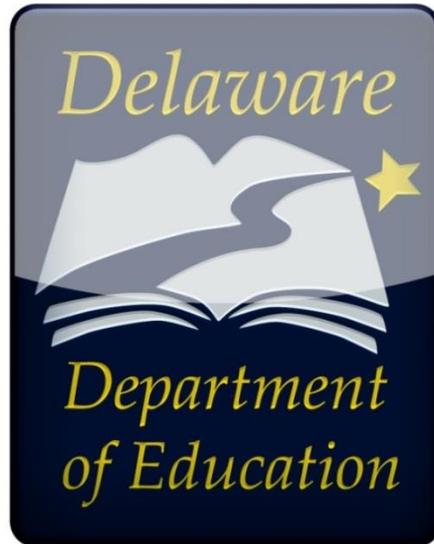


# CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## Odyssey Charter School

### MINOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION FINAL REPORT

CSAC Initial Meeting: February 23, 2016  
CSAC Initial Report Published: February 25, 2016

On December 29, 2015, Odyssey Charter School submitted an application for a minor modification of its charter. The Secretary referred the application to the Charter School Accountability Committee for review.

The following were in attendance at the Final Meeting of the CSAC on February 23, 2016:

**Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee**

- David Blowman, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Associate Secretary, Financial Management and Operations, DDOE
- Karen Field Rogers, Deputy Secretary, DDOE
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM, DDOE
- Barbara Mazza, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources, DDOE
- Chuck Taylor, Head of School, Providence Creek Academy
- Deborah Wilson, Community Representative

**Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)**

- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- Jennifer Nagourney, Executive Director, Charter School Office, DDOE
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Financial Reform and Resource Management

**Representatives of Odyssey Charter School**

- George Chambers, Board President
- Nick T. Manolakos, Ed.D., Headmaster
- Riccardo Stoeckicht, Chief Operating Officer, Innovative Schools

**Discussion**

The following was discussed:

- A summary of the request – Odyssey Charter School (“Odyssey”) has requested a minor modification to increase its currently approved enrollment by 14.92%. Five years ago Odyssey embarked on a process to consolidate all grades on one campus. The board was eventually able to purchase a portion of the Barley Mill Plaza complex. Odyssey now has the space to serve students at one location but the school is not yet fully enrolled. Odyssey is approved to serve 1,716 students in grades K-12 but currently serves 1,286 students in grades K-9. Prior to the expansion, Odyssey was able to build cash reserves of \$1 – 1.5M. Two years ago, a portion of the reserves was used for the expansion. Odyssey’s bondholder has some influence on the school’s ability to incur any new debt. Essentially, the bondholder was not comfortable with the school incurring any new debt to build out the new facility to serve grades 9-12. A board working group looked at various scenarios and determined that it is more expensive to operate a K-8 school versus a K-9

school. It would require discipline and creativity to grow the school without incurring additional debt.

- Updates since January 26 CSAC Initial meeting – The school stated that it has initiated negotiations with Academia Antonia Alonzo for them to lease building 26 at Odyssey’s Barley Mill school campus. The lease would provide Odyssey with \$300k in revenue. This is a result of the Major Modification application submitted by Academia Antonia Alonzo at the end of January, requesting approval for a change of location from the Community Education Building (CEB) to Odyssey’s Barley Mill school campus. Odyssey will also generate additional rent proceeds from leasing its St. Thomas building and projected leases on unoccupied buildings at Barley Mill Plaza.
- Facilities management and oversight – The school stated that it plans to bid for formal facilities management and oversight services. The school also noted that due to its increased size and scope, they can no longer look to volunteers to manage its facilities.
- Process to find facilities management and oversight – The school stated that its board will review the process at its next meeting.

## **Conclusion**

Mr. Blowman asked if there were any additional questions about any section of the application. None were noted.

A motion was made and seconded that the Major Modification Application be recommended for approval. All six voting CSAC members voted “yes” in favor of a recommendation for approval.

## **Next Steps:**

- A second and final public hearing will take place on March 7, 2016, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium of the Carvel State Office Building, which is located at 820 N. French St., Wilmington, Delaware, beginning at 5:00 p.m.
- The public comment period will close on March 11, 2016.
- The Secretary of Education will announce his decision at some point between March 11 and March 17, 2016.