

## 1.1 Executive Summary

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14 Del. C. §§ 512(1)-(3). And (5)-(6)

Destiny Education Leadership Academy (“DELA”) is a proposed grade K-8 public charter school located in Kent County, Delaware. The proposed education plan features a 21<sup>st</sup> Century school and learning environment. The school is student-centered and embraces a program of “Intelligent Academic Rigor (IAR).” IAR is an academically rigorous data-driven program which builds upon timely information which pinpoints student status and moves student progress in a methodical and systematic fashion toward established student performance goals. This data-driven school will use Brain-Based Learning theory and research to elevate Kent County students to new heights.

### 1. Mission and Vision Statements

Destiny Education Leadership Academy (“DELA”) mission is:

***“To provide our students with a rigorous academic program which builds 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and places students on a path to admission to the best colleges and universities in the world.”***

DELA is a proposed tuition free public charter school which will serve grades K-8. The school will serve grades K-5 in the initial year of operation and expand one grade level per year until reaching grades K-8 in year four. The intent of the school is the improvement of student learning. Admissions to the best colleges and universities in the world required greater than 90<sup>th</sup> percentile scores on the ACT and SAT. Preparation for admission to the top tier schools starts in the early grades. Students development of strong cognitive skills in reading, writing, and math are important predictors of future college success. DELA’s vision is to provide students in Kent County, Delaware with a rigorous academic experience which places them where they need to be academically to become eligible for later admission to top tier schools. Our vision is to inspire students to take personal responsibility for learning and work diligently in a student learning community aspiring to high academic achievement.

DELA board of directors is committed to scientifically based educational best practices and cutting-edge learning technology. DELA’s vision of the future is a world where our students are planetary defenders who exhibit strong character, leadership, and passion on the cutting edge of change. Our students will develop a global view which sees us all as interconnected. Our students will treat all others with dignity, honor, kindness, and respect. Our students will exhibit strong problem-solving skills, excellent analytical, abstract, and logical reason skills. DELA students will help shape a better world. Just a few years ago now, the Japanese National Space Agency landed a robotic spacecraft on an asteroid over 190 million miles away from our planet. Over 50 nations have space programs, use satellite technology, or support private corporations engaged in some form of space exploration. In 2015, the United States slipped to number 40 in math, number 25 in science, and number 24 in reading skills in the

Programm' in International Student Assessment (PISA). America's decline in the international academic community must be reversed by innovation in education and major educational reform. DELA's vision is to provide leadership in educational reform.

## **2. Educational Need and Target Population**

DELA will locate in the school attendance area of the Capital School District at 4861 N. DuPont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901. The recently reported Delaware School Report Card shows that about 4 in 10 students in the Capital School District score at or above grade level on State End-of-Grade Test in Reading/English Language Arts. About 3 in 10 students score at or above grade level in Mathematics. Several elementary schools in the local school district experience even worse academic score. They students deserve and opportunity to excel and change the trajectory of the future by embracing a student learning community focused on academic success. At-risk groups' test scores in the Capital School District and all the local Kent county school districts demonstrate an urgent need for a public school choice.

DELA will serve students in grades K-8. In the initial year of operation, the school will serve grades K-5 and subsequently expand one grade level per year until reaching grade 8 in year four. The proposed school will also draw students from Smyrna School District, Lake Forest School District, and Caesar Rodney School District. We anticipate that about 57 percent of student who attend DELA will reside in the Capital School District with the remaining students coming from the other named districts. The proposed location at 4861 N. DuPont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901 was selected due to the existing conditions which demonstrate a need for school choice.

DELA will meet the needs of students and the community by providing the opportunity for a high-quality educational experience which sets the foundation and readiness for future college admissions. Students in grades K-8 need a strong academic foundation in reading, writing, and math to prepare them for future academic success. So far over 400 families have signed on to support DELA by indicating an intent to enroll their students.

## **3. Community Engagement**

DELA has bubbled up from the local community to address an identified need for quality education. The organizers are primarily residents of Kent County. DELA board members have conducted community forums and appeared at multiple community events, published its' Preliminary School Design Plan, and conducted a survey to obtain over 400 responses supporting the opening of the proposed school. Part of our assessment included public records searches and analysis of public school data which demonstrates a need for the proposed school. We have also examined multiple school design plans and have embraced the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education Model as cutting edge and timely.

