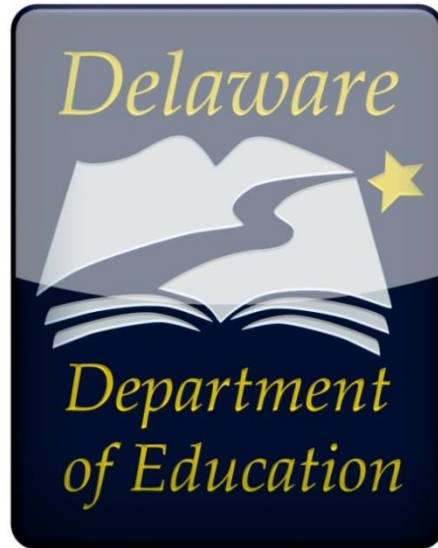


CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Academia Antonia Alonso

**MAJOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION
FINAL REPORT**

CSAC Final Meeting: March 21, 2016
CSAC Initial Report Published: March 24, 2016

On January 29, 2016, Academia Antonia Alonso submitted an application for a major modification of its charter.

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on March 21, 2016:

Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee

- David Blowman, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Associate Secretary, Financial Management and Operations, DDOE
- Karen Field Rogers, Deputy Secretary, DDOE
- Chuck Taylor, Head of School, Providence Creek Academy
- Deborah Wilson, Community Representative

Non-voting Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee

- Donna Johnson, Executive Director, State Board of Education

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- Jennifer Nagourney, Executive Director, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Financial Reform and Resource Management, DDOE

Representatives of Academia Antonia Alonso

- Brian Fahey, Board Treasurer
- Mark Phelps, Head of School
- Riccardo Stoeckicht, Chief Operating Officer, Innovative Schools

Discussion

The following was discussed:

- A summary of the request – The school has applied to change the location of Academia Antonia Alonso (La Academia) Charter School from the Community Education Building (CEB), located at 1200 N. French Street, in Wilmington, Delaware to Barley Mill Plaza (Building 26) located at 4326 Lancaster Pike, also in Wilmington, Delaware. Academia would occupy one of the 60,000 SF buildings that is on the campus currently owned by Odyssey Charter School, and available for lease.
- At the February 23, 2016 CSAC Initial Meeting, the CSAC identified the following areas of concern that required a response from the school:
 - 80% budget
 - Anticipated changes in transportation costs.
- On March 7, the school submitted a Response to the CSAC Initial Report that addressed both issues.
- Transportation costs (line 31) – The CSAC noted that transportation costs decrease from \$279K (this year) to \$254K in 2016-17 and increase to \$354K in 2017-18. The school stated that the decrease in 2016-17 is based on slightly lower rates provided by the bus company. The school also noted that projected enrollment increases are driving the increased costs in 2017-18. Currently, the school uses four buses but that will increase to eight buses in 2017-18. The school noted that 100% of students are currently transportation eligible. Additionally, the school is exploring bus sharing options with Odyssey Charter School.
- Supplies and materials costs – The CSAC noted that on the 80% budget, supplies and materials costs decrease from \$62K (2015-16) to \$20K (2016-17) and increase to \$29K (2018-19). The CSAC also note that the decrease did not correlate to the school’s projected enrollment increase. The school explained that an additional \$20K is budgeted under “Other Funds: Donations” (line 3) so the total budget for supplies and materials is \$40K for 2016-17.
- Therapy services costs (line 41) – The CSAC noted that costs for therapy services vary from \$50-\$85K and requested confirmation that this projection is based on current costs. The school noted that speech therapy services are typically needed for grades K -2. The school also noted that the percentages of special education students is not particularly high currently but that could change as the school grows and this was factored into the projections. Additionally, the budget allocation is intended to complement the special education team and counselors employed at the school as the staff builds up to full enrollment.
- Enrollment – The school noted that to date, it has received a total of 136 applications and 58 have been accepted. Total enrollment for 2016-17 is currently at 343 (above the 80% threshold). The school also noted that processes have been put in place to address last year’s challenges with first year charter agreements that were signed but registration was not completed. The school stated that it has held open houses at the prospective new

location and 61 families have visited to date. The school also noted that recruitment efforts have continued, including partnering with organizations that can help provide a pipeline of prospective families.

- Parent feedback on new location – The school noted that parent feedback has been very positive. Only two families indicated they would not follow the school to the new location and 11-12 families are undecided. The school also noted that one parent at a recent PTA meeting expressed concern about the new location because lives close to the school's current location and does not have transportation to get to the new location. However, the parent fully supported the move after getting more information. The school also noted that it was pleased by the parent turnout and support at the public hearing.

Conclusion

Mr. Blowman asked if there were any additional questions about any section of the application. None were noted.

A motion was made and seconded that the Major Modification Application be recommended for approval. All four voting CSAC members voted "yes" in favor of a recommendation for approval.

Next Steps:

- A Final CSAC Report will be issued no later than March 24, 2016.
- A second and final public hearing will take place on April 4, 2016, in the 2nd Floor Auditorium of the Carvel State Office Building, which is located at 820 N. French Street, in Wilmington, Delaware, beginning at 5:00 p.m.
- The public comment period and public record will close on April 15, 2016.
- The Secretary of Education will announce his decision at the regular meeting of the State Board of Education on April 21, 2016.