

GREAT OAKS CHARTER SCHOOL

Minor Modification

Application to Modify Enrollment

2019-20

Submitted via email on December 31, 2019 to:

DE Department of Education
Charter School Office
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Dover, DE 19901
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CHARTER SCHOOL MODIFICATION APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please indicate the type(s) of modification(s) you are requesting by checking all applicable boxes below:

Table 2

Minor Modification (Section A Only)		Major Modification (Section A <u>AND</u> additional questions identified below)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change (increase or decrease) between 5 and 15%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Agreement Section A only
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change agreement with EMO/CMO	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change (increase or decrease) of greater than 15% Section B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start date (one-time) delay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade configuration (adding grade levels or reducing grade levels) Section C
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of charter school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Program (i.e. curriculum) Section D
<input type="checkbox"/>	Existing or planned school facilities or structures (including any plan to use temporary or modular structures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission (includes At-Risk designation) Section E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in terms to current site facility arrangement (i.e. lease to purchase)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Replace, remove, or add EMO/CMO, or transfer of authorizer Section F
<input type="checkbox"/>	Educator Evaluation Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment preferences Section G
<input type="checkbox"/>	A change to the current authorized number of hours, either daily or annually, devoted to actual school sessions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Location change Section H
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Goals for student performance Section I

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 Great Oaks Charter School Board seeks approval to decrease authorized enrollment by 14.9%. The current authorized enrollment is set forth on Page 80 of the Charter Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 and approved by the DOE on December 20, 2018.

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

The proposed enrollment will be effective for the 2020-2021 school year.

- 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.**

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

For a full discussion, please refer to the recently submitted 2018-2019 Annual Report. Although we are not yet where we wish to be with our student academic performance, we continue to adapt practices and innovate new ways of ensuring that students receive the supports they need. Further, we are continuing to see growth with some students, particularly those who are with Great Oaks from 6th grade.

Major Challenges:

A significant challenge facing us is the large number of students who arrive at Great Oaks significantly behind grade level and with significant needs. Approximately 80% of our students enter below grade level, with 40% coming in multiple grade levels behind. In addition, we serve a diverse population of students including a significant percentage of students with IEPs, students with Section 504 Plans, English Language Learners, immigrant, migrant and refugee students, students identified as gifted, students at risk of dropping out, and homeless students.

Despite this, we are making some gains by providing each student with personalized and differentiated instruction. Our model includes a Corps of Fellows which has proven to be an effective mechanism to differentiate instruction for many students. However, we are discovering that students with the highest levels of need require additional supports. We have begun offering a variety of additional supports to (including Learning Support Fellows and Literacy Support) to foster growth for those students.

Another, and related challenge, is the high number of students impacted by trauma personally or by living in communities rife with crime and poverty.

Finally, many of our students struggle on the SBAC with computer literacy skills. The computerized NWEA MAP and Mastery Connect assessments are working to build computer literacy skills.

Major Accomplishments:

This year students experienced significant gains in Math Proficiency, especially in 6th grade. Only 9% of our incoming 6th Grade students came in proficient in math. At the end of the year 20% of this cohort of students reached proficiency. In 5 out of 6 areas math, we saw significant scale score growth. We similarly saw an increase in the number of 8th grade proficiency in ELA.

Ninth grade students demonstrated significant growth in their MAP scores from Fall to Spring, with the majority of the students growing over one grade level within the year.

Plan Moving Forward

Not complacent with where we are, our goal is to ensure that our student proficiency rates meet the state average in all categories within 5 years of our charter renewal. We acknowledge this is an ambitious goal given the challenges that many of our students face. However, we have high expectations for ourselves and our students to learn from our successes and remain committed to our goals.

