

CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE
2018-19
STATE CHARTER REPORT

Report Overview

As required by [Del. C., Title 14, Ch. 5 § 514](#), the Department prepares an annual report for the Governor, the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education on the success or failure of charter schools and proposes changes in state law necessary to improve or change the charter school program. This report contains:

- a comparison of the per student expenditures of charter schools, considering all sources of such expenditures, with those of other public schools;
- recommendations relating to, and proposed changes relating to Delaware education laws, in light of the content of annual reports submitted pursuant to § 513 of this title; and,
- the assessment of specific opportunities and barriers relating to the implementation of charter schools' innovations in the broader Delaware public education school system.

[14 DE Admin. Code 275](#) further defines the requirements of this report to include an analysis of all charter schools in relationship to the Performance Framework.

General Charter School Information

During the 2018/2019 school year, there were twenty-three charter schools in Delaware. Twenty-one of these charter schools were authorized by the Department of Education with the assent of the State Board of Education and two charter schools were authorized by the Red Clay Consolidated School District. The charter schools in operation during the 2017/2018 school year are listed below along with the year that they opened:

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Date Opened</u>
Positive Outcomes	September 1996
East Side Charter School	September 1997
Campus Community Charter School	September 1998
Thomas Edison Charter School	September 2000
Sussex Academy	September 2000
Kuumba Academy	September 2001
Newark Charter School	September 2001
MOT Charter School	September 2002
Providence Creek Academy	September 2002
Academy of Dover	September 2003
Family Foundations Charter School	September 2006
Las Americas ASPIRA Academy	August 2011
Gateway Lab School	August 2011
Odyssey Charter School	August 2011
Academia Antonio Alonso	August 2014
Early College High School	August 2014
First State Montessori	August 2014
Design Thinking Academy	August 2015 (closed as of June 2019)
First State Military Academy	August 2015
Freire Charter School	August 2015
Great Oaks Charter School	August 2015

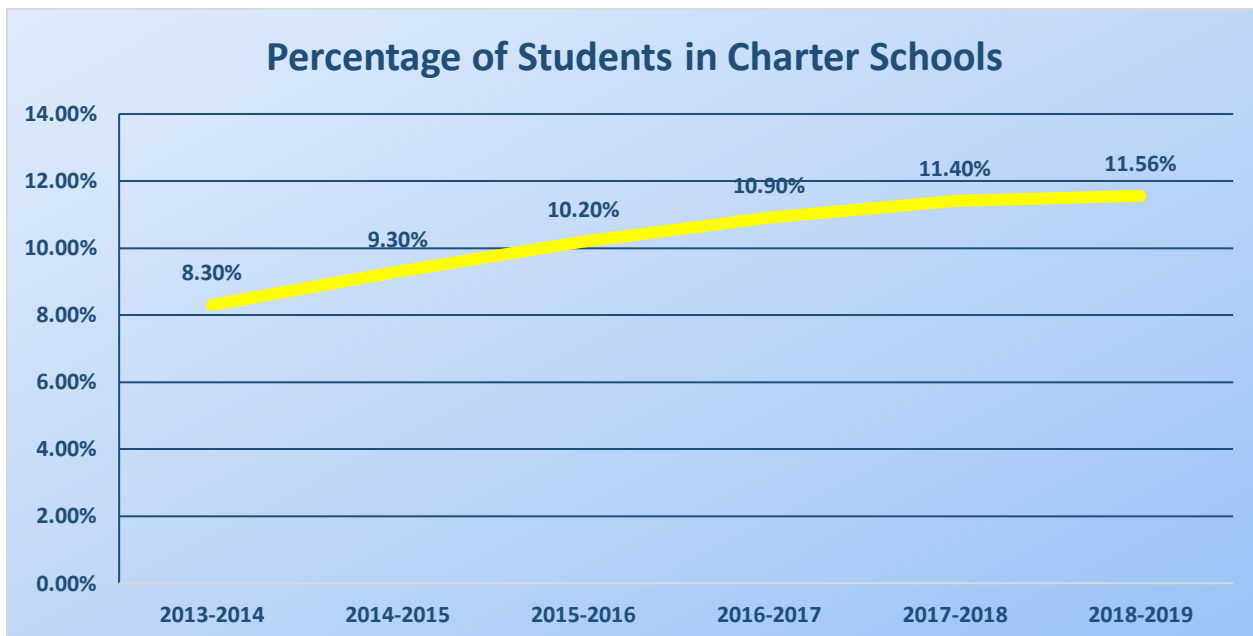
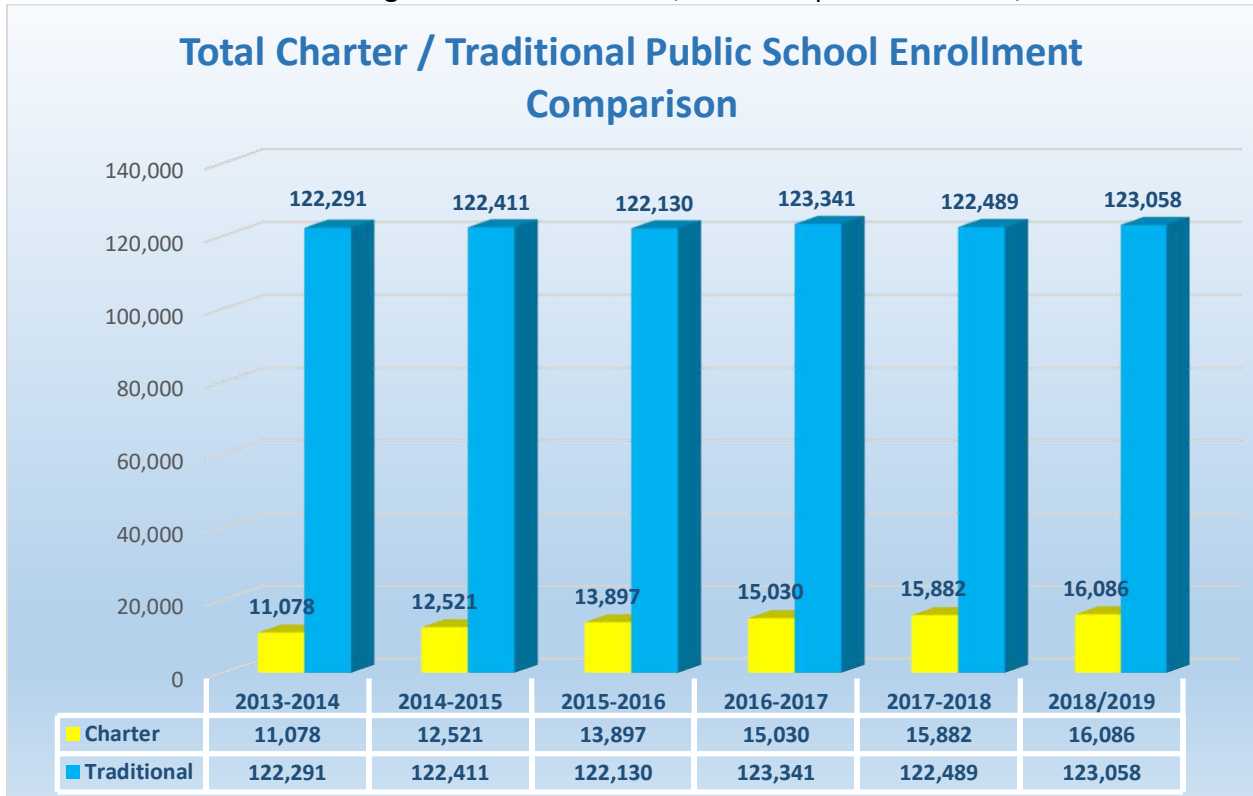
Red Clay Schools

Charter School of Wilmington	September 1996
Delaware Military Academy	September 2003

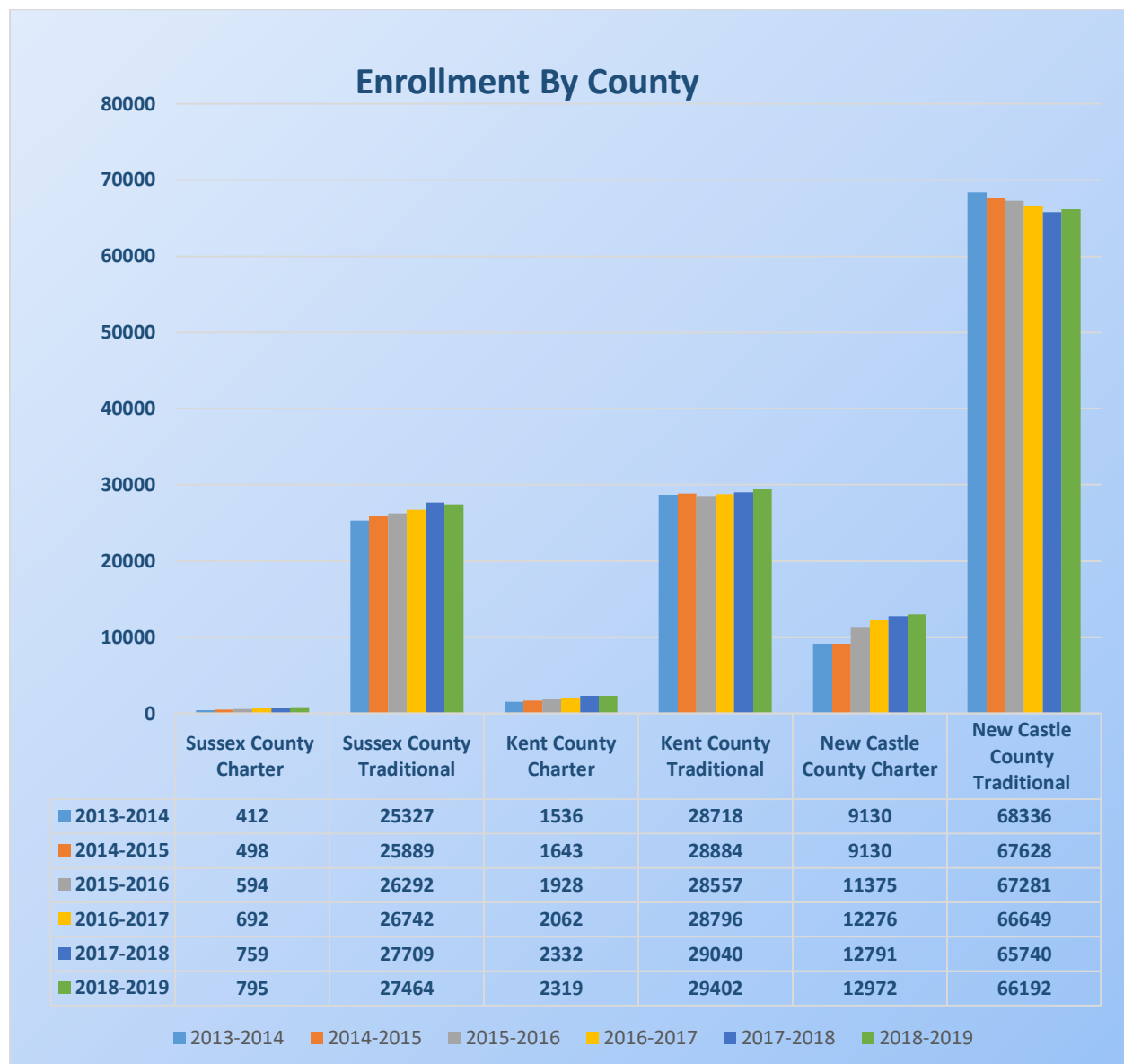
*Sussex Montessori School is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2020.

Charter School Enrollment

Charter schools are independent public schools designed and operated by educators, parents, community leaders, educational entrepreneurs and others. They are sponsored by designated local or state educational organizations, who monitor their quality and effectiveness but allow them to operate outside of the traditional system of public schools. Delaware has seen a 1.01% increase in students attending charter schools SY18/19 in comparison to SY17/18.



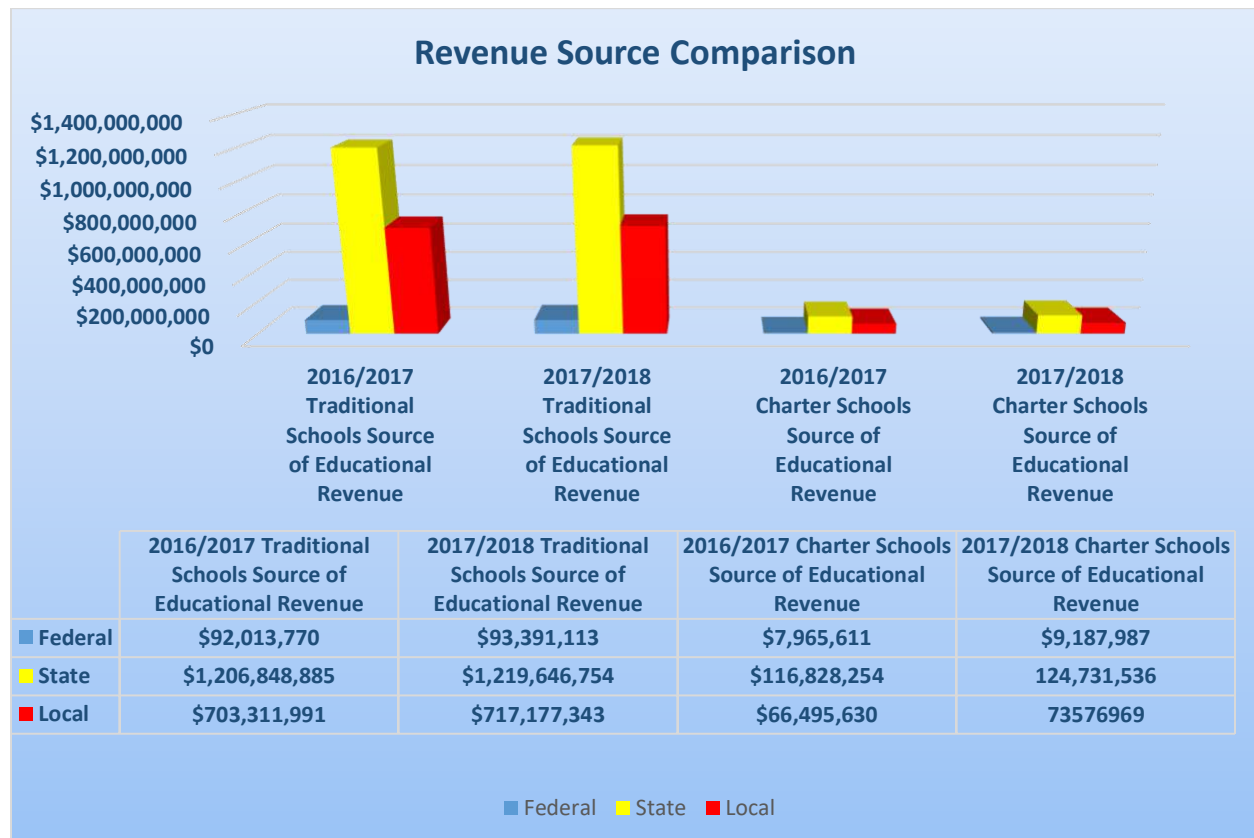
There is a disparity over the last six years in the number of students enrolled in charters across the three counties. This disparity correlates to the number of charter schools located in New Castle County as compared to other counties. The number of students enrolled overall in charter schools has not varied greatly over the last three years. Similar to the enrollment there is a disparity over the last six years in the number of students enrolled in charters across the three counties. This disparity correlates to the number of charter schools located in New Castle County as compared to other counties. The number of students enrolled, overall, in charter schools has not varied greatly over the last three years. Similar to the enrollment by county, there have also been slight variances in demographics of charter schools that align with demographic trends in non-charter schools. Data was reviewed in relationship to demographics, which showed that both charter and non-charter schools followed a similar enrollment trend over the last six school years.



