

infocso

From: Carol Shekhar <infocso@doe.k12.de.us>
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2016 7:01 PM
To: infocso
Subject: First State Montessori Academy Major Modification Application Public Comment

Charter School: First State Montessori Academy

Name: Carol Shekhar

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Public Comment: First State Montessori Academy is a great example of the potential of a charter school. The faculty and staff at FSMA provide an exceptional education to a diverse array of students.

My 3rd grader has been in Montessori since the age of 3. I'm confident that he would struggle in a traditional learning environment and Montessori is the perfect fit for him. Had we not had access to two public Montessori schools in Wilmington, we would be between a rock and a hard place.

I worry about the transition to middle school. For kids like mine, a Montessori middle school would be a Godsend. All children should have the opportunity to learn in an environment that meets their needs, and not all children learn well in the traditional model of education.

FSMA's opening was flawlessly executed last year, and I'm confident their expansion to include 7th and 8th grade would be equally impressive.

My family strongly supports expanding FSMA to include middle school.



A PHI Company

Gary R. Stockbridge
President

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January 29, 2016

To the State Board of Education:

As a business leader in Delaware, I found myself searching for the best way to help the young men and women of Delaware, currently in our Delaware schools, prepare themselves for a career at our company, Delmarva Power.

Fast forward to today and how this quest has made me involved in the Delaware Education landscape and brought me to my leadership role with the Vision Coalition and Student Success 2025. A program and plan that strives to elevate our schools to world-class status through the entire spectrum of the learning experience with the goal of making Delaware a better place to live and raise a family. It's about building good citizens and young people who feel confident and excited about the world that awaits them.

This involvement brought me to the role of being the session leader for the Personalized Learning Action Group at the 8th Annual Conference on Education, where I became aware of First State Montessori Academy, the first public Montessori charter school in Delaware. I learned of their commitment to personalized learning, pedagogy first, based on the proven age old principles of Maria Montessori and their commitment to sharing this with students, educators and families of Delaware. Their passion led me to visit them.

What I experienced was enlightened, energetic happy classrooms where each child has their own individual work plan tailoring instruction to their needs, essentially meeting the child where they are. The results I saw were young children, K-6th Grade, that were responsible, empowered, and being recognized for their unique strengths, talents and interests. I saw individuals already able to make choices and prioritize, helping one another and satisfying their own curiosities while learning and caring for one another. I experienced learning that encompassed the whole child...children who knew their facts, as well as how to recognize another classmate's accomplishments; children being innovative, while being guided with 100+ year old learning principles. I saw my future work force.

Based on this experience, it is with much enthusiasm, that I would like to offer my support of FSMA being able to expand their reach to more students by increasing their enrollment and also, adding grades 7-8, to allow more life-long learners and community contributors to develop at their school, while experiencing the power of personalized learning.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Stockbridge", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Gary Stockbridge
President