DELA's board will continue to host community forums, conduct open board meetings, and conduct outreach to engage students, parents, and the community to

support the proposed school. To learn more, please visit us on the worldwide web at: [www.delacademy.org](http://www.delacademy.org)

#### **4. Educational Plan**

DELA's education plan builds a student-centered 21<sup>st</sup> Century School with an interactive whiteboard in every classroom, document cameras in every classroom, and one-to-one student computers. A "state of the art" school facility will house our program of "Intelligent Academic Rigor." The major instructional strategy, design which is based upon Brain-Base Learning Theory, is Active-Based Learning. Active-Based Learning is a strategy designed to engage students through multiple neuro pathways. Active-Based Learning is designed to create a vivid sensory rich learning experience to result in deep learning. Our program is designed to help student process information to the highest levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Active-Based Learning also has a social component which promotes cooperative learning and positive social interactions to support learning.

DELA will use the Delaware Content Standard as the foundation of its instructional program. The school will feature a digital repository of content materials and student works storage. The school will engage in regular assessment using the Northwest Evaluation Associations Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in reading, math, and science. The school will feature a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) to assure that no student is left behind. The RTI system will enable us to quickly identify students in need of additional academic support.

DELA's academic program and RTI system will help the school assure the success of traditionally at-risk students such as students with disabilities, English language learners, economically disadvantaged students, homeless students, gifted and talented students, and other educationally disadvantaged or underserved students.

The school's use of MAP assessments will provide the advantage of our teachers and Instructional Leaders having accurate and timely data to make appropriate academic interventions, engage in strategic planning, and provide academic rigor which engages students in the learning process. DELA is working to create a school culture where students are passionate about learning and work in cooperation to build a successful academic future.

DELA's educational plan build upon the "Mars One" model. In future interplanetary space travel, the residences of space pods will pursue their individual and specific areas of academic and career competencies, but entire group is responsible for assuring that all group members have the minimum knowledge need to survive in the hostile environment of space. Similarly, DELA's school culture is designed to facilitate a student learning community where student, staff, and parents, work together to assure that all DELA students meet and exceed grade level standards.

#### **5. Leadership and Governance**

DELA has a highly-qualified board of directors which will provide governance, academic oversight, and fiscal oversight to the school. The board will hold monthly board meetings which are open to the public. The board sets policy, hires and

supervises the Lead School Administrator, and hears grievances from parents, staff, and the community. The board approves the annual budget and authorizes expenditures.

The school leadership team will be hired by May 2021. The leadership team will consist of a lead school administrator, instructional leader, and school finance officer. The board has engaged H.A.R.K. Educational Services, Inc. to support the school's planning, organization, and development. H.A.R.K. will support the school leadership team, provide professional development to the board and staff specific to the operation of public charter schools. H.A.R.K. is an educational services provider with extensive background and skill in the planning, organizing, opening, and operating of public charter schools.

The governance structure of the school consists of oversight, policy development, budgeting, and the board functions required to operate a nonprofit corporation and carry out the duties of governance in a public charter school. The management structure is led by a Lead School Administrator which manages staff and guides the day-to-day operations the school. The Leader School Administrator manages federal programs, student information management, provides facilities management, manages curriculum and instruction issues, and carries out reporting duties. The board, educational services provider (H.A.R.K.), and the Lead School Administrator work together during the term of the charter to assure the school is working to carry out its mission and vision.

The Lead School Administrator will be selected based upon qualifications and experience. The board is searching for an individual who can think outside the box as its Lead School Administrator. We are on the cutting edge of educational change. DELA is pioneering "Intelligent Academic Rigor" as part of a new educational paradigm where all students become high achievers as consequence of operation of a high-quality program which is not dependent for its' success on a student's zip code. We need a leader who will carry out the program with passion and integrity.

## **6. Business Plan**

DELA will operate from an approximately 30,000 SF facility featuring 13 classrooms, a library, computer lab/small group instruction room, and high-quality workspace. The proposed facility will feature high-bandwidth Internet access and internal infrastructure which will accommodate all student and staff being on a device on the Internet at the same time without loss of speed or getting knocked off-line.

The school's finances will be managed by the board with the support of a highly qualified School Finance Officer. The school's transportation plan assure that transportation is not a barrier to student attendance. The board seeks to establish partnerships in the community which enhance the opportunities of our students.

The school plan to engage in private fundraising to support the school's annual operating budget and capital development needs.