Revenue and Expenditure Comparison

Annually the Department of Education produces educational statistic reports. The tables below were produced as a part of the annual fiscal reporting completed by the Department of Education for 2017-2018 and can be found at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/4080>. It is essential to note that the financial data for this report is lag data. The 2018-2019 report will not be available until March/April when fiscal monitoring is completed.

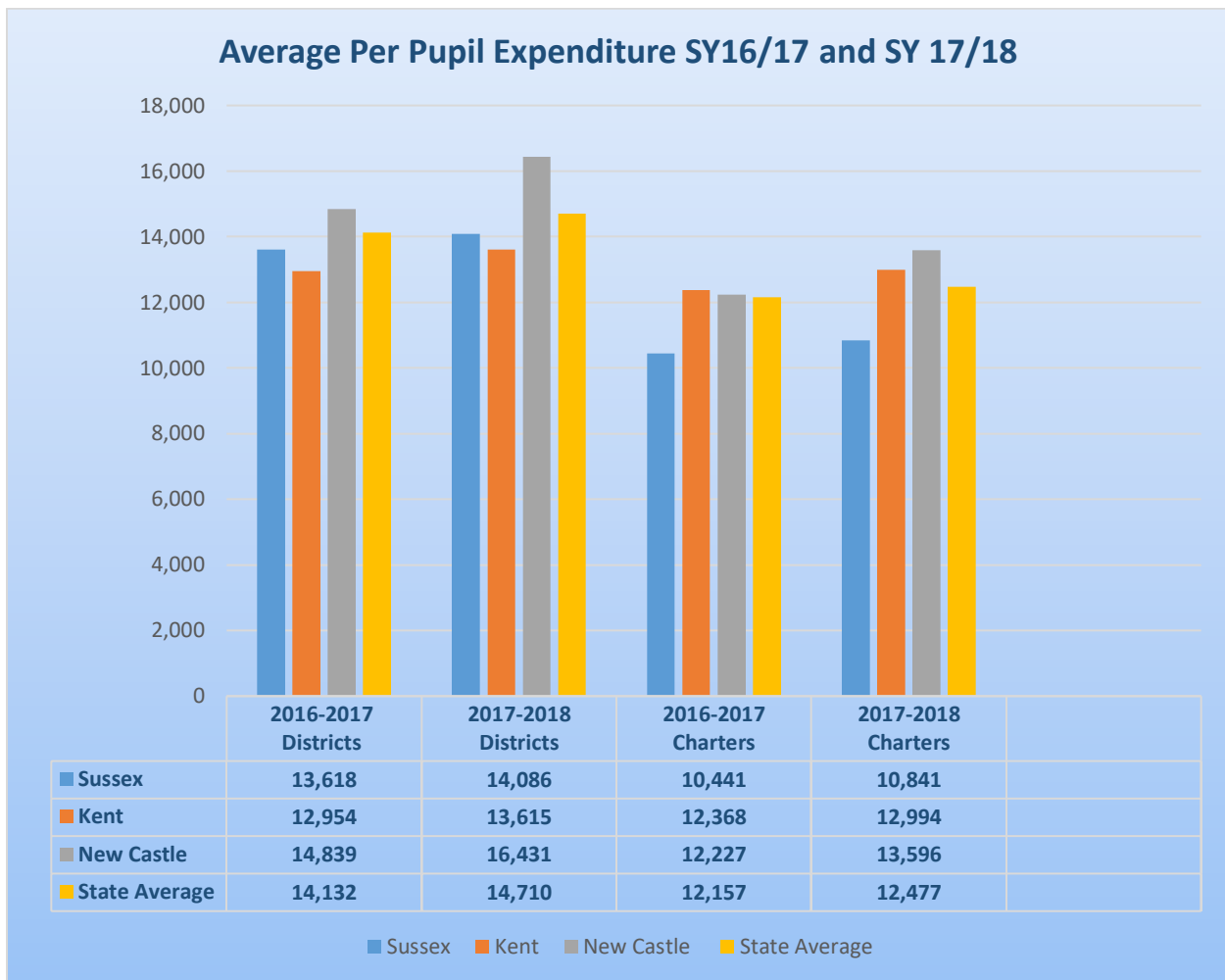
In school year (SY) 2017-2018 there were 22 charter schools servicing 16,086 students. Public charter school revenue is comprised of federal, state, and local dollars. There were slight differences in funding revenue from SY2017-2018 that seem to correspond with the increase in enrollment. In SY 2016-2017, 15,030 students were enrolled in charter schools. In SY 2016-2017, charter school revenue equated to \$7,965,611 in federal funds, \$116,828,254 in state funds, and \$66,495,630 in local funds¹. In SY 2017-2018, 16,086 students were enrolled in charter schools. In SY 2017-2018, charter school revenue equated to \$9,187,987 in federal funds, \$124,731,536 in state funds, and \$73,576,969 in local funds². The charts below provides a comparison of all state sources of educational revenue to charter school sources revenue.



¹ Reports can be located at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/4080>

² Reports can be located at: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/4080>

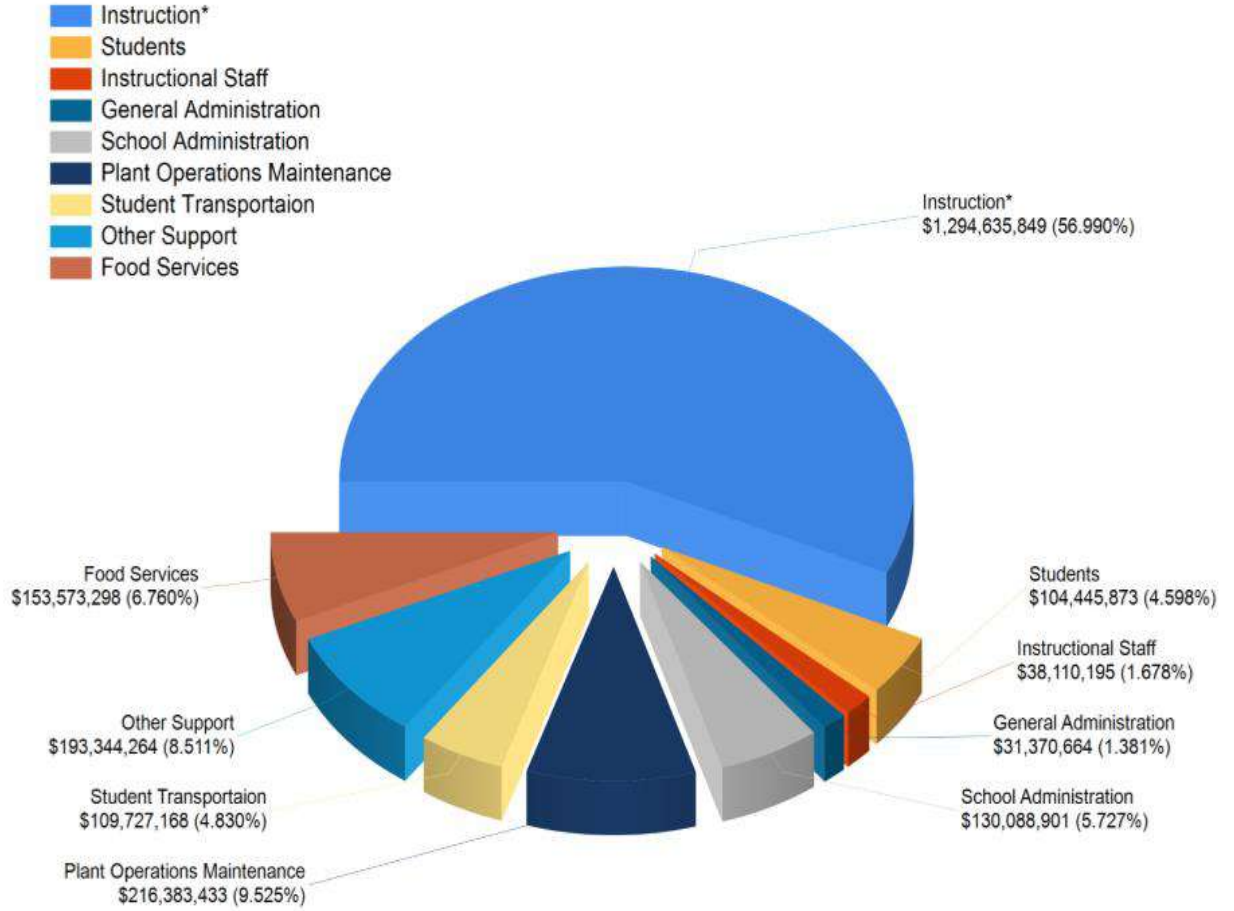
Average per pupil expenditures increased from SY 16/17 to SY 17/18. Historically, this data was reported annually on the Delaware School Profiles website. It can currently be found on the Delaware Report Card Website. Per pupil expenditure reports are broken down by county, by school districts, and by charter schools. Comparison of the two year trends indicates an increase of per pupil expenditures for districts and Kent and New Castle counties ranging from \$661 to \$1,592 dollars. Per pupil expenditures in Sussex County increased by \$106. Charter school per pupil expenditures included a \$400 increase for Sussex County, a \$626 increase for Kent County, and an increase of \$1,369 in per pupil expenditures for New Castle County. Figure 7 (Table 34) of this report provides a breakdown in the per pupil revenue.



Actual expenses for Districts and Charters are captured in the graphics below.

Districts (figure 3):

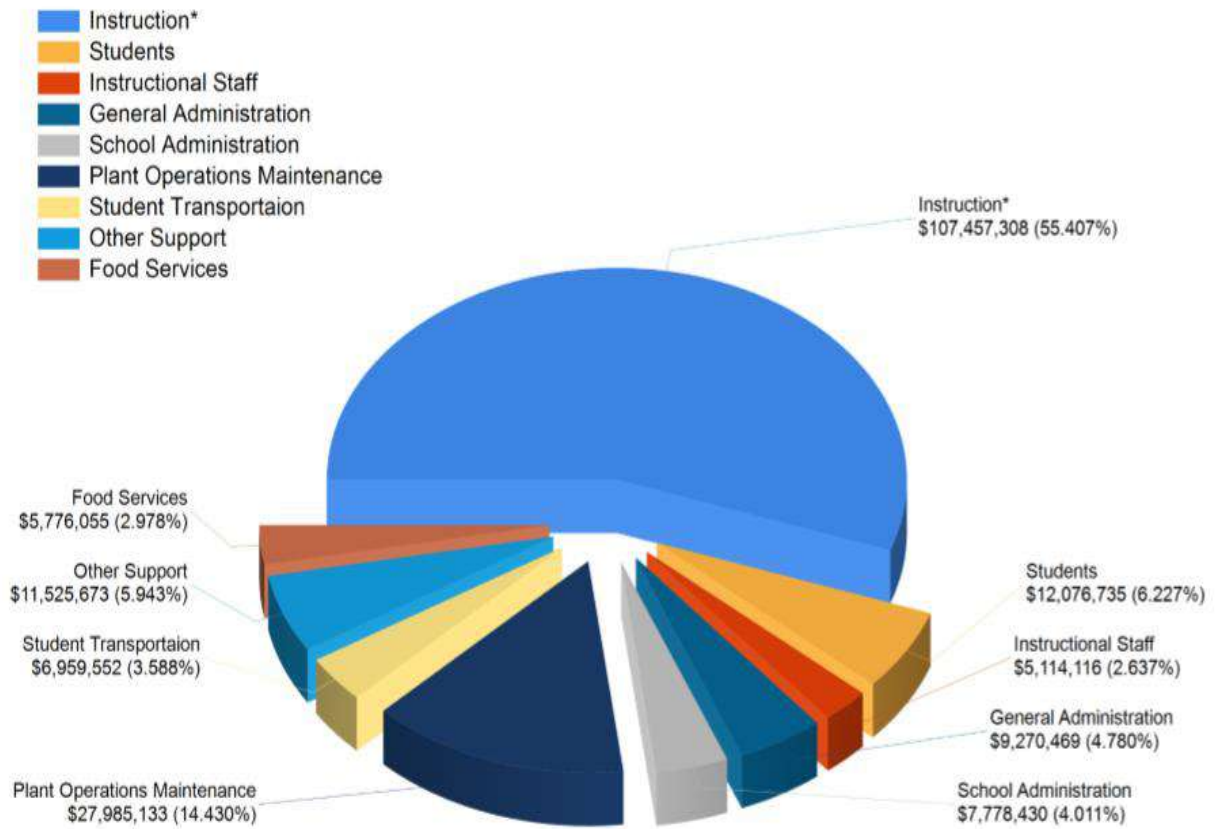
Figure 56 Actual Expenses Delaware School Finance (2017-2018)



*Excludes Within State Tuition \$19,326,184
Source: Technology Operations

Charters (figure 4):

Figure 56 Actual Expenses Delaware School Finance (2017-2018)



Source: Technology Operations
*Percentage totals may vary due to rounding

Figure 7: District and all charter revenue based on September 30, 2017 enrollment.

