

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN APPROVED CHARTER

Minor Modification for Sussex Academy
December 2018

Eric Anderson, Executive Director, eric.anderson@saas.k12.de.us

Jennifer S. Scott, Board President, Jennifer.scott@saas.k12.de.us

DE Department of Education
Charter School Office
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901
Phone: (302) 735-4020
Fax: (302) 739-4483

Modification Requested..... 3
 Section A Core Questions: 4
Appendix A- Annual Report attachment 6
Appendix B- FY18 Audited Financial Statements attachment..... 6

Modification Requested

Minor Modification (Section A Only)	
	Enrollment change (increase or decrease) between 5 and 15%
	Change agreement with EMO/CMO
	Start date (one-time) delay
	Name of charter school
	Existing or planned school facilities or structures (including any plan to use temporary or modular structures)
	Change in terms to current site facility arrangement (i.e. lease to purchase)
	Educator Evaluation Process
	A change to the current authorized number of hours, either daily or annually, devoted to actual school sessions.
	Other

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.

With this submission, the Executive Board (the Board) of Sussex Academy, seeks to modify the following provision of the most recently approved charter renewal application:

In section I, on page 4, the approved enrollment for SY17/18 and beyond is 776 students. Sussex Academy is requesting that the approved enrollment for SY19/20 be increased to 820 students and for SY20/21 and beyond be increase to 840 students.

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

The Board requests the Modification to become effective February 1, 2019 as the school will be enrolling students for the 2019-20 school year beginning on that date in preparation for the May 1 Unit Count.

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.

Sussex Academy continues to be one of the top performing schools academically in the State of Delaware and achieved a score of 87% for Academic Achievement, 66% for Academic Progress, 96% on Student Success, 92% for Graduation Rate, and an overall score of 81% for Academic Performance on the most recent Organizational Performance Framework. Please see the school's 2018 annual report (Appendix A; pages 6 to 14).

Sussex Academy received an overall rating of met the standard on the Organizational Performance Framework included in the 2017-18 Annual Report as well as on all of the related measures (Appendix A, pages 14 to 20).

Sussex Academy received an overall rating of met the standard on the Financial Performance Framework included in the 2017-18 Annual Report as well as on all of the related measures (Appendix A, pages 21 to 22). Sussex Academy continues to be financially viable and experience annual budget surpluses thus increasing the overall unrestricted reserves available to the organization. Please see the FY18 Audited Financial Statements (Appendix B).

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)*

Sussex Academy opened in September 2000 as a middle school serving 225 students in grades 6 through 8 at our original Georgetown location on Sussex Pines Road. Soon thereafter, a modification was approved to increase the student population to 325 students. Sussex Academy modified its charter again in December 2011 to add high school grades beginning with grade 9 in SY13-14 with the intent of increasing the student population from 325 in grades 6 to 8 to 730 by SY17. In FY13, the Sussex Academy charter renewal increased the total enrollment to 776 by SY18. That same year, the Sussex Academy Foundation arranged for a building swap with Delmarva Christian High School (DCHS) to accommodate the anticipated student population growth. At that time, the Sussex Academy Executive Board believed that the new facility, after the final phases of interior construction that DCHS was unable to complete, could easily accommodate 7 grade levels, 6 through 12. Within 2 years of occupancy, however, it became obvious that additional classrooms would be needed for the middle school grades because the increase in the number of high school students, their newly adopted block schedule model and additional curricular programming required more classrooms and instructional spaces. During school year 2016, a new middle school wing consisting of 12 classrooms, 3 science labs, offices, restrooms, a multipurpose room, and RTI pull-out spaces was added onto the existing building. As such, the school is now in a position to accommodate more students and, since the interest certainly exists within our community considering the number of students on our waiting lists, Sussex Academy requests that the approved enrollment for SY19/20 be increased to 820 students and to 840 students in SY20/21 and beyond.

Not only do we have the physical capacity to accommodate more students but doing so would also result in additional units to support an enhanced school experience for students by putting us in a position to offer more curricular choices and pathway options for our students.

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.

This modification will positively impact the operations of the school in the following ways:

- Provide additional units to enable Sussex Academy to expand the educational and programmatic opportunities and experiences for students, particularly in the high school grades, thus enhancing student achievement.
- Provide for additional planning and preparation time for teachers in all grades through hiring additional staff supported by the additional units.
- Ensure that Sussex Academy continues to experience financial stability and annual budget surpluses to build our unrestricted reserve funds.

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.

There is no anticipated significant impact projected on the school's present financial position. This modification request is related to expanding the educational opportunities for our students by earning additional units to hire additional staff to enhance the curricular options that we would like to make available at Sussex Academy. Sussex Academy is and has been a

financially secure charter school with annual budget surpluses for the majority of the years since operations began in 2000. The year when reserves were needed to balance the annual budget was marked by unusual, non-recurring events like moving to our new, larger location and, as a result, making significant technology, maintenance equipment, and furniture purchases needed to prepare the school for students.

Appendix A- Annual Report attachment

Appendix B- FY18 Audited Financial Statements attachment