

School Culture [14 Del. C. § 512(6)-(7) and 14 Del. C. §4112D]**1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school and how this culture or ethos...**

LTA physical environment will be welcoming and conducive to learning. LTA's school culture will support wellness and achievement... and an affective environment that promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem. The building and its arrangement will reflect the needs of our students and their educational accomplishments. The School Leader, teachers, students, and parents will participate in decision making. Our culture will illustrate that all our students can learn. Our parents will want their children to succeed and our parents will be partners in their student's education. The development of the school culture will extend to the teachers and other adults in the building, who will model trust, respect, and responsibility in their interactions with each other. The positive school culture will be built using an advisory system which creates a "home base" for all students each year where students develop build confidence in themselves and in their peers. Our advisories will: (1) Build a solid school culture; (2) Develop interpersonal relations between students and staff; (3) Provide academic and personal support to students; (4) Enrich the curriculum; (5) Monitor the electronic student portfolio -- Student Success Plan (SSP); (6) Provide college and career readiness preparation, et.al. All of which are key components; which focuses on building a better community – Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child. Our advisories will give students a venue to discuss academic or behavior problems that they may be having. The advisor advocates on the student's behalf when appropriate; provides current events, particular issues in the school, or more controversial subjects like drugs or contraceptives.

1. Explain the systems, practices, and traditions that the School Leader and staff...

LTA's culture naturally will have an emphasis on academics; whereas all types of intelligence and competence will be respected and supported. Teaching methods will respect the different ways children learn, expectations will be high for all students, all students will be encouraged to succeed, and progress will be monitored regularly. Results of assessments are promptly communicated to students and parents and will be used to evaluate and redesign teaching procedures and content. Achievements and performance are regularly rewarded and praised. LTA's teachers will be confident and knowledgeable.

Finally, LTA will build a culture of wellness for students and staff members, parents and the community. Various programs and activities during the school day, after school, evenings, weekends and during the summer months will be implemented within the school and in the Parent Education Center (year three of the school's operation) to help make our children healthier. The president, Mrs. Pipkin-Perry, states that "It will not be just thing, it is all the holistic pieces that come together to make a child healthier: nutrition, activity and more...It is about being more strategic and thoughtful about our approach." One of LTA's major wellness goals is to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic.

2. Describe the key elements of the school's bullying prevention and anti-hazing....

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/delaware.html>

Pursuant to Chapter 41 Title 14 of the Delaware Code, Section 4112D each school is required to establish a site-based committee that is responsible for coordinating the school's bully prevention program including the design, approval and monitoring of the program. LTA will be in compliance by ensuring that a majority of the members of the site-based committee are members of the instructional staff, support staff, student body, parents and all staff who work at LTA and who are a part of the LTA family.

LTA is committed to fostering a sense of community. LTA believes that every student has the right to attend school without being physically, socially and/or emotionally harmed by others. Teachers will be trained during in-service of LTA's bullying policy and procedures. Our policy is addressed in our Code of Student Conduct and Student/Parents Rights and Responsibilities Manual. The bullying and anti-hazing policies will be articulated to all students during student/parent orientation in July and also the first days of school in homeroom advisories. There will be valuable resources available on our website for staff, parents, and students. These resources include forms to report bullying incidents. Bullying reporting forms will also be available in each office of the school for easy access of reporting. LTA proposes to initiate a Bullying Prevention Group where students can bring awareness to the school community. It will continue to build a positive school culture all year round by celebrating national anti-bullying month in October. Other student activities will include: students signing the anti-bullying pledge during lunch, erecting anti-bullying posters throughout the school building year round, designing and wearing anti-bullying T-shirts (students and staff) on specific dates, creating and presenting skits and inviting national promotional guest speakers to assembly programs.

Preventing bullying will be identified as a priority at LTA and will require everyone's cooperation. The School Leader, teachers, parents and other adults will shape the school climate. They will be responsible to serve as role models in creating a respectful, safe environment for students. Successful bullying prevention programs have the following components addressing all members of the school community – students, teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and other community partners:

- School Leader/Assistant Principal will provide vital leadership and administer bullying prevention programs. LTA's leaders will be required to read: No Place for Bullying Leadership for Schools that Care for Every Student by James Dillon. The author has been an educator for over 35 years, including being a school administrator. He developed and published the Peaceful School Bus Program which is being implemented in schools across the country.
Teachers and School Staff will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and enforcement of bullying prevention policies.
- Students at LTA will have a significant role in preventing bullying, and through training and awareness activities throughout the school year, they will develop the confidence to safely intervene, stop bullying, and report bullying.
- Parents at LTA will be important participants in ensuring that bullying prevention goes beyond the school grounds.
- Board of Directors must demonstrate that bullying prevention is a broad-wide priority.