TABLE 34
DISTRICT REVENUE RECEIPTS PER PUPIL BASED ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 ENROLLMENT
2017-2018

District	Enrollment	LOCAL REVENUE								State, Federal	
		State Revenue Total	Federal Revenue Total	Current Expenses			Other Than Current Expenses			Local**** Revenue Total	Local Revenue Total
				Taxes	In-Tuition	Other** Sources	Tuition Outgoing	Debt Service	Other***		
NEW CASTLE COUNTY											
Appoquinimink	10,882	8,978	293	2,225	0	40	1,125	767	148	4,577	13,848
Brandywine	10,475	8,804	634	5,968	42	36	1,208	593	132	8,053	17,491
Christina	14,689	8,295	1,012	4,541	0	18	1,992	285	47	6,665	15,972
Del Autistic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret S. Sterck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
R.E.A.C.H	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Christina ILC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colonial	9,819	8,854	785	4,372	0	21	857	429	129	5,842	15,481
Data Service Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
John G. Leach	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NCC Votech	4,716	11,770	629	5,710	0	26	0	826	16	7,590	19,989
Red Clay	15,741	8,417	950	4,206	331	31	1,528	700	165	6,970	16,336
Meadowood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Clay ILC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COUNTY TOTALS	66,322	9,879	759	4,676	288	29	1,306	571	115	7,122	17,760
KENT COUNTY											
Caesar Rodney	7,443	9,053	711	993	265	21	426	280	156	2,688	12,451
John S. Charlton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dover Air Base	498	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,139	14,743
Capital	6,494	11,195	1,059	1,660	0	45	660	925	149	3,889	16,143
Polytech	1,188	11,310	634	3,978	0	51	0	733	42	5,262	17,206
Lake Forest	3,804	9,780	719	1,274	0	21	728	97	86	3,163	13,662
Milford	4,127	9,658	753	1,980	72	31	213	334	47	3,158	13,568
Smyrna	5,486	9,920	522	1,319	0	22	475	365	134	2,544	12,986
COUNTY TOTALS	29,040	10,240	745	1,486	78	29	472	438	118	3,525	14,451
SUSSEX COUNTY											
Cape Henlopen	5,451	10,508	748	4,050	0	85	3,522	676	230	9,287	20,543
Delmar	1,348	8,639	452	743	488	48	158	242	19	1,818	10,909
Indian River	10,819	8,806	616	3,510	-459	21	773	303	50	4,891	14,113
Howard T. Ennis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laurel	2,449	8,911	991	774	3	25	280	816	140	2,713	12,615
Seaford	3,475	10,303	1,238	1,217	21	20	502	310	128	2,735	14,366
Sussex Technical	1,248	11,347	753	6,629	0	68	0	837	164	8,733	20,833
Woodbridge	2,537	10,536	1,009	995	655	22	465	481	96	3,253	14,797
COUNTY TOTALS	27,127	9,854	791	2,849	-91	38	1,151	463	112	5,313	15,958
CHARTER TOTALS	15,882	7,854	579	2,088	1,176	229	0	0	7	4,633	13,065
TOTAL ALL DISTRICTS	138,371	9,717	741	3,351	272	54	951	456	103	5,727	16,173
Department of Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ALL DISTRICTS & DOE	138,371	10,302	1,417	3,351	272	54	951	456	103	5,777	17,484

*Part-time students are excluded from totals. **Includes interest, rent, athletic funds and other.

Interest for construction and minor capital improvements. *Local revenue receipts adjusted for Within State tuition (\$19,326,184).

Note: State Revenue includes school construction funding provided through General Funds rather than through the sale of bonds. Row totals may vary due to rounding.

Source: Technology Operations

Figure 8: All charter revenue based on September 30, 2017 enrollment.

TABLE 34
CHARTER SCHOOL REVENUE RECEIPTS PER PUPIL BASED ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2017 ENROLLMENT
2017-2018

District	Enrollment	State Revenue Total	Federal Revenue Total	LOCAL REVENUE						State, Federal	
				Current Expenses			Other Than Current Expenses			Local**** Revenue Total	Local Revenue Total
				Taxes	In-Tuition	Other** Sources	Tuition Outgoing	Debt Service	Other***		
CHARTER SCHOOL											
Academy of Dover	270	7,729	1,010	0	1,307	6	0	0	0	2,239	10,978
Alonso	494	7,191	1,025	4,137	0	7	0	0	0	5,031	13,247
Aspira Academy	740	8,148	511	4,005	0	12	0	0	151	6,514	15,173
Campus Comm	417	8,266	1,264	0	1,331	32	0	0	0	1,763	11,292
Charter of New Castle	751	6,899	829	0	3,587	10	0	0	0	4,800	12,527
Charter Sch of Wilm	971	6,719	208	0	3,419	152	0	0	0	4,049	10,976
DAPSS	228	10,119	791	4,869	0	51	0	0	0	5,358	16,269
Delaware Design	298	7,938	468	0	4,378	7	0	0	0	5,539	13,945
Delaware Military Academy	582	6,917	245	3,424	0	21	0	0	0	4,808	11,970
East Side	415	8,246	1,920	0	4,815	22	0	0	0	7,012	17,178
ECHS at DSU	420	7,344	441	0	0	5	0	0	0	2,593	10,377
First State Military	409	8,656	465	0	2,139	78	0	0	0	3,319	12,439
First State Montessori	509	8,143	244	4,050	0	21	0	0	0	5,523	13,910
Freire Charter School	411	7,702	1,496	0	0	4,733	0	0	0	5,823	15,021
Gateway Lab	189	16,797	1,021	0	0	37	0	0	0	9,255	27,073
Great Oaks Charter School	448	7,874	1,095	4,533	0	7	0	0	0	4,858	13,828
Kuumba	719	6,999	1,132	4,214	0	15	0	0	0	4,518	12,649
MOT	1,288	8,201	194	0	2,029	25	0	0	0	3,435	11,830
Newark Charter	2,354	7,967	241	4,177	0	117	0	0	0	4,904	13,112
Odyssey Charter	1,662	7,261	335	4,010	0	570	0	0	0	6,149	13,745
Positive Outcomes	126	23,635	648	0	3,761	424	0	0	0	5,059	29,341
Providence Creek	690	7,471	301	2,082	0	41	0	0	0	2,122	9,894
Sussex Academy	759	7,926	266	0	2,134	51	0	0	0	2,690	10,883
Thomas Edison	732	6,265	1,289	0	3,918	47	0	0	0	4,999	12,553
CHARTER SCHOOL TOTAL	15,882	7,854	579	2,088	1,176	229	0	0	7	4,633	13,065

*Part-time students are excluded from totals. **Includes interest, rent, athletic funds and other.

Interest for construction and minor capital improvements. *Local revenue receipts adjusted for Within State tuition.

Note: State Revenue includes school construction funding provided through General Funds rather than through the sale of bonds. Row totals may vary due to rounding.

Source: Technology Operations

Charter School Performance Framework

Charter schools are evaluated annually for their academic, organizational, and financial performance using three separate performance frameworks.

On October 13, 2016, the State Board of Education approved revisions to the Charter School Organizational and Financial Performance Frameworks with the goal to:

- Clearly communicate standards and expectations to schools;
- Conduct a transparent, consistent, and predictable oversight process;
- Conduct an oversight process that is respectful of charter schools' autonomy;
- Focus on student outcomes; and
- Provide evidenced-based feedback to schools and communities indicating where schools stand relative to performance framework expectations and standards.

These changes went into effect SY2016-2017.

Included in this report is the summative data for all charter schools from SY2014-2015 and SY2015-2016 for each of the performance frameworks as well as the individual measures included within the frameworks.

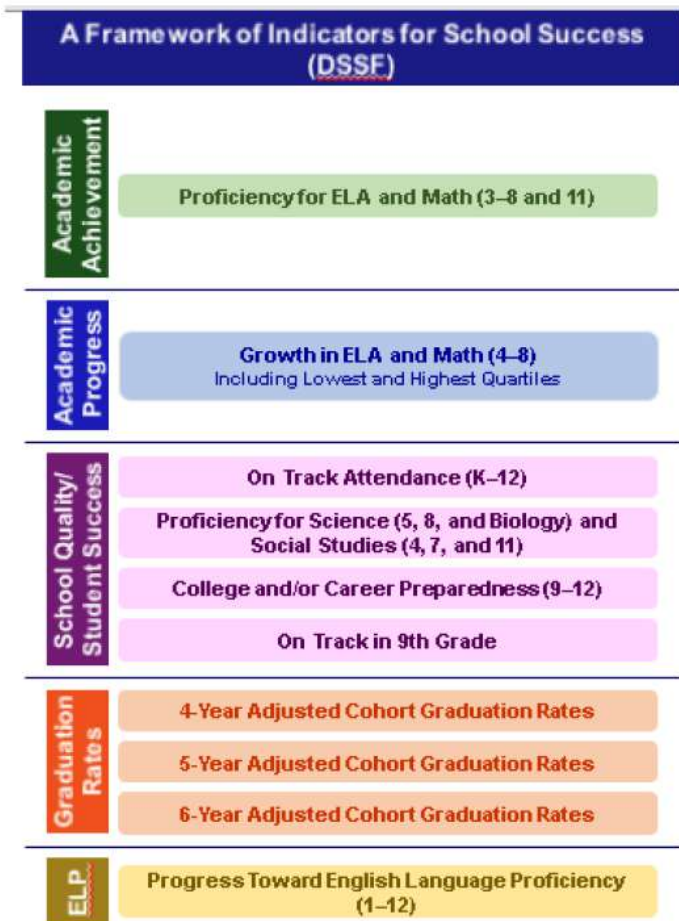
Academic Performance Data

In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the main federal law governing funding of public education, as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In a post-No Child Left Behind era, ESSA gives states more flexibility and provides more state and local control as well as the opportunity to advance Delaware's public schools by enabling all students to succeed. ESSA also requires states to have a plan for spending federal funds, for measuring the skills students learn, and for supporting students in making academic progress. Delaware's ESSA plan is an important component of Delaware's overall education system. ESSA implementation began in 2017-18 school year. On November 7, 2018, the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) released results of the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF) for the first time under ESSA.

The DSSF, a component of the Performance Framework, is a comprehensive accountability system that measures and publicly reports on multiple areas of school success. applies to all public schools, including charter schools and career technical schools that are subject to the calculation and reporting of AYP as prescribed by the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S. C.A. §6301 et seq. and 14 DE Admin. Code 103 Accountability for Schools, Districts and the State. The DSSF measures the following five indicators of school success:

1. Academic Achievement
2. Academic Progress
3. School Quality/Student Success
4. Graduation Rates
5. English Language Proficiency

These five indicators are comprised of ten individual measures (see below).



The indicators of the DSSF are aggregated on a 500-point scale reflecting different values for elementary/middle, high schools, and high schools that serve grades beyond 9-12 (e.g., a grades 6-12 school). Each indicator (e.g., Academic Achievement), will receive a text-based rating based on the aggregated performance on the measures in that particular area . The ESSA-approved indicator weights for ES (K-5), MS (6-8), HS (9-12) and HS Plus (for schools that serve additional grades beyond 9-12, i.e. 6-12) and associated points are as follows. High School weighting will be applied to single high school districts as well as districts serving multiple high schools serving grades 9-12 only. High School Plus weighting will be applied to all other districts.

Elementary (grades K-5)/Middle School (grades 6-8)

Indicators/Measures	Weight	Points
Academic Achievement	30%	150
Proficiency ELA (grades 3-8)	15%	75
Proficiency Math (grades 3-8)	15%	75
Academic Progress	40%	200
Growth in ELA (grades 4-8)	15%	75
Growth in Math (grades 4-8)	15%	75
Growth of lowest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.5%	12.5
Growth of highest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.5%	12.5
Growth of lowest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.5%	12.5
Growth of highest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.5%	12.5
School Quality/Student Success	20%	100
On Track Attendance (K-12)	10%	50
Proficiency Science (grades 5 and 8)	5%	25
Proficiency Social Studies (grades 4 and 7)	5%	25
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	50
Total	100%	500

High School (grades 9-12)

Indicators/Measures	Weight	Points
Academic Achievement	30%	150
Proficiency ELA	15%	75
Proficiency Math	15%	75
School Quality/Student Success	40%	200
On Track Attendance (K-12)	5%	25
Proficiency Science (Biology)	5%	25
Proficiency Social Studies (Grade 11)	5%	25
College and/or Career Preparedness (9-12)	15%	75
On Track in 9 th Grade (grade 9)	10%	50
Graduation Rate	20%	100
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15%	75
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	3%	13
6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	2%	12
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	50
Total	100%	500

High School Plus (For districts and for schools with variant grade configurations that include grades 9-12, e.g. 6-12)

Indicator/Measures	Weight	Points
Academic Achievement	20%	100
Proficiency ELA (grades 3-8 and 11)	10%	50
Proficiency Math (grades 3-8 and 11)	10%	50
Academic Progress	25%	125
Growth in ELA (grades 4-8)	10%	50
Growth in Math (grades 4-8)	10%	50
Growth of lowest quartile ELA (4-8)	1.25%	6.25
Growth of highest quartile ELA (4-8)	1.25%	6.25
Growth of lowest quartile Math (4-8)	1.25%	6.25
Growth of highest quartile Math (4-8)	1.25%	6.25
School Quality/Student Success	25%	125
On Track Attendance (K-12)	2.5%	12.5
Proficiency Science (5, 8 and Biology)	5%	25
Proficiency Social Studies (4, 7 and 11)	5%	25
College and/or Career Preparedness (9-12)	7.5%	37.5
On Track in 9 th Grade (grade 9)	5%	25
Graduation Rate	20%	100
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15%	75
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	3%	13
6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	2%	12
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	50
Total	100%	500

Overall summative ratings are calculated by taking the actual points earned by the school overall (true points) and dividing by the total number of overall index points possible. If performance data for a

measure or indicator are missing or nonexistent (i.e. school does not meet minimum n of 15), the points for the missing measure or indicator are removed from the overall index and an overall score is calculated based on the *actual points earned* divided by the *total points possible*. By using the percentage of total points earned, schools are able to be evaluated on the indicators/measures for which they truly earn points and allows all schools to be measured against the rating scale for continuous improvement. Text-based descriptors replace the star ratings used in prior years (see below).

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Well Below Expectations

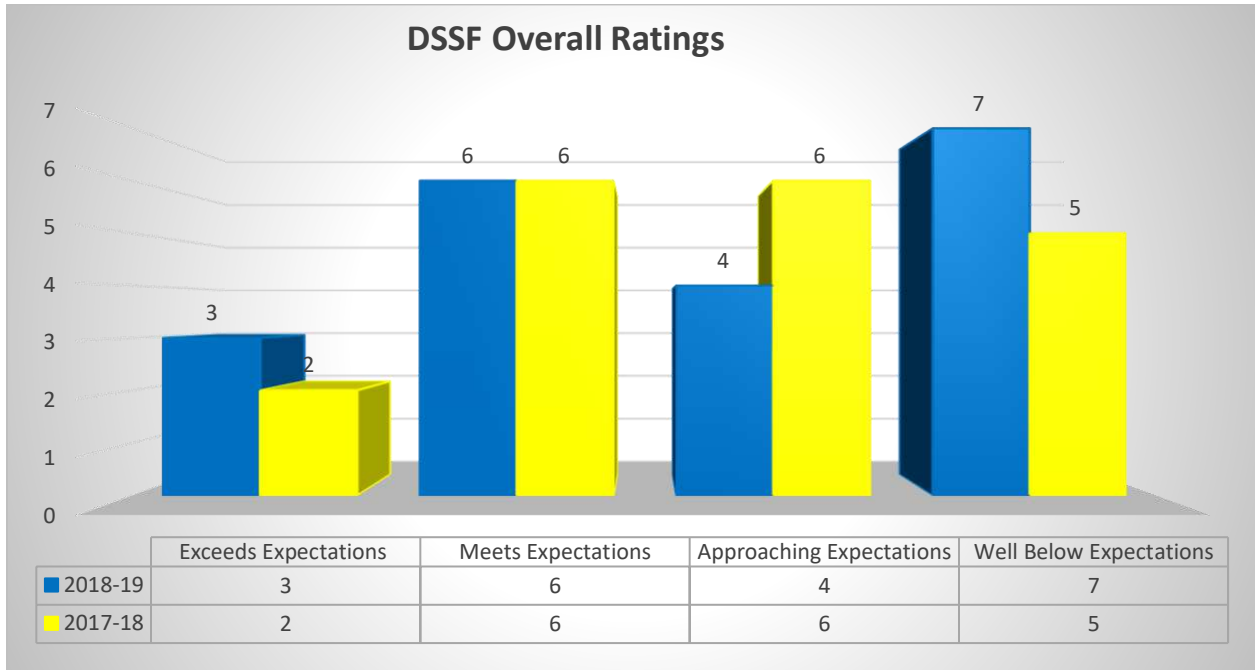
Charter School Academic Performance SY18/19

The Charter School Office conducts an analysis of charter school academic achievement looking for trends in data that include information collected through site visits and annual reports. As noted above, in SY17/18 the DSSF was significantly revised and enhanced to align with the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Due to these changes, prior year’s data could not be aligned with the current DSSF.