GOWIL expects to outperform the district in which we reside and demonstrate steady growth toward closing the gap between GOWIL students and the state. GOWIL will increase academic supports and outcomes by doing the following:

1. Focusing teacher coaching on core themes with an intent focus on increasing the Depth of Knowledge level of student tasks.
2. Effective use of formative data and MAP feedback to inform instructional decisions and for grouping students in tutorial
 - a. Weekly data meetings will be conducted across content teams and grade-levels
 - b. Well-structured data reviews after MAP administration cycles; Setting goals around student growth & monitoring student progress
 - c. Develop a streamlined and aligned system for using assessment data to inform instruction for diverse learners.
3. Utilize the tutor model to effectively target instruction for students at risk of not meeting grade level standards;
 - a. Ensure that tutors are building off the work done in the classroom and are assets when in the classroom

- b. Consistent collaboration between tutors and teachers with clear expectations for roles and responsibilities.
 - c. Content is connected to what's happening in class but personalized and differentiated with task cards for each student.
4. Instructional and Curriculum Shifts
 - a. Deepen teachers' internalization of the Eureka curriculum and ability to identify areas of focus based on highest leverage standards and needs of students
 - b. Supplementing EngageNY curriculum to better address student needs
 - c. Fostering writing across content
 - d. Transitioning to Illustrative Math
 - e. Aligning KHAN Academy with NWEA and Mastery Connect results
 5. Strengthening and Expanding Co-Teaching Program
 6. Increasing SPED supports in the high school
 7. Increasing SEL supports, including additional counseling services, integrating trauma-informed and restorative practices throughout

ORGANIZATIONAL AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The school met standard on the Financial Performance Framework. The school will work with an expert accountant to ensure proper internal controls and financial reporting processes are in place in response to the FY19 audit.

The school has already implemented board level processes that outline clear roles and responsibilities regarding governance, oversight and reporting to address governance and reporting deficiencies. We will work with the Delaware Charter School Network to provide additional board governance training over the next 3 months.

The school will engage additional support and will work with the Department to rectify deficiencies in staff certification and hiring requirements.

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*)

Great Oaks Charter School is part of the Community Education Building. We currently occupy two floors in the building with the original intention of occupying three floors. Each floor is designed to accommodate 250 - 300 students. Our current authorized enrollment for next year of 600 students will not comfortably fit on 2 floors, particularly given the tutor model. While we have an option to place some students on a third floor (as would be necessary by our current authorized enrollment) doing so would complicate scheduling, student supports, and instruction delivery. It would also interfere with a cohesive school climate and work against maintaining a positive school culture. Overcoming these complications would require us to divert valuable human capital and financial resources

away from instruction and student supports.

The modified enrollment presented here will fit on two floors in the 2020-2021 school year. We fully expect to be back in front of the DOE with a major modification next year to present a long-range vision and plan regarding the size of Great Oaks that will allow us to best serve our students and families. Unfortunately, due to recent leadership changes it was not possible to conclude our inquiry and pull together a major modification to meet the December 31, 2019 deadline. The Board has already begun a deep inquiry to determine the most effective enrollment configuration for Great Oaks.

- 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.**

At the center of this application sits our desire to ensure that all students leave Great Oaks prepared for success in college or a career of their choosing. The decrease in enrollment will allow us to better leverage the supports provided to students. It will allow us to remain on two floors rather than expand partially to a third floor which would place additional administrative and instructional burdens on our staff. The decrease in enrollment is the solution best suited to ensuring Great Oaks' long-term financial viability.

- 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.**

As noted above, this application is just the first step in a review of the right enrollment configuration for Great Oaks. In the short-term, this modification will save us the need to lease additional space and save potential human capital resources that would likely be needed to ensure smooth transitions, effective delivery of instruction, and instructional time.

APPENDIX A

Modified Projected Enrollment

Note: This will become the school's authorized enrollment if the modification application is approved.

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Grade 6	69	92	92	92	92
Grade 7	114	89	92	92	92
Grade 8	121	98	87	89	89
Grade 9	71	80	82	80	79
Grade 10	90	69	78	82	78
Grade 11		85	68	77	76
Grade 12			80	67	73
Total	465	513	579	579	579