



Delaware Design-Lab High School

**Minor Modification Application
16 February 2016**

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN APPROVED CHARTER 2015-16

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Section A Core Questions:

1. What modification does the school's Board of Directors want to make to the term(s) of the charter? Identify the page number(s) on which the term(s) is/are stated in the currently approved charter. If the term(s) of the charter the school wants to modify is/are conditions placed on the charter by the Secretary of Education and members of the State Board of Education, state the condition(s) and the date(s) on which the condition(s) was/were placed on the school's charter.

The Board of Directors of Delaware Design-Lab High School requests to add a six-classroom, education coded modular building unit to the existing school facilities in order to accommodate additional student enrollment for school year 2016-2017. At the suggestion of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC), we request that the minor modification to add modular units be considered along with the major modification for enrollment. (See APPENDIX A "Modular Unit Floor Plan")

2. What is the effective date of the proposed modification?

The effective date of the proposed modification is upon approval by the Delaware Department of Education after the CSAC review process, in approximately March 2016.

In light of the timelines of the permitting and approval processes with the New Castle County municipality, the Board has taken a proactive approach and has composed a facilities team to move the process forward. Design-Lab Board member, Steve Forbes, a professional engineer with experience in industrial and commercial construction, is lending his expertise as project lead.

The modular units would be leased from Vanguard Modular Building Systems. Delaware Design-Lab High School and Vanguard Modular Building Systems are currently and actively working toward entering into an operating lease agreement. We anticipate that the lease for the modular units will be in sync with the March 2016 State Board of Education meeting. (See APPENDIX B "Letter & Brochure")

3. The authorizer will review your most recent Performance Review Reports as part of your application. Discuss the school's academic performance, compliance with the terms of its charter, and financial viability as measured by the Performance Framework.

Not Applicable

4. Describe the rationale for the request(s). Discuss any relevant research base or evidence that supports this type of request. (*Attachments may be provided*)

The current school building at 179 Stanton Christiana Road can accommodate 300 students and school offices. Adding more students in the 2016-2017 school year requires additional classrooms. Design-Lab High School's enrollment strategies are very successful. We believe it will be more than attainable to retain most of our current students and to fill any vacancies with new student applicants, thereby enrolling at least 80% to 100% of the approved enrollment.

School Choice applications for SY 2016-2017 as of 16 February 2016 –

Total applications – 157

Grade 9 – 119

Grade 10 – 21

Grade 11 – 17

18 of the 157 applicants have applied to other schools as well. With current enrollment applications that show a demand in grades 9, 10, and 11, the need to add classroom space to accommodate new enrollment for 2016-2017 is certain.

5. Describe how the proposed modification will impact the operation of the school. Include how student achievement, staffing, facilities, and financial viability of the school may be impacted in the current school year and for the remainder of the school's charter term.

The proposed modification will positively impact the operation of the school because the modular units provide additional space, at a reasonable cost, they are good quality, and are available for lease in time for additional student enrollment.

Additional Space –

The modular building unit has a footprint of 84 X 60' (5,040 sq. ft.) with 4,920 sq. ft. of classroom space. Design-Lab High School would intend to educate between 132-150 students in the units. Adding six modular classrooms will accommodate up to 150 students with class sizes of 25. The financial models would allow for this plan to be viable with a total of 132 students with class sizes of 22.

Reasonable Cost –

The school benefits from a unique and fortuitous situation in which the modular unit costs are relatively inexpensive because they were custom built for a

Delaware charter school in Wilmington and are no longer needed because the school moved to another location. And relocating the units from Wilmington to Newark is far less expensive than moving them from the other closest location (of equivalent in-fleet stock) which is North Carolina.

Quality –

The quality of the instructional and non-instructional spaces of the modular units is high. The units are two years old, which makes them virtually new in comparison to the typical in-fleet modular unit vintage of 10-12 years. They are ADA compliant and have sprinkler and security systems. We toured the modular units to confirm their quality.

Timing –

The units are available now and that matches our timing needs. Vanguard Modular Building Systems is willing to disassemble and move the units. The school's landlord is willing to allow the units to be stored and staged on the Design-Lab Newark campus, giving the school time to work with the civil engineer and facilities team to complete their installation.

Feasibility & Safety –

Based on a preliminary site survey recently conducted by Vanguard engineers, the units could easily be sited on Design-Lab's Newark campus at 179 Stanton Christiana Road. Design-Lab students, faculty and staff would travel across a secure field to have classes in the modular units. Students and visitors in wheelchairs would be able to access the modular units because ADA coded ramps come with the buildings.

6. Indicate the projected impact, if any, of the proposed modification on the school's present financial position, and its financial position going forward. If the modification promises to create financial challenges, indicate how those will be remedied.

The budgets submitted with the major modification for enrollment, under current review by the CSAC, assume a full contingent of modular building units from school years 2016-2017 through 2019-2020. The financial models are agnostic in both 80% and 100 % student enrollment scenarios.

There are no financial challenges that would be created by the addition of modular classroom units. Budget "Line 37 – Rent" in both the 80% and 90% enrollment scenarios are increased to account for the addition of modular units needed each year that enrollment increases. The request for modular classroom units permanently solves space needs for the amount of time stated in the school's lease agreement with the landlord.