

Gregory R. Meece, Sr.
School Director

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EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS AND DECORUM

November 18, 2014

Mark Murphy
Secretary of Education
Delaware Department of Education
John G. Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901-3639

Dear Secretary Murphy:

Newark Charter School respectfully requests your consideration and approval for a minor charter modification that would allow the school to make the following building alterations to our Junior/Senior High School, which is located at 200 McIntire Drive, Newark, Delaware 19711:

- **Engineering and Physics Classroom Suite**
Renovate 6,000 square feet of unused space in the second floor mezzanine to create three new science classrooms
- **Performing Arts Center**
Construct a new 4,500 square foot Band, Chorus, and Orchestra building (3 music classrooms) on the North-West corner of the building

The **Engineering and Physics Classroom Suite** is needed because of the expansion of the school's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. In the Fall of 2013, the high school opened with a DDOE-approved four-year Engineering Pathway. Due to the program's success, it has grown faster than the school anticipated. In the Fall of 2014 our high school added a DDOE-approved four-year Biotechnology Pathway. This program was not anticipated when the high school facility was originally designed three years ago. It also has been highly successful. Renovating the upstairs mezzanine will allow us to relocate the two Engineering classrooms and tie them in with a new Physics classroom. This will free up extra space on the first floor for the Biotechnology classrooms.

The **Performing Arts Center** is needed because the original architectural design of the Junior/Senior High School has the Band, Orchestra and Chorus rooms located in the center of the building, adjacent to other classrooms, such as World Languages and Technology Education. The sound (while beautiful☺) interferes with learning in the

adjacent classrooms, which are separated from the music classes only by drywall and insulation. Relocating these music rooms to their own building, with block walls separating the three areas, will solve the acoustics problem. It will also free-up more space on the first floor for other learning spaces.

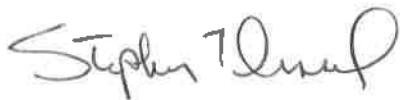
Neither project includes an increase in the levels of enrollment already approved. The work is expected to begin after the last day of school in June 2015 and end prior to the first day of school in August 2015, with no impact on the starting date or school operations. No temporary or modular structures will be needed. The school owns (rather than leases) the current buildings and property, so there is no changes to site facility agreements. The school has no contract with an EMO/CMO. All work will be subject to City of Newark building and land-use codes.

As reflected in the Performance Frameworks the last three years, Newark Charter School meets all Academic, Financial and Organizational measures. The school is designated as a Recognition School and a School of Continued Excellence by the DDOE and a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the Federal Department of Education. Newark Charter School's charter was approved in 2000 and its charter has been renewed three times.

As demonstrated by our Financial Statements (available on our webpage) and Project Budget, the school has the financial capacity to complete these projects using its reserve funds, if necessary. However, as has been done with past capital projects, we will be seeking external grants and donations from public (including Delaware's Charter Performance Fund) and private foundations, corporations and individuals to cover most of these expenses. The ongoing operations of the facilities addressed by this project will not necessitate adding additional staff other than, perhaps, one custodian for which the school may earn one additional custodial unit.

If you would like to visit the school or discuss this request in more detail, please don't hesitate to contact either me or School Director Gregory Meece. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Stephen Dressel
Chair
Newark Charter School Board of Directors

Copy: Gregory R. Meece, School Director

Project Budgets

	Approved in FY15 Operating Budget	Projected for FY16*
Engineering and Physics Classroom Suite (renovate 6,000 sq. ft. of existing unused space.)		
Architectural Plans	\$6,500	
Construction		\$403,088
Performing Arts Center (new construction 4,500 sq. ft.)		
Architectural Plans	\$20,000	
Site Engineering	\$17,500	
Construction		\$450,000
Total	\$44,000	\$853,088

*FY 16 construction will be paid with funds from the school's reserve accounts and/or grants and donations.