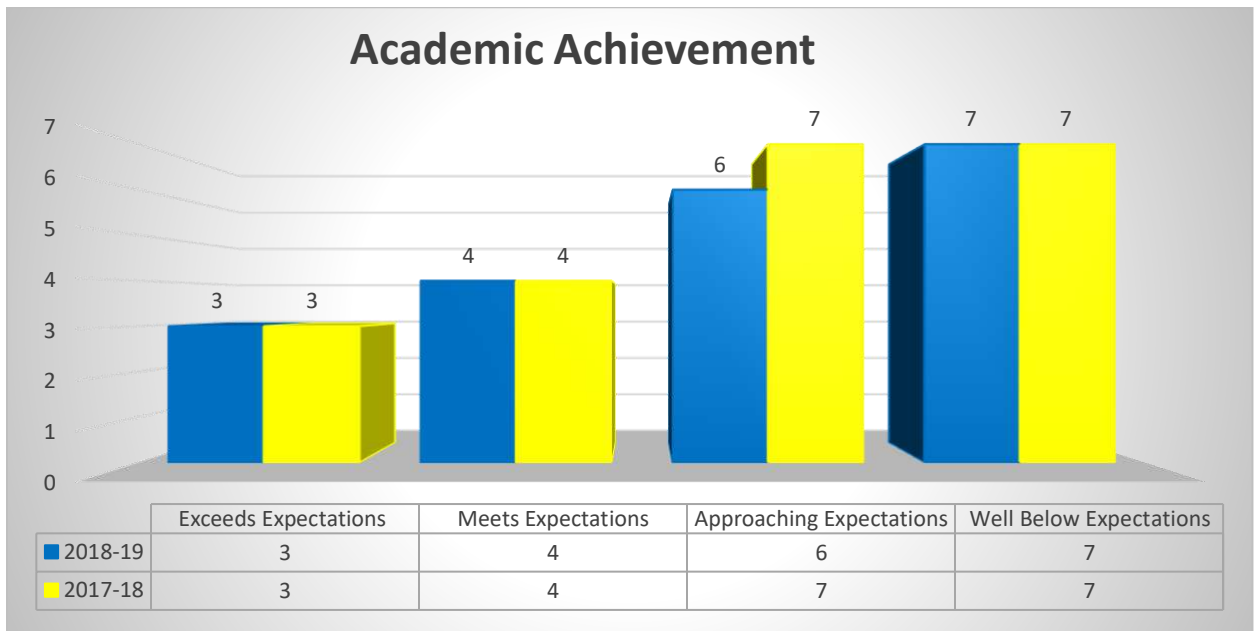
In SY18/19, 43% of the twenty state authorized charter schools received an overall rating of Meets or Exceeds Expectations, while 32% achieved a rating of Approaching Expectations and 26% achieved a rating of Well Below Expectations.

% Schools Meeting DSSF Performance Levels School Year 2018-19						
	% Academic Achievement	% Academic Progress	% School Quality/ Student Success	% Graduation Rate	% Progress toward English Language Proficiency	Overall Ratings
Exceeds Expectations	14%	22%	71%	100%	29%	11%
Meets Expectations	19%	39%	14%	0%	29%	32%
Approaching Expectations	33%	39%	14%	0%	14%	32%
Well Below Expectations	33%	0%	0%	0%	29%	26%

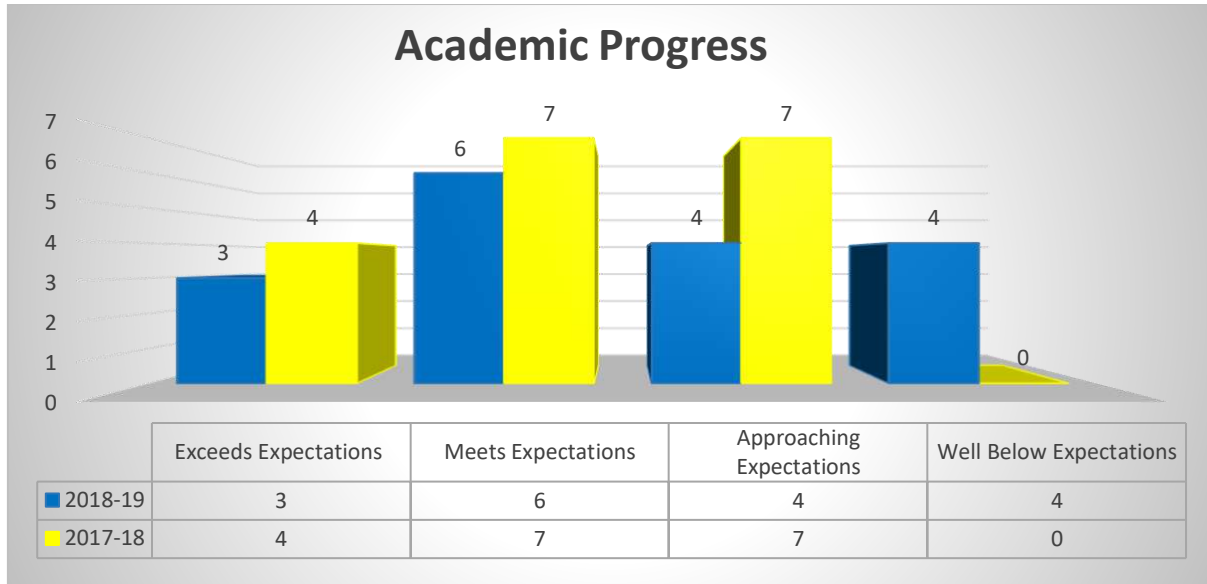
The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF overall ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18.



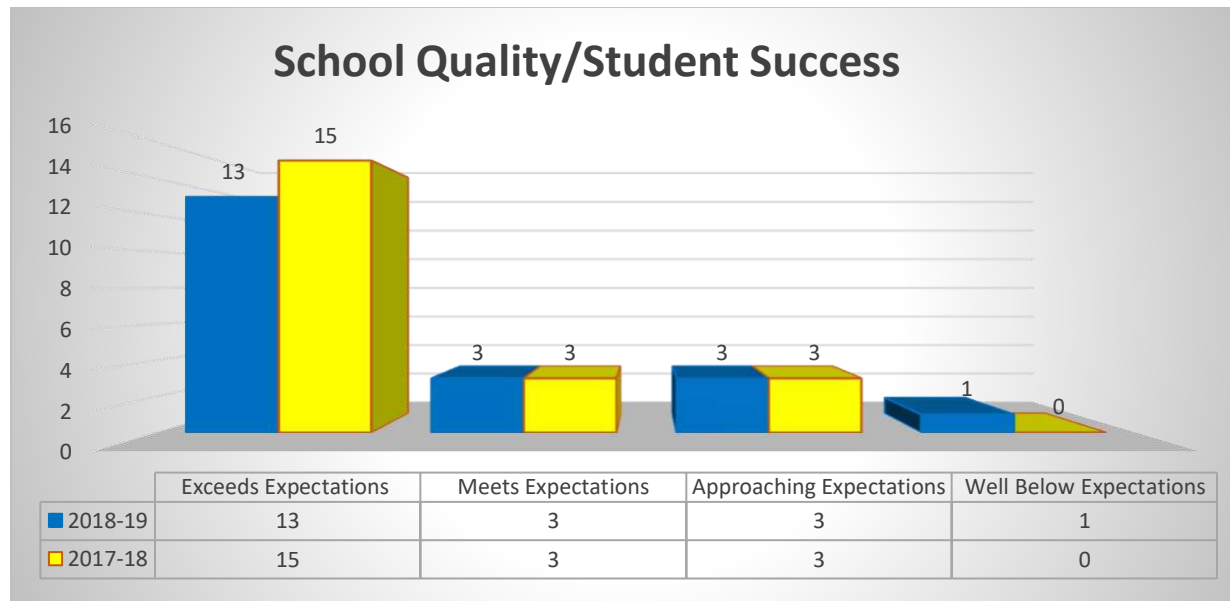
The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF Academic Achievement ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18. Seven of the twenty charter schools (35%) achieved ratings of Meets or Exceeds Expectations in the Academic Achievement indicator. Thirteen of the twenty charter schools (65%) achieved ratings of Approaching or Well Below Expectations.



The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF Academic Progress (Growth) ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18. Nine of the twenty charter schools (45%) achieved ratings of Meets or Exceeds Expectations in the Academic Progress indicator. Eight schools were rated as approaching standards or well below expectations.

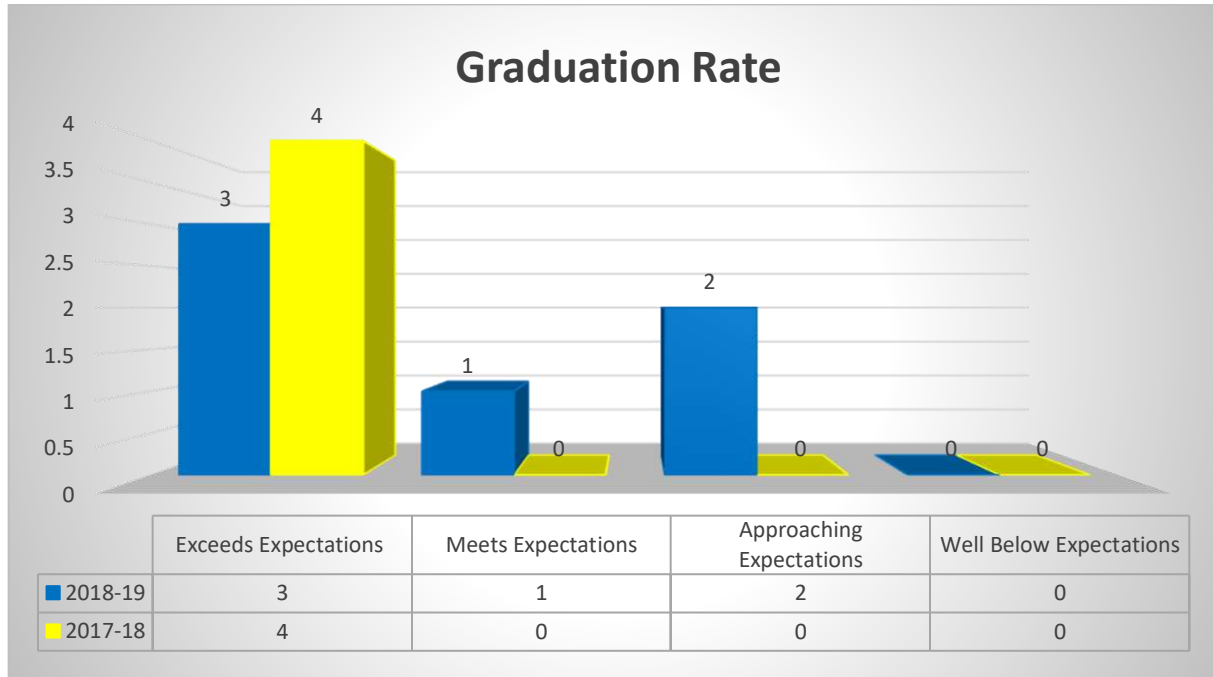


The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF School Quality / Student Success ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18. Sixteen of the twenty charter schools (80%) achieved ratings of Meets or Exceeds Expectations in the School Quality/Student Success indicator. Four were rated as approaching or well-below expectations.

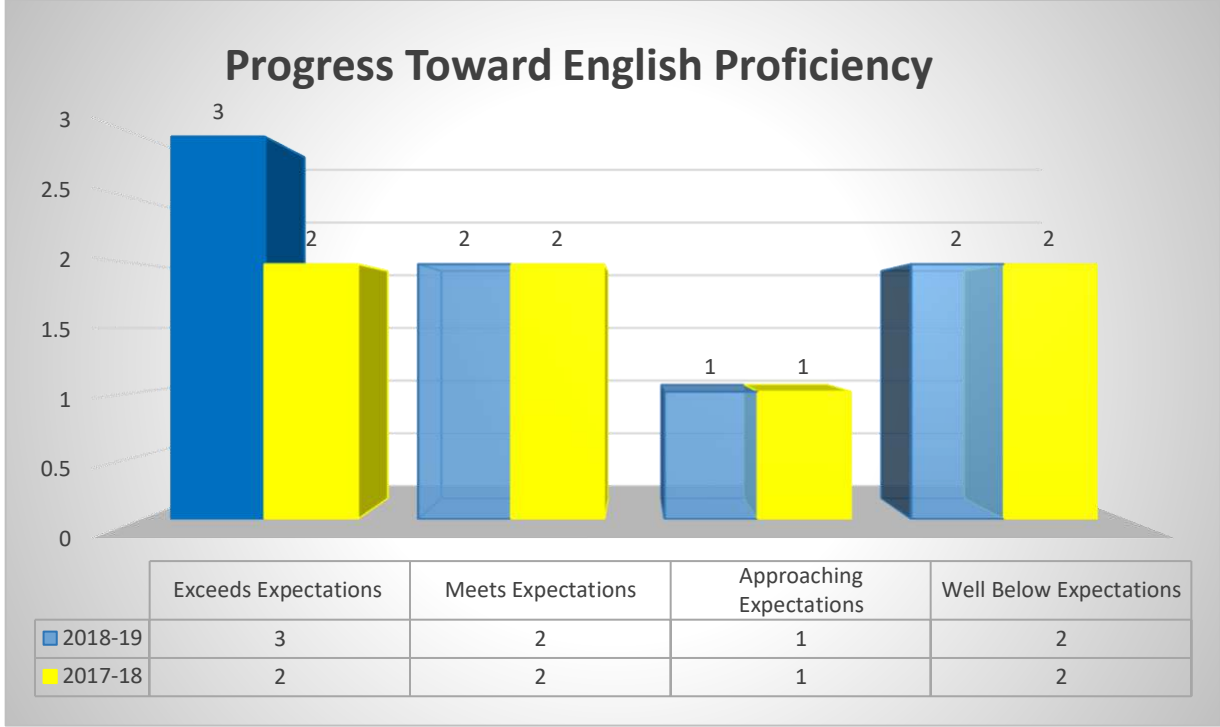


The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF School Quality / Student Success ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18. Four of the six charter high schools (100%)

with sufficient data to generate graduation rate data achieved Exceeds Expectations in the Graduation Rate indicator. Two of the eight charter high schools were rated as approaching expectations.



