Leaders
- Delaware Charter Schools Network
- Community Partners (Library, Health, Colleges, DHSS, DPH, etc.)
- Charter School Office



# Questions



Delaware  
Department of Education



# Contact Information

**Charter School Office  
Delaware Department of Education**

**John Carwell, Jr. (General questions)**  
[john.carwell@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:john.carwell@doe.k12.de.us)  
**302-735-4020**

**Brook Hughes (Budget & Finance questions)**  
[brook.hughes@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:brook.hughes@doe.k12.de.us)  
**302-735-4020**

**Joyce Leatherbury (Exceptional Children Resources)**  
[Joyce.Leatherbury@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Joyce.Leatherbury@doe.k12.de.us)  
**302-735-4210**

**Laura Horsey (School Facilities, Capital Project Management)**  
[Laura.Horsey@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Laura.Horsey@doe.k12.de.us)  
**302-857-3364**