One key strategy will be the use of Restorative Justice Practices as teaching and learning tools to support the school's culture of trust, respect, and responsibility. LTA Student Assistance Team members will participate in the "No Bullying Delaware Conference" at Delaware State University and the "How to Make Your School Bully-Free sponsored by Delaware Bullying Prevention Association and DDOE. LTA will implement the Students Taking a Responsible Stance or S.T.A.R.S. Program. S.T.A.R.S. is a program used and collaborated by school president Mrs. Pipkin-Perry while a school counselor in the Brandywine School District. Some components of the STARS are based on the *Bullying at School*, Dan Olweus (1993); *Bully-Proofing Your School*, Carla Garrity, et.al (1994). Mrs. Pipkin-Perry sat on the Brandywine Schools district wide bullying committee and spearheaded the high schools policies and procedures for the district in 2012. Our goal at LTA will be to raise awareness of the severity of bullying as well as to identify what bullying is while learning effective strategies so stop bullying. Additional training of designated staff will take place at the state level to develop plans to be implemented; which will empower our students to take a stand against bullying. In addition, administrators will utilize the DDOE School Climate and Discipline program manager and Department of Justice (DOJ) State Ombudsperson on bullying (800-220-5414) for technical assistance in regard to the Mandatory School Crime Reporting Law.

4.Explain how the school culture will serve and support students with special needs,...

Family involvement and partnerships will be the key to success of our students and the culture of our school. Resources and support for parents, guardians, and families of children with disabilities will be a priority at LTA. LTA will adopt a school wide approach to supporting all students; which is based on the premise that comprehensive reform and systemic strategies rather than separate, add-on services are most effective in raising academic achievement for the lowest achieving student in a school. LTA's school wide program will touch all aspects of the school's operation and will offer an appropriate option for our special education, ELL, homeless and migrant student through the coordination and integration of federal, state and local services and programs; as it seeks to improve achievement for all students, particularly the lowest achieving.

Following its first year of operation, LTA will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that identifies the school's strengths and challenges in key areas that affect student achievement. [Section 1114(b)(1)(A) of Title I of ESEA]. The school will develop a comprehensive school wide plan that describes how it will achieve the goals it has identified as a result of its needs assessment [Section 1114(b)(1)(B-J) and (34 CFR 200.27) of Title I of ESEA]. LTA's school wide plan will:

- Identify reform strategies, aligned with the needs assessment, that are research-based and provide opportunities for all children to meet the State's proficient or advanced levels of academic achievement;
- Provide instruction by highly qualified teachers;
- Offer high-quality, ongoing professional development;
- Create strategies to attract highly qualified teachers;
- Create strategies to increase parental involvement;

- Develop plans to assist preschool students through the transition from early childhood programs to local elementary school programs;
- Identify measures to include teachers in decisions regarding the use of academic assessments;
- Conduct activities to ensure that students who experience difficulty attaining proficiency receive effective, timely, additional assistance; and

To assure that students with disabilities receive the programs and services they need, positive results are achieved, and procedural safeguards will be provided at LTA through its Quality Assurance Program (QAP). Our QAP will verify that students with disabilities receive the programs and services they need, positive results are achieved, and procedural safeguards (DOC) will be provided each parent. Our program will be modeled after California Department of Education.

Responsibility, excellence, self-control, perseverance, integrity, respect, service, health, fitness and nutrition is “The LEAN Way.” LTA is founded on the principles and philosophy that cultivating the mind, strengthening the body and nurturing the spirit of each child makes a great school. High expectations will be the norm for all of LTA’s students. Student achievement will be closely monitored through the advisories program, review of student records, IEP and 504 implementation plans, and parent input meetings. The use of PBL will promote teamwork and the inclusion of all teammates in the developments and completion of the project. Advisories will engage all students in character education that includes promoting sensitivity and diversity; as well as the “Character Counts” program. Extended day programs such as: SAT training, arts programs, athletic programs, Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware, Black Achievers, Career and Technical Education Leadership Training, Peer Mentoring, Connecting Generations, academic programs and at risk programs, wellness and fitness programs, parent breakfast, and dinner programs and workshops will be constructed to continually keep students culturally involved