The chart below provides a comparison of DSSF Progress toward English Proficiency ratings for charter schools in school year 2018-19 versus school year 2017-18. Five of the eight charter schools (57%) with sufficient data to generate English Proficiency data achieved Meets or Exceeds Expectations in the Progress toward English Proficiency indicator. Three of the eight charter schools (43%) achieved ratings of Below or Well Below Expectations for this indicator.



Beyond the Achievement Data: Conclusions

The Charter School Office reviews the data collected beyond DSSF for our high performing schools and those schools demonstrating substantial growth for common trends or practices that can be replicated across schools throughout Delaware. The trends in the high performing schools this year include:

1. Creating and sustaining a culture of learning where students are empowered to be advocates for themselves and others in need;
2. Fostering relationships between among teachers, students, families, and the larger community;
3. A consistent, well-developed, and responsive curricula that is implemented with fidelity and supported by professional development;
4. A rigorous system for Response to Intervention (RTI) that includes clearly developed systems of identifying student needs and tracking student progress;
5. A curricula for RTI that is implemented and supported by professional development; and
6. Strong site-based management.

There are many factors that make schools successful which includes establishing a climate and culture of success, consistent effective school leadership, and a high functioning system of school governance lead by a strategic plan. These factors will be covered in the Organizational Performance Framework.

Organizational Performance Framework

The purpose of the Organizational Performance Framework is to provide each charter school and the public a useful annual assessment of the school's organizational soundness, public stewardship, and fulfillment of essential legal obligations. The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law, the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

- Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?
- Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations, fiduciary duties, and sound public stewardship?
- Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?

As much as possible, the Organizational Performance Framework seeks to focus on:

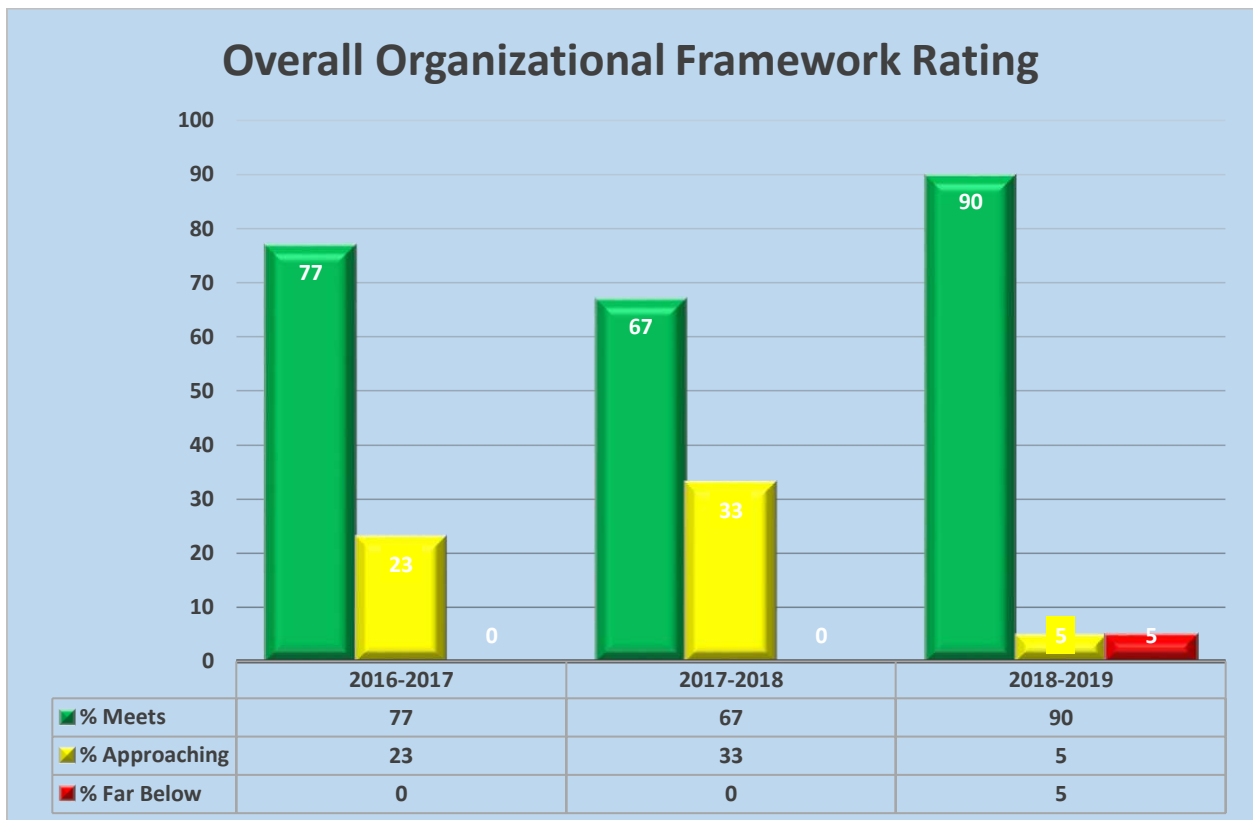
- Outcomes rather than process or inputs (except where the law dictates particular compliance processes or requirements);
- Matters that are material or significant to a school's organizational health and effectiveness; and
- Measures that can be objectively judged or determined.

The overall Organizational Performance Framework is broken down into four metrics or indicators that include ten separate measures. These metrics/indicators and measures include:

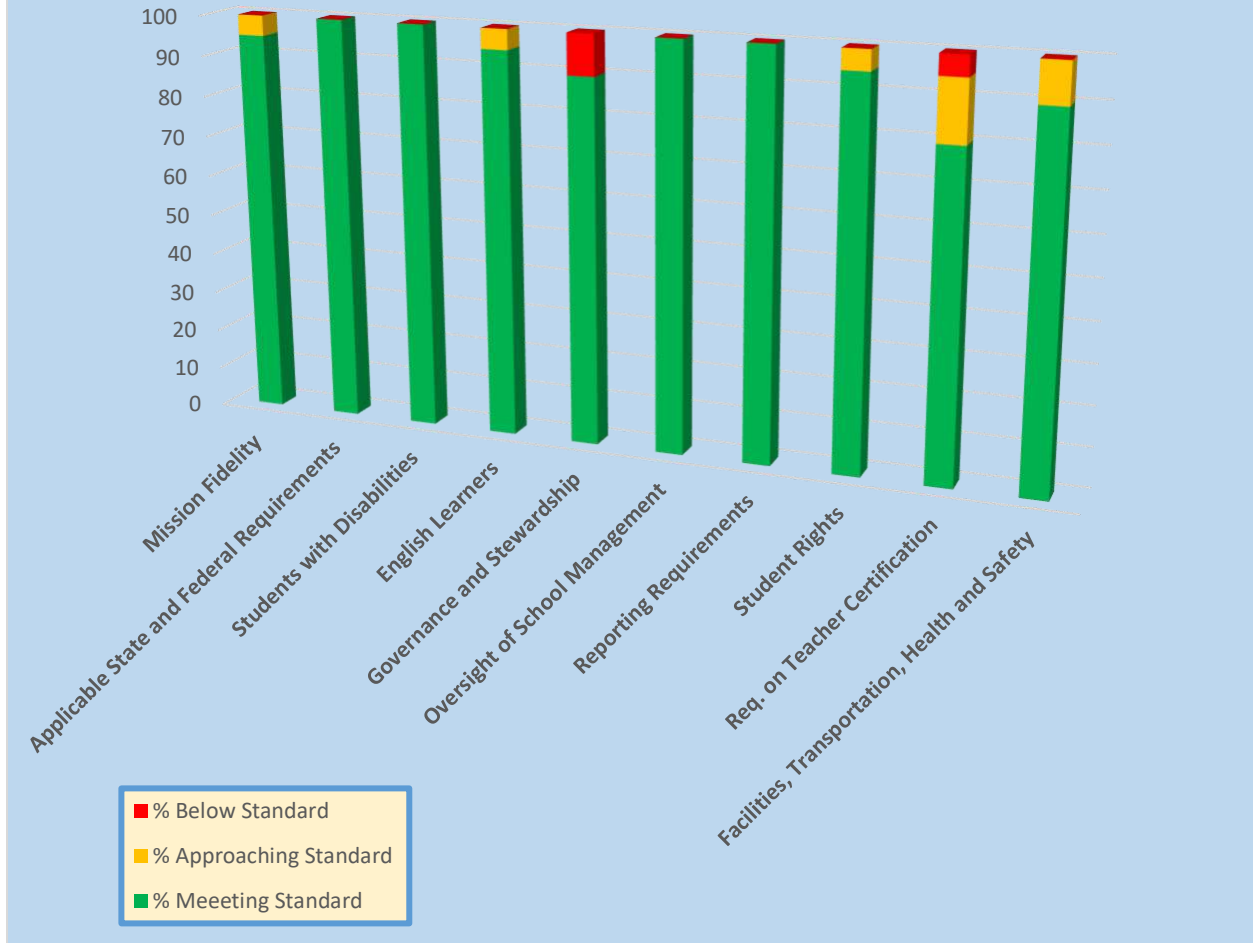
1. Education Program
 - a. Mission Fidelity
 - b. Applicable State and Federal Requirements
 - c. Students with Disabilities (SWDs)
 - d. English Learners (ELs)
2. Governance and Reporting
 - a. Governance and Public Stewardship
 - b. Oversight of School Management
 - c. Reporting Requirements
3. Students and Staff
 - a. Student Rights
 - b. Requirements on Teacher Certification and Hiring Staff
4. Facilities, Transportation, Health, and Safety

2018-19 Overall Ratings - Organizational Performance Framework

In SY18/19, there was one school that earned an overall rating of Far Below Standard on the Organizational Performance Framework and one school earned a rating of Approaching Standard. The remaining schools earned ratings of Meets Standard.

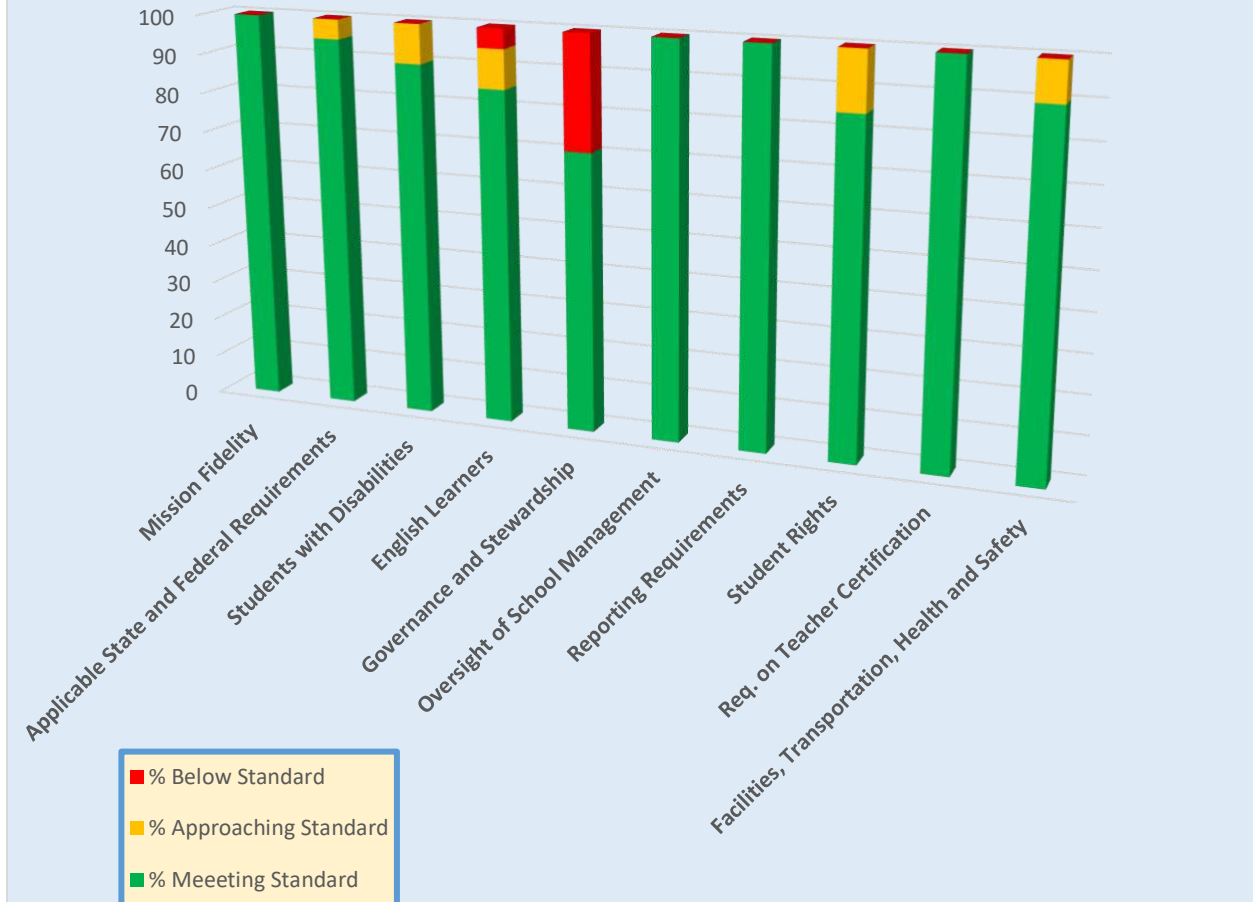


2018 / 2019 Organizational Framework % Meeting, Approaching and Below Standard



In SY18/19, the greatest area of concern in the Organizational Framework is Requirements on Teacher Certification. The area of Governance and Stewardship improved from SY 17/18 to SY 18/19.

2017 / 2018 Organizational Framework % Meeting, Approaching and Below Standard



Beyond the Organizational Performance Framework Data: Conclusions

This is the third year that the Charter School Office and charter schools have utilized the revised Organizational Frameworks. The Charter School Office has become aware of some areas of the Organizational Frameworks that are irrelevant, confusing, and/or contradictory. The Charter School Office will work to rectify those areas of the Organizational Frameworks.