**Newark Charter School
Request for a Minor Modification
November 18, 2014**

DE Department of Education
Charter School Office
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901
Phone: (302) 735-4020
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Appendices	
Memorandum from Board Chairman	

Table 2

Minor Modification (Section A Only)		Major Modification (Section A <u>AND</u> additional questions identified below)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change(increase or decrease) between 5% and 15%	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment change(increase or decrease) of greater than 15% (<18 mos includes impact study) Section B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change agreement with EMO/CMO	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grade configuration (adding grade levels or reducing grade levels) Section B
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start date/one-time delay	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Program (i.e., curriculum) Section C
<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of charter school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission (includes At-Risk designation) Section D
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Existing or planned school facilities or structures (including any plan to use temporary or modular structures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Replace, remove, or add EMO/CMO, or transfer of authorizer Section E
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in terms to current site facility arrangement (i.e., lease to purchase)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrollment preferences Section F
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Location change Section G
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Goals for student performance Section H
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance Agreement Section A only

Section A: Core Questions

1. What modification does the school’s Board of Directors wish 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 wishes 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.

Newark Charter School’s grade and enrollment expansion and construction of a new Junior/Senior High School facility was approved at the April 2012 meeting of the Delaware State Board of Education. The Board of Directors of Newark Charter School requests consideration and approval for a minor charter modification that would allow the school to make the following building alterations to our Junior/Senior High School, which is located at 200 McIntire Drive, Newark, Delaware 19711:

- **Engineering and Physics Classroom Suite**

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2. What is the effective date of the proposed modification? (Please note: if this is a request for an enrollment expansion of greater than 15%, the applicant must provide an impact analysis pursuant to 14 Del. Code Chapter 5 §511(b)3 as an Attachment See Section B Question 3 in this application.)

The construction and renovation work is expected to begin after the last day of school in June 2015 and end prior to the first day of school in August 2015, with no impact on the starting date or school operations.

3. The authorizer will review your most recent Performance Review Reports as part of your application. Discuss the school's academic performance, its compliance with the terms of its charter, and its financial viability as measured by the Performance Framework.

As reflected in the Performance Frameworks over the last three years, Newark Charter School meets all Academic, Financial and Organizational measures. The school is designated as a Recognition School and a School of Continued Excellence by the DDOE and a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the Federal Department of Education. Newark Charter School's charter was approved in 2000 and its charter has been renewed three times.

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.*)

The **Engineering and Physics Classroom Suite** is needed because of the expansion of the school's Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. In the Fall of 2013, the high school opened with a DDOE-approved four-year Engineering Pathway. Due to the program's success, it has grown faster than the school anticipated. In the Fall of 2014 our high school added a DDOE-approved four-year Biotechnology Pathway. This program was not anticipated when the high school facility was originally designed three years ago. It also has been highly successful. Renovating the upstairs mezzanine will allow us to relocate the two Engineering classrooms and tie them in with a new Physics classroom. This will free up extra space on the first floor for the Biotechnology classrooms.

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5. Describe how the proposed modification will impact the operation of the school. Include how student achievement, staffing, facilities, and the financial viability of the school may be impacted in the current school year and for the remainder of the school's charter term.

Neither project includes an increase in the levels of enrollment already approved. No temporary or modular structures will be needed. The school owns (rather than leases) the current buildings and property, so there is no changes to site facility agreements. The school has no contract with an EMO/CMO. All work will be subject to City of Newark building and land-use codes.

Student achievement in the affected CTE programs will be improved due to the facility upgrades proposed. Exploring career pathways such as engineering and biotechnology requires adequate space for hands-on learning and projects to supplement and enhance classroom learning. The relocation of the music performance programs to its own building will improve student achievement by eliminating distracting noises in the adjacent classrooms, which interferes with teaching and learning. At the same time, the music students will have the space needed to practice without distractions which can accompany limited available space.

6. Indicate the projected impact, if any, of the proposed modification on the schools present financial position, and its financial position going forward. If the modification promises to create financial challenges, indicate how those will be remedied.

As demonstrated by the school's Financial Statements (available on school web page) and Project Budget, the school has the financial capacity to complete these projects using its reserves within the School's Local appropriations. However, as has been done with past capital projects, we will be seeking external grants and donations from public (including Delaware's Charter Performance Fund) and private foundations, corporations and individuals to cover most of these expenses. The ongoing operations of the facilities addressed by this project will not necessitate adding additional staff other than, perhaps, one custodian for which the school may earn one additional custodial unit.