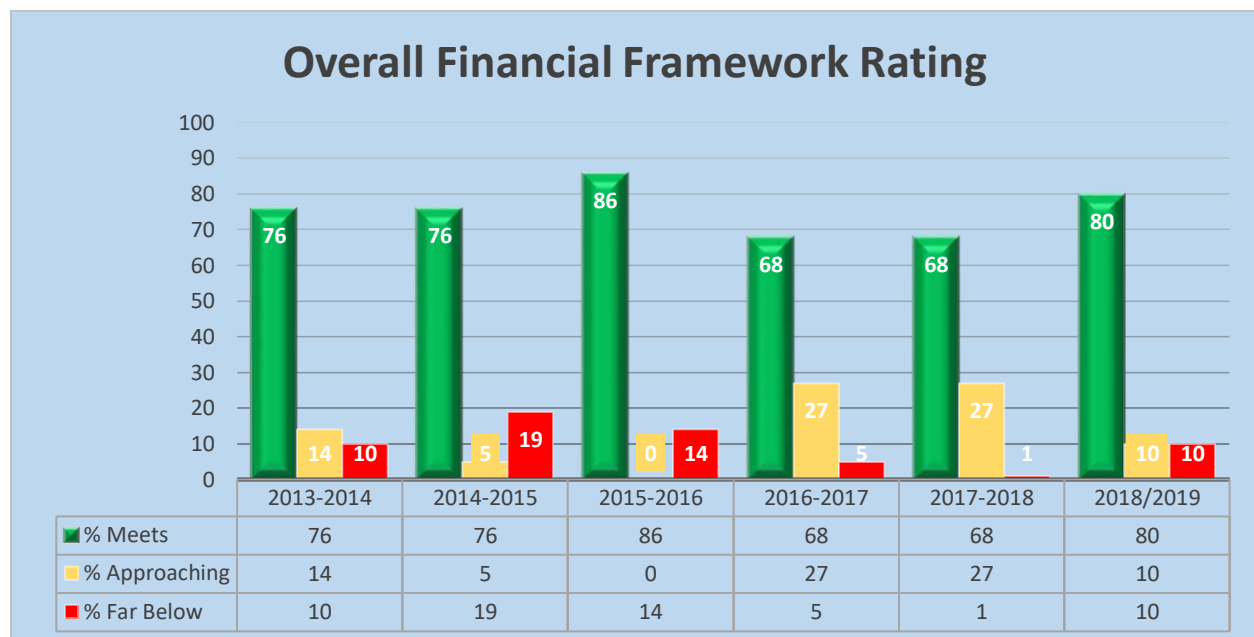
Financial Performance Framework

Charter schools have the autonomy to manage their finances consistent with state and federal law; however, authorizers must ensure that the schools they authorize are financially stable. Authorizers, by renewing or not renewing a charter school, determine whether that school is not only academically and operationally sound, but also financially viable. The Financial Performance Framework gauges both near term financial health and longer term financial sustainability.

The portion of the framework that tests a school’s near term financial health is designed to depict the school’s financial position and viability in the upcoming year. Schools meeting the desired standards demonstrate a low-risk of financial distress in the coming year. Schools that fail to meet the standards may currently be experiencing financial difficulties and/or are at high risk for financial hardship in the near term. These schools may require additional review and immediate corrective action on the part of the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE).

The portion of the framework that tests a school’s longer term financial sustainability are designed to depict a school’s financial position and viability over time. Schools meeting the desired standards demonstrate a low-risk of financial distress in the future. Schools that fail to meet the standards are at high risk for financial hardship in the future.

Revisions to the Financial Performance Framework were made in October of 2016. These changes went into effect for the 2017-2018 annual report. Due to the alignment of the prior annual reporting and the October 2016 changes to the Financial Framework, it was possible to include historical data for this performance framework. The Financial Performance Framework is designed to be a stand-alone document that clearly identifies each school’s financial standing in the context of the eight measures.



2018-2019 Overall Financial Performance ratings

In SY 2018-2019, two schools were rated as approaching standard and two schools were rated as far-below standard using the Financial Framework. This overall data is further explained by the metric/indicators and measures that are utilized to determine if a charter school is meeting the standards of financial performance.

These Metrics/Indicators and Measures include³:

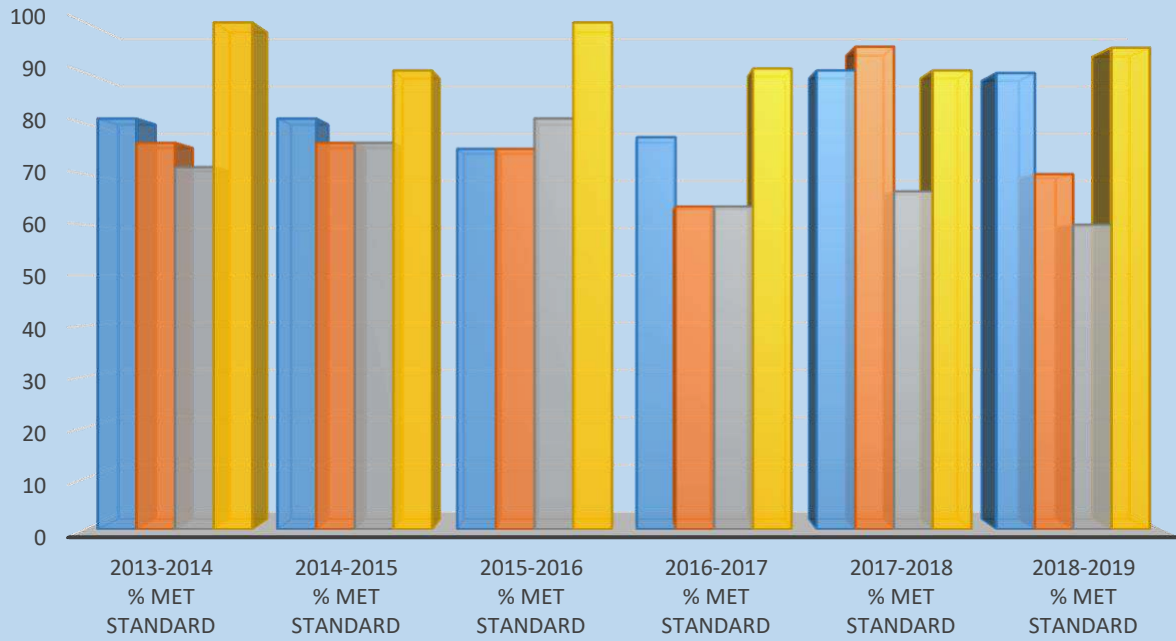
1. Near-Term Metric/Indicators
 - a. Current Ratio
 - b. Unrestricted Days Cash
 - c. Enrollment Variance
 - d. Default
2. Sustainability Metric/Indicators
 - a. Total Margin
 - b. Debt to Asset Ratio
 - c. Cash Flow
 - d. Debt Service Coverage Ratio
3. Financial Management and Oversight Metric/Indicators
 - a. Financial Management and oversight

2018-2019 Near-Term Indicators

The Near Term Indicators comprise four measures including current ratio, unrestricted days cash, enrollment variance, and default. The current ratio depicts the relationship between a school's current assets and current liabilities. The unrestricted days cash on hand ratio indicates how many days a school can pay its expenses without another inflow of cash. Enrollment variance tells authorizers whether or not the school is meeting its authorized enrollment, thereby generating sufficient revenue to fund ongoing operations. Debt default indicates if a school is not meeting debt obligations or covenants.

³ For each measure, the school is able to earn a rating of "Meets Standard", "Approaches Standard", or "Far Below Standard"

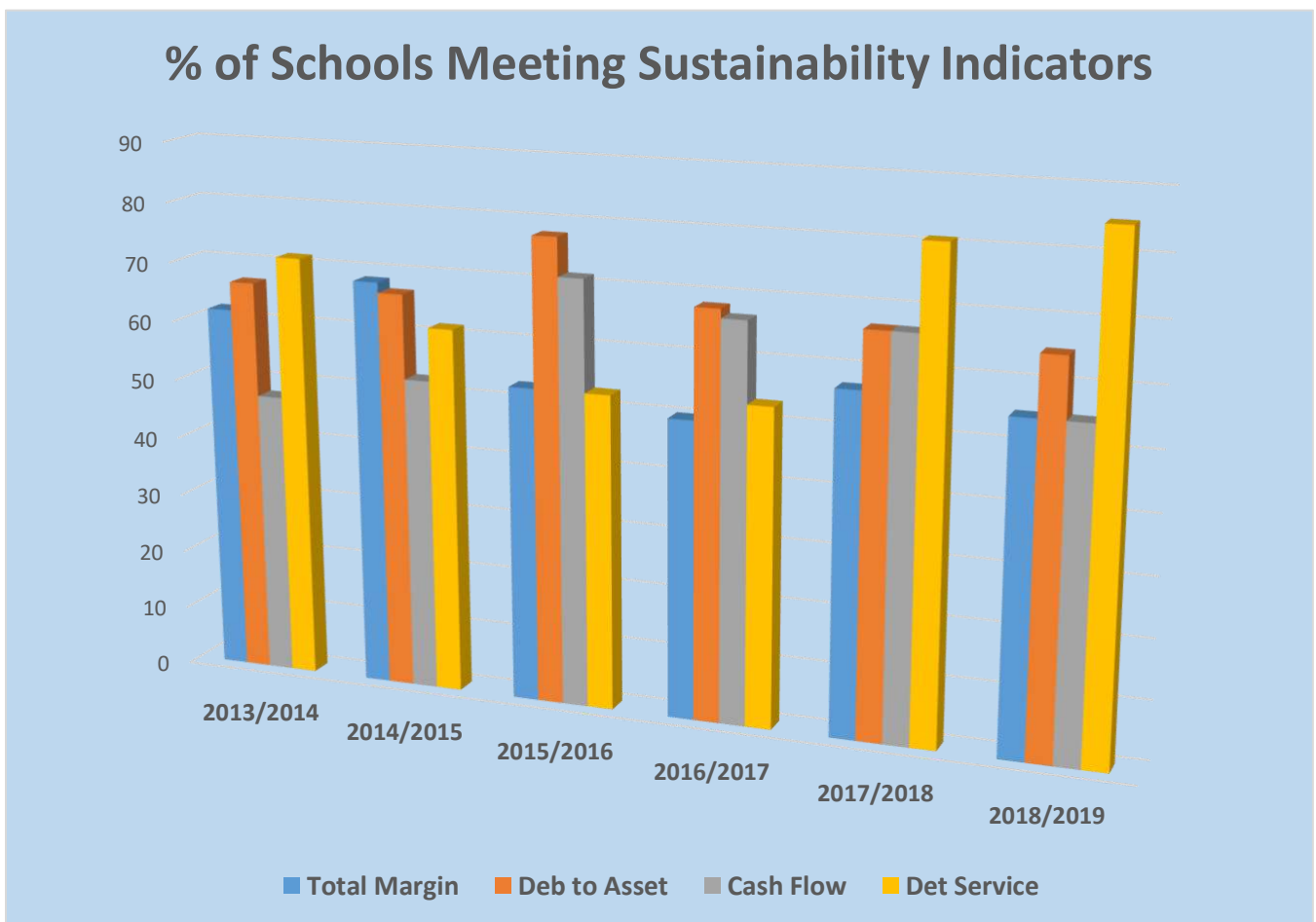
% of Schools Meeting Near Term Metrics/Indicators



	2013-2014 % Met Standard	2014-2015 % Met Standard	2015-2016 % Met Standard	2016-2017 % Met Standard	2017-2018 % Met Standard	2018-2019 % Met Standard
■ Current Ratio	81	81	75	77.3	90.5	90
■ Days Cash	76.2	76.2	75	63.6	95.2	70
■ Enrollment Variance	71.4	76.2	81	63.6	66.6	60
■ Default, Loan Covenants & Debt Service Payments	100	90.5	100	90.9	90.5	95

2018-2019 Sustainability Indicators

The Sustainability Indicators comprise four measures including total margin, debt to asset ratio, cash flow, and debt service coverage ratio. Total margin measures the deficit or surplus a school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. The debt to asset ratio measures the amount of liabilities a school owes versus the assets they own; in other words, it measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. The cash flow measure indicates a school's change in cash balance from one period to another. The debt service coverage ratio indicates a school's ability to cover its debt obligations in the current year.



Beyond the Financial Performance Framework Data: Conclusions

Review of the data indicates that schools operating for less than five years are less likely to meet overall Financial Performance Framework standards. There is a similar trend for schools that have made substantial capital improvements. These substantial capital improvements impact Financial Performance Framework ratings overall and within individual measures.

The CSO will work with schools to develop plans to improve individual measures that do not meet standard. It is the goal of the CSO, in conjunction with charter school leaders, to determine what enhancements could be made to the Financial Performance Framework as well as tools and measures that can be used to provide more accurate projections in 2019.

In August of 2019 a committee was convened to further study the Financial Frameworks to ensure that the ratings received by schools is truly indicative of that school's financial well-being and sustainability. A revised Financial Framework is expected to be put into place in April of 2021.

Innovation and Collaboration

Each charter school highlights their innovative practices as a part of their annual reports that can be found at <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/page/2654>.

As a part of these reports, schools were required to share innovative practices that could be replicated. Excerpts from the school's annual reports are below.

Academy of Dover shared:

AOD has a great process for Response to Intervention (RTI) that proves to be effective. Currently, AOD uses DIBELS for reading RTI and Math Inventory for math RTI. Our schedule allows a 30 minute block for both reading and math RTI during the day in addition to the regular ELA and Math blocks. This allows AOD students to spend about 3 hours per day in small groups with the classroom teacher and the math and reading interventionists. Students are tested 3 times per year in these areas and benchmarked either weekly or bi-weekly depending on their tier. Also, for math students practice on IXL daily for the additional math practice at their grade level. The interventionists meet with classroom teachers and observe RTI times to ensure that our program is implemented with fidelity. Attached is RTI data for the 2017 school year which shows Beginning, Middle and End of year (Appendix 4 of the SY16/17). Keeping in mind this was the first year with the Math Inventory, many students went up in tiers. However, we continue to analyze data and make changes to positively affect the process and student outcomes.

Campus Community School shared:

Creating a culture of learning within the CCS school community naturally lends itself to **innovation and unique features**. Foremost, there is an overall expectation that everyone and everything is constantly evolving, growing with infinite capacity, where all students can be successful. Second, relationship building between and among teachers, students, families, and the larger community is essential to understanding the interconnectivity and interdependence of all learning. Finally, we believe in developing in students the capacity to nurture passion creativity and intrinsic motivation to learn.

***Responsive Classroom** - Campus Community has adopted the Responsive Classroom approach to teaching and learning. Responsive Classroom is a researched based approach that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social/emotional learning. Responsive Classroom is structured around 4 domains: Engaging Academics, Positive Community, Effective Management, and Organizational Awareness. The program has a set of six guiding principles that Campus Community has adopted as school-wide guiding principles. These are:

- Teaching social and emotional skills is as important as teaching academic content.
- How we teach is as important as what we teach.
- Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.

- What we know and believe about our students—individually, culturally, and developmentally—informs our expectations, reactions, and attitudes about those students.
- How we work together as adults to create a safe, joyful, and inclusive school environment is as important as our individual contribution or competence.
- Partnering with families – knowing them and valuing their contributions – is as important as knowing the children we teach.

***Professional Learning Communities** - The school environment is learner-centered for both children and adults. Staff are organized into professional learning communities that meet weekly to reflect and improve upon the results of data analysis and classroom practice, with the goal of continuous improvement. Staff also meets one or more times per month to discuss and study academic focus areas. The focus areas for 2017-18 were two aspects of Responsive Classroom: Teacher Language and Engaging Academics.

***Academic Enrichment** - All K-8 students participate daily in Academic Enrichment, as part of Campus Community's day. The purpose of Academic Enrichment is to provide students with additional time to enhance their academic skills in the core content areas, especially reading, writing and math. Some students may need more support, while others may need more of a challenge. Whole class and individual needs are considered when designing this time. Additional time for students on RTI tier 2 and 3 is met through Academic Enrichment. 4th-8th grade students also receive enrichment based around their interest through clubs, such as Robotics, Gentlemen of Quality, and Band.

***Standards-Based Grading/Reporting** – We have completely transformed our report card to show more than just a grade for each class/subject. Our new report card also shows how students are progressing in their mastery of academic standards at each grade level. This end product is preceded by assessments that are intentionally designed to align to the standards. Teachers keep a standards-based gradebook, as well.

***Student-led Conferences** - Another innovative practice at CCS is our student-led conferences. A student-led conference is a meeting with the student, his or her family, and the teacher to discuss school progress. The student has the leadership role in informing parents of his/her progress by sharing evidence of their learning in meeting state standards and habits of mind. Students use this time to discuss school expectations as well as personal growth goals. Student-led conferences help students develop ownership and accountability for their learning. These conferences are required and take place twice per year.

***Habits of Mind** - Habits of mind are an essential part of the environment at Campus Community School. Each trimester, students are graded in the areas of Citizenship, Reflection, Self-Direction, and Persistence. Campus Community emphasizes these traits throughout the school, and teaches them to students along with the academic curriculum.

First State Military shared:

First State Military's key innovative practice is the focus on culture and a strong foundation of for a successful learning environment centered on the principles of the Marine Corps.

Freire shared:

Freire Wilmington has put significant effort into positively enabling students to achieve high standards through a variety of initiatives. Many of these initiatives stem from the fostering of a supportive school climate, creating a safe space for students, families and staff alike. Freire Wilmington takes a proactive approach in building a Freire Family, which means that the culture of the school is one where everyone is valued and where the school community is built upon mutual respect, openness and honesty. Student and staff voice is paramount to the operation of the school, as Freire believes that the success of the community, as a whole and individually, is contingent upon making sure everyone is included.

There are many ways the Freire builds this culture within the community. New students are introduced through a two-day summer clinic, before the start of the school year. The clinic serves as an intensive orientation to the unique school culture and expectations. Students learn conflict resolution skills, the anti-bullying program, and peer mediation. Throughout the year, students have access to various behavioral supports through the Dean of Students and through peer mediation. Mediations are held by trained student peers and staff and can be requested by the student themselves, a staff member or a dean as a requirement of a behavioral resolution. Mediations are completely confidential, keeping with the theme of honesty and respect. Academically, Freire has implemented the use of Afterschool Academic Centers where students can drop-in for help from teachers as well as their peers on topics and subjects that they have difficulty with.

Freire has also undertaken a number of diversity initiatives to help students and staff bridge differences. At the midway point of the 2016-17 school year, as students returned from rigorous midterms, a "Dragon Day" was held. This was a celebration focused on building the school family and creating a sense of belonging and personal development. Teachers offered workshops and activities like chess lessons and escape the room that students signed up for based on interest. The day also included a diversity session where participants discussed their own identities, got to know others, and ultimately built a greater mutual understanding of issues around diversity and sense of oneness. The 2016-17 year also featured all-school field trips to go ice skating and to enjoy Hershey Park as a way to build camaraderie and connectedness.

Further, Freire held conversation circles on race for the school community in 2016-17, including family-focused events to ensure the maximum of opportunities to integrate community voice into school outcomes. Facilitators led a discussion on a topic such as black lives matter vs. blue lives matter vs. all lives matter. Conversation was then directed toward brainstorming about how to best keep students safe coming to and from school each day so that the Freire community could ensure student safety and success despite nationwide tensions.

Many of the innovation practices mentioned above have improved culture, impacted a decrease in attrition rates, and impacted a complementary increase in attendance. Attrition rates dropped

18% from 2015-16 to 2016-17. Further, attendance has increased from 88% in 2015-16 to 93% in 2016-17. Anecdotally, student interviews have also described an increased sense of safety and family culture. Freire will continue to strive for excellence in these climate indicators and others year after year in the effort to foster a supportive and safe school community.

Gateway Lab School shared:

At GLS we have an above-average percentage of students with developmental disabilities and learning differences. Examples include hearing impairment and disorders such as autism spectrum, attention deficit, oppositional defiant, bipolar and conduct. The composition of our student population calls on us to innovate in certain ways:

- For example, we believe that a foundation of solid emotional growth is a precondition for strong academic growth and to this end we successfully blend the Responsive Classroom approach with Applied Behavior Analysis. This innovation facilitates significant emotional growth in our students. We believe this practice is replicable at other schools in Delaware.
- Another innovation we have found to be very successful is our Wilson Reading program. We have a specifically trained staff member in the practice of Wilson Reading, and she is also trained to train our instructional staff in how to benefit from Wilson Reading. The innovation here is not only the use of the practice with students, but in the leverage gained through having a central expert act as a resource to all instruction staff. The data in Attachment-1 (MAP data) on the last side (“Wilson Data”) illustrates the success of this innovation: 91% of the GLS student who participate in the Wilson Reading program have met their NWEA MAP growth targets. We believe this practice is replicable at other schools in Delaware.

Great Oaks shared:

GO-WIL’s approach apart from other college preparatory charter schools is our high-dosage tutoring; the Great Oaks Tutor Corps, a highly selective cadre of recent college graduates, will deliver at least two hours of individualized instruction to every student every day. GO-WIL will serve Wilmington students in Grades 6-12. In our first year, enrolled 240 sixth graders, selected a corps of 40 highly effective tutors, and currently have 60 recent college graduates supporting our students’ academic growth. The academic model of our schools was inspired by the Match School of Boston (Match), which has an extraordinary track record of success using the Tutor Corps model.

GO-WIL’s vision has three components and extends beyond the four walls of our school. First we envision creating a supportive yet rigorous middle/high school program that promotes college readiness. Second, we envision incorporating an intensive teacher preparedness program that creates a pipeline of highly effective educators. Third, we envision partnering with other high-performing schools and community-based organizations to invest in the community of Wilmington, DE.

The data that this is replicable can be seen in the MATCH School, which has sent 89% of graduated high school seniors to 4-year colleges and universities, and the Great Oaks Charter School

Location in Newark, New Jersey, which graduated 100% of their seniors into 4-year colleges and universities in May 2017.

Kuumba Academy shared:

Kuumba Academy is happy to report the continued successful Implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework to support our teachers' professional growth and development. The Urban Charter Collaborative received the "Superstars in Education" award for the creation of this innovative and effective framework.

In collaboration with Thomas Edison, East Side Charter School and Prestige Academy, KACS is implementing an alternative teacher evaluation system in place of the DPAS II. 2016-2017 marked our fourth year of implementation. TEF is built around four goals/objectives that we believe revamping our teacher evaluation process will help us meet. These include:

- Dramatically Improve Student Performance - Put student learning front and center and utilize their performance as the primary benchmark of our teachers' development and success.
- Develop and Retain Effective Teachers – Engage teachers in a culture of feedback and professional learning that promotes effective practice, enables leadership roles, and rewards those achieving at high levels.
- Develop a Network of Like-Minded Colleagues - Create space for educators both within and between our schools to provide feedback and engage in development opportunities.
- Inform Policy and Practice - Share lessons learned to policymakers and practitioners in order to drive change at scale to the benefit of every student throughout Delaware.
- 76% of teachers reported that the feedback they receive from the TEF is "very valuable" or "extremely valuable".

Las Americas Aspira Academy shared:

The program at Aspira includes many innovative practices including:

- **Dual Language:** The K-5 Dual Language Immersion Program focuses on building academic biliteracy and fostering the transfer of concepts/skills across two languages (Spanish/English) in all core content areas. The Middle School Dual Language Immersion Continuation Model provides daily Spanish Language Arts instruction and Immersion Social Studies content taught in Spanish.
- **Project-Based Learning (K-8):** A teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge.
- **Mastery Learning and Assessment (K-5):** Focus on implementation of Common Core, NGSS and DE Content Standards in a competency-based learning model. Implementation of Mastery Connect to provide real-time information to teachers and parents regarding students' mastery of concepts and skills.

- **Social Curriculum:** A school-wide implementation of the Responsive Classroom Approach, which embraces a fostering of community, based upon teaching socially responsible behaviors.
- **Blended Learning Initiative:** 1:1 iPads in grades K-2; 1:1 Chromebooks in Grades 3-5 and Middle School; Implementation of Schoology, Google Apps for Education, Discovery Education Streaming (K-8) and Science Techbook (K-5); and Science Bits (6-8).
- **Personalized Learning Pilot (3rd-4th Grade):** Personalized learning puts students at the center of the learning environment, and leverages the power of technology and real world experiences to empower students, teachers, and families to all work together towards students' individualized learning goals.
- **Character Education:** ASPIRA's Character Education provides students the social and emotional foundation and skills necessary to work in a rich and diverse learning environment. It focuses on teaching Accountability, Social and Emotional Intelligence, Positive Mindset, Inquiry, Resilience, and Appreciation mostly through two components already embedded in our instructional practices: Morning Meetings and Community Circles. By having a character growth focus, we launch our students into a successful future. We teach one character trait per month of the year. We do this by incorporating conversations, quotes, readings, discussions, games, and other similar practices to one of our Morning Meeting components: Greeting, Sharing, Activity, or Morning Message. Growth Mindset is a key trait taught throughout the school year. Students at ASPIRA track their progress towards demonstrating these 7 traits throughout the school year. We use Character Growth Cards to provide opportunities for student self-reflection toward demonstrating these traits. Our Character Growth Cards are provided to students every trimester. Via a mini-conference with their homeroom teachers, students discuss their progress and next steps (strategies). At the end of each trimester, celebrations of learning occur to reinforce our students' social and emotional practices and growth. Since the inception of our Character Growth Cards, we have had 100% completion rate in Middle School. At ASPIRA, our social and emotional growth is as important as our academic growth.
- **Grade-Level Proficiency:** LAAA prides itself on offering a balanced curriculum with two main components - a mini-lesson tied to grade-level Common Core State Standards and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students at both their independent and instructional levels. These concepts are accounted for in our daily lesson plans following the scope and sequence document. During the 2016 - 2017 school year, LAAA took an additional approach to meeting grade-level proficiency by providing staff and students with rich data analysis by Smarter assessment claim, research, and corresponding professional development. While SBAC Interims are used on a monthly basis to practice for the summative Smarter assessment, "Test Readiness" instruction has been incorporated into the units of study (1-2 months prior to the summative Smarter assessment). Data was analyzed comparing 2015-2016 (no test readiness units of study) to 2016- 2017 implementing test readiness units of study. Results indicated an increase in writing claim proficiency at each grade level: 4th Grade 10%, 5th Grade 13%, 6th Grade 15%, and 7th Grade 3%. The research and professional development around performance tasks and brief writes positively contributing to these increased outcomes could be shared and replicated at other schools in Delaware.

MOT Charter School shared:

At MOT Charter, we place a heavy focus on school culture and the student and family experience. Students are empowered to be advocates for themselves and others in need. Kindness and respect make up two of our core values. We celebrate students and actions that contribute to a warm and friendly school environment. We employ a problem-solving approach to student discipline that builds understanding and good relations.

Our environment begins with students feeling supported in their academics, but extends well beyond the classroom. Students are provided with many opportunities to find success and enjoyment in extracurricular activities. We celebrate diversity by encouraging students to share about their customs and cultures throughout the year. A highlight of our program is the annual Multi-Cultural Fair, during which families come together to share the traditions, customs, and food of the wide range of cultures represented in our student body.

Involved Parents

Involved parents are a key ingredient to MOT's success. With over 500 family members logging almost 5,000 volunteer hours, the MOT parent body is fully engaged. Parents routinely help the school in many traditional ways such as providing support to classroom teachers, chaperoning field trips and dances and sending in items requested by teachers. However, parent involvement reaches much further than this. We have an incredibly active PTO that sponsors many school-wide events that help contribute to MOT's sense of community. The PTO also fundraises to provide operational support to both the K8 Academy and the High School. Parents coach athletic and academic teams, serve as club advisors and participate in our hiring process as members of interview panels. Parents help at recess and support other important school-wide functions such as the winter concert, graduation, and open house. Parents serve as members of the P.O.S.S.E. (Parents Offering Support Services in Education) to provide small group instruction to students who need extra help and those who need additional challenge. Parent volunteers regularly provide support in our library.

Rigorous, Student-Centered Instruction

At MOT Charter School, classrooms are student-centered and lessons are designed to challenge and engage students in thoughtful inquiry, problem-solving, and analysis. Based on the Common Core standards for math and language arts and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science, instruction guides students to increasingly deeper levels of understanding. Classroom experiences include discussion, independent and group research, collaboration with peers, presentations, projects, and real-world learning opportunities. While we expect all students to work to their potential, we accept that all students do not begin at the same place. We have a variety of supports in place to ensure that all students continue to excel.

Responsive Curriculum

Rooted in national content standards and best practices, and anchored by well-respected instructional resources, MOT Charter’s curriculum is a living and evolving entity. Each year, the instructional staff analyze student achievement results from the prior year as well as information about the students in the current year to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to student needs. Using daily common planning time and ten professional development days over the course of the year, our faculty constantly look for innovative ways to engage and challenge students and to integrate learning across content areas.

Early Intervention

Whether it is for academic, social, or emotional reasons, we are committed to intervening early when a student is struggling. Interventions begin with the teacher, student, and parents jointly creating a plan for success. These plans incorporate a variety of supports and resources available to students – including RTI (Response to Intervention) services, counseling, mentoring, tutoring, online supports, and weekly check-ins. In the case of RTI services, progress monitoring data is used to track whether students are progressing, maintaining, or falling farther behind. This data is used to adjust or change the interventions being used. When necessary, we also hold comprehensive early intervention meetings at which parents, students, teachers, administrators and support faculty meet to problem solve ways to help the student get back on track.

Well-Rounded Arts Program Beginning In Kindergarten

We believe that a well-rounded education includes study in the arts. MOT’s educational program provides students with the opportunity to participate in music, art, and drama beginning in kindergarten. As they enter middle school, students may choose to concentrate in one area of the arts. High school students have the opportunity for even greater exposure to the arts by joining the Academy of the Arts and choosing to major in digital communications, visual arts, dance, theater, vocal music or instrumental music.

K-12 Continuous Course of Study

As a K-12 school, MOT Charter students have the opportunity to experience continuity from grade level to grade level over the course of their academic career. Students become a part of a small school community in which teachers and administrators get to know each and every student and their families. This is one of the reasons that MOT Charter has enjoyed extremely low student attrition year to year and above-average daily attendance. Because students progress through a continuous, vertically aligned curriculum with teachers who communicate and collaborate across content areas and across grade levels, we are better able to monitor and support student academic achievement and deliver instruction targeted to our students’ needs.

The continuity from year to year likewise supports and enhances our school environment. Starting in kindergarten, students begin to build strong relationships with teachers, support staff, administrators and volunteer parents. High staff retention allows us to get to know our students and build strong relationships with our students and families. Over the years, students develop a profound sense of belonging and acceptance.

Further, from the start students are held to high standards of conduct and are expected to demonstrate kindness and respect throughout the community. As this expectation is reinforced year after year, students gain an increasingly deeper understanding and appreciation for what it means to work together to build a community.

1-to-1 technology program

Every high school student enrolled at MOT Charter is provided with a laptop and online access to all of their instructional materials. Using *Schoology* as our learning platform, students and teachers engage in a true blended learning experience. We have extended use of the *Schoology* platform to portions of our K8 Academy, and have also begun to transition our middle school grades towards a more classroom-technology-rich environment. This allows us the opportunity to provide greater differentiation for our students while also maintaining predominantly mixed-ability classrooms. Our hope in the next few years is to extend our 1-to-1 program to include our middle school students as well.

Commitment to Enrichment Programs at K8

The MOT Charter K8 Academy recently modified the student academic schedule to include greater opportunities for enrichment. This adjustment to the schedule has allowed the middle school to recently develop a vocal ensemble and an instrumental band that meets throughout the year. In addition, students are engaged in a STEM Lab to apply their problem solving skills in an integrated class structure. STEM Lab expands content and skills from the core classes and builds teams of mixed 7th and 8th grade students to foster cooperative learning and strategic results driven thinking using all aspects of math, science, engineering, technology.

Newark Charter School Shared:

1) Setting the Bar High for Academics

Newark Charter School's original charter application stated that the school was established to provide an alternative "rigorous and academically challenging curriculum." The school's theme is "Emphasizing Excellence in Academics and Decorum" reflects our philosophy "to serve a diverse student population by challenging each student at his or her level so that all students exceed the state standards and reach their full potential." The outcomes described in this Annual Report show that our two-time National Blue Ribbon School for Academic Excellence has achieved consistently excellent results. Setting the bar high for academics is essential and replicable in all of our public schools.

During the 2016-17 school year, the school received a rating of Exceeds in three of four measurements of School Overall Performance on the Delaware School Success Framework, the state's comprehensive accountability system that measures and publicly reports on multiple areas of school success. The highest score (5 stars) was received for Academic Achievement, On Track to Graduation and College and Career Readiness. Academic Growth received a rating of four stars. This is considered to be very good, especially given the school's high level of Academic Achievement. Out of 15 state tested areas (grades 3-8 Smarter Balanced ELA and Math; grades 5, 8 and 10 DCAS Science), Newark Charter School students placed first in the state in 7 categories and second in the state in 8 categories. The school's high school students also performed significantly higher than the state and national averages on the PSAT for Math and Reading/Writing. And the juniors who took the SAT scored second highest in the state in Math and third highest in the state in Evidence-Based Reading and Writing.

2) Continuity of Educational Services

NCS provides continuity from grade to grade. Configured as a K-12 school, NCS is the largest public schools in the state. More importantly, the school has a program that allows students to remain in one place for a longer period of time than most traditional public schools. The benefit of this continuity of educational services is enhanced by the fact that student attrition is extremely low (less than 1%). NCS is above the state average daily attendance. The school's average daily attendance is 96.68% (96.3% in the primary school; 96.94% in the intermediate school; 96.96% in the junior/senior high school). The most recent available data (2015 – 2016) for the State of Delaware shows that average daily attendance rate is 94.24% (95.32% in grades K - 3; 95.36% in grades 4 - 6; 92.815% in grades 7 - 12). Finally, the school provides summer learning opportunities including 23 Summer Camps, year-round education for students with intense or complex disabilities, and academic enrichment programs.

3) Core Knowledge Curriculum (K-8)

Since its inception, NCS has utilized the Core Knowledge curriculum scope and sequence developed by Dr. E. D. Hirsch and the Core Knowledge Foundation. It is carefully aligned to the State and Common Core Standards. The Core Knowledge curriculum framework is coherent, cumulative and, most importantly, it identifies specific content to be studied in each grade. Core Knowledge presents a body of lasting knowledge that should form the core of a preschool to 8th grade curriculum. Core Knowledge is an interdisciplinary curriculum, which helps children see the interrelationships between subjects taught in school. Because students learn best when new knowledge builds on previous knowledge, the curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that students enter each new grade ready to learn and build on knowledge and skills learned in previous years. Knowledge builds on knowledge. Gaps and repetitions in content do not occur. All students, regardless of socioeconomic backgrounds or past levels of achievement, have a level academic playing field.

NCS earned the designation as a Core Knowledge Visitation School. Schools throughout the country are encouraged to visit to learn about our academic programs. The Core Knowledge Foundation cited NCS as one of the eight best Core Knowledge schools in the country. NCS was the first school in Delaware to use the Core Knowledge curriculum. Locally, Las Americas Aspira

Academy successfully replicated NCS's Core Knowledge curriculum. The two charter schools have shared Core Knowledge in-service training for teachers. Other Delaware and regional charter schools have consulted the school about adopting its Core Knowledge curriculum.

4) Instructional Grouping

Homogeneous grouping (phasing) for instruction is observed in grades 4-8. Homogeneous groups bring together students of similar ability in order to optimize learning. Students receive instruction to meet their learning needs more specifically. Teachers can better attend to learning similarities and differences, making differentiated instruction and assessment more efficient. Extra support can be made available more readily to those who need it.

Phasing is determined by multiple indicators of student achievement, including Smarter Balanced testing, DCAS, MAP growth model testing, standardized testing, teacher and parent recommendations, grades and learning style assessments. Phasing the students into groups does not mean that any student is presumed to be below grade level, although occasionally scores may indicate that. All students are taught on grade level and receive the same curriculum. The pacing at which instruction takes place and the depth to which a topic is studied may differ. Within each phase there remains a range of learning ability so that instruction is tailored to the unique needs of the groups.

Phasing of students is reviewed by the teams of teachers and administrators working with the students, with essential input from parents. A student can move up a phase or down. The reliability of the phasing system in place at NCS has proven to be very high, as few students need to be re-phased.

1) A Community-Based School

NCS is a community-based school, made possible in part by the five-mile radius and the sibling preference in the lottery-based admissions process used by the school as encouraged by Delaware's charter school law. This is the best model to foster parental involvement, improve the school environment and motivate the students. The School Council's annual Parent Satisfaction Survey (February 2017) shows that parents are highly satisfied with the school overall. The survey yielded an increase in responses for the sixth consecutive year.

In order to foster a "small community feel" to a large and growing school with three buildings on two campuses, the School Director continued his in-house newsletter for staff called STAFF MATTERS. This weekly publication features news about staff members to keep them "connected" to each other and to keep them informed about what is happening school wide.

2) Strong Site-Based Management

As a school established by parents, there is a high degree of parent involvement and parent satisfaction each year. Parent surveys consistently show that parents are virtually 100% satisfied with the school. Parents have authentic participation in school-wide decision making. They hold the majority of seats on the Board of Directors. The School Council, consisting of parent-elected parent representatives from each grade level, serves as a "sounding board" to management on issues. It conducts and monitors two formal parent satisfaction surveys annually. The Friends of

NCS is an active and essential parent organization, providing volunteers, fund raising support, and programs to enrich the school. More than 500 different parent volunteers served the school this past year.

Internally, the staff decision making process is modeled after management practices at large integrated companies. Each grade is represented by a team leader to provide a horizontal perspective that focuses on what the students in a particular grade experience and learn. Academic core content areas are representative by department heads to provide a vertical perspective, ensuring that each content area connects from one grade to the next. In the Jr./Sr. High School, a faculty-based Leadership Council ensures that shared decision making occurs through constant communication among academic departments, grades, and with administration.

3) Market-Driven School

NCS continuously measures the extent to which it is meeting the demands of its market. Annually, it uses extensive parent and staff survey data, and input through stakeholder groups such as the School Council, Board of Directors and CTE Advisory Committees, to assess how the school is measuring up to its constituents' expectations and how it is responding to market trends and demands, such as the job market and competition within the education environment. A school-wide strategic long range planning committee is being formed in 2017.

Market demand continues to be strong. 3,247 external applications were received for the 2017-2018 school year. Approximately 215 applicants were offered enrollment, mostly in the Kindergarten class, leaving more than 3,000 students on the waiting list for grades K-12.

8) Emphasis on Decorum and Character Development

NCS's motto is "Excellence in Academics and Decorum." The school has made it a priority to create an orderly, safe environment allows teachers to teach and students to learn. School uniforms have been in place from the beginning to promote discipline, respect, and a focus on learning. This has since been replicated in many public school districts and charter schools. Strict absentee and tardiness policies teach students to value the importance of education. Students encourage one another to adopt good behavior, good manners, honesty, politeness and civic-mindedness.

NCS was the first school in Delaware (2005) to implement the research-based Olweus Anti-Bullying Program. The program enhances school culture because everyone has a part to play. Everyone has a right to a safe school where students feel secure and treat each other with mutual respect and kindness. Years later, such anti-bullying programs would become mandatory in Delaware public schools.

NCS was one of two Delaware schools designated "No Place For Hate" schools. The "Gold Service Leadership School" was awarded to the high school for the students' Jefferson Awards

community service activities. Even though the school population increased, suspensions decreased compared to the previous year. As of May 30, 2017, during the 2016 - 2017 school year, Newark Charter School had 22 suspension incidents with 24 students suspended. This represents 1.1 % of the school population.

9) Commitment to Diversity

Diversity in the student body continues to increase. In the 2017 lottery, 56% of the newly admitted students are Caucasian compared to 64.9% in the school's general population for 2016-2017.

The school's population continues to include an increasing number of students with significant intellectual and physical disabilities. The number of students with "Complex" disabilities (including Down Syndrome, Autism, Significant Multiple Disabilities, etc.) continues to increase:

- 2014 (8 students)
- 2015 (13 students)
- 2016 (15 students)
- 2017 (17 students)

The school's student demographics compares closely to the diversity within the Greater Newark area and within New Castle County.

The Outreach Committee, comprised of administrators, faculty and parents, is active and its efforts continue to provide awareness and accessibility to underrepresented populations within the greater Newark community.

10) AP Capstone Diploma Program

Newark Charter High School is the first high school in Delaware, to implement the College Board's new AP Capstone™ Diploma Program, an innovative and challenging program that allows students to develop the skills that matter most for their future college success: research, collaboration, and communication. Already, other Delaware high schools have reached out to NCS to learn more about the program for possible adoption in their schools.

The Advanced Placement program includes a two-course sequence: AP® Seminar and AP Research. Developed in direct response to feedback from higher education faculty and college admission officers, AP Capstone complements the in-depth, subject-specific rigor of Advanced Placement courses and exams while empowering students with the very skills college professors want their students to possess.

Students who complete AP Seminar and AP Research with scores of 3 or higher, and receive scores of 3 or higher on four AP Exams in subjects of their choosing will receive the AP Capstone Diploma™. Students who earn qualifying scores on the two AP Capstone exams but do not take

or earn qualifying scores on four additional AP Exams will earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™.

The AP Seminar course, typically taken in 10th or 11th grade, will equip students with the power to explore academic and real-world issues from multiple perspectives. Through a variety of materials – from articles and research studies to foundational and philosophical texts – students will be challenged to explore complex questions, understand and evaluate opposing viewpoints, interpret and synthesize information, and develop, communicate, and defend evidence-based arguments. Teachers have the flexibility of choosing themes based on student interests, whether they are local, regional, national or global in nature. By tapping into students’ personal interests, AP Capstone gives a broader array of students an entry point into challenging coursework. Students are assessed through an individual and team project completed during the year and a year-end written exam.

The subsequent AP Research course will allow students to design, plan, and conduct a year-long investigation on a topic of their choosing with support from experts at the university level or in the community. At the end of the course students have the confidence to present and orally defend their own scholarly academic research.

11) Global Studies/ Leadership Academy (9-12)

Newark Charter High School’s Global Studies/ Leadership Academy is a program grounded in a common core of studies, with opportunities for students to focus on challenging programs of interest and career pathways. Students will also be able to explore opportunities for enrichment through elective courses and complementary activities outside the classroom. Classroom activities directly connect with the opportunity for students to take action in the greater community and beyond. Several community partnerships are in place to support and encourage service outreach conducted by students such as; the Jefferson Awards: Students in Action, the Newark Rotary, and the Human Ecology Foundation. The Global Studies/Leadership Academy endeavors to offer insights into the histories of various peoples, cultures of the world, dynamic issues of the day, and effectively contributing to the global community in which we live.

12) Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S.T.E.M.) Academy

The high school’s STEM Academy is a program grounded in a common core of studies, with opportunities for students to focus on challenging programs of interest and career pathways. Students will also be able to explore opportunities for enrichment through elective courses and complementary activities outside the classroom. STEM Academy coursework will focus upon studies in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Three-year programs of study are offered in the following pathways in Engineering (Project Lead the Way), Biotechnology, Computer Science and Business, Finance and Marketing. These pathway programs provide students the opportunity for college credit and dual-enrollment. Additionally, following

completion of the program students are encouraged to enroll in AP math and science courses to further enhance their learning experience.

13) Accountability, Autonomy and Choice

NCS provides autonomy at the school level in exchange for clear accountability, which results in outstanding student performance and a well-managed organization. All staff members have one-year contracts that must be renewed annually. The school uses its autonomy to take advantage of innovative practices such as financial spending flexibility, peer evaluations and alternative curriculum models. School choice is vital for a charter school to provide a focused learning community where staff, parents and students share common values and expectations.

14) Merit Pay

NCS was one of the first schools in Delaware to offer its teachers and staff members merit pay (bonuses). Merit pay may be awarded through a merit pool to be administered by the management. The level of the bonus is determined by the Board of Directors and is dependent on availability of funds. Newly-hired employees will become eligible to participate in the merit pay program after completion of their second year of employment. Merit pay is awarded based on a combination of factors including, but not limited to, formal observations and evaluations (such as those outlined by the Delaware Department of Education) walk-through observations, informal observations, parent surveys, student achievement, attendance, and uncompensated efforts on behalf of the school that go above and beyond basic job duties, etc.

Providence Creek Academy shared:

The mission of PCA is to provide a safe, nurturing, and diverse campus environment allowing our K- 8 students to learn from experiences beyond the traditional classroom setting. Our mission is to empower students with opportunities to engage in a number of sports, visual and performing arts, creating connections with our community to provide deeper learning experiences. PCA's innovation is not in what we do, but in how we teach, partner with our parents, and our connections with our community. Through academics, arts, and athletics we are the PCA family.

Policy Recommendations

There are also recommendations for changes to Regulation 275. The changes are:

9.8 Major modifications, include the word 'add' to 9.8.1.1 and 9.4.3. We also recommend that First Instructional Day be discussed and potentially stricken from the regulation. Should a charter school determine that the education management organization is not best suited or able to meet the terms of the agreement, it is not in the best interest of the school or the taxpayer to enforce that contract without a process by which to make the modification.

9.8.1 A major modification is any proposed change to a charter, including proposed changes to any condition placed on the charter, which would:

9.8.1.1 Replace, **add**, remove or permit the school to operate **with or** without an educational management organization providing administrative, managerial or instructional staff or services to the charter school at any time ~~on or after the First Instructional Day~~ **that was not included in the approved charter**; or

9.4.3 An application to replace, **add**, remove or permit the school to operate **with or** without an educational management organization providing administrative, managerial or instructional staff or services to the charter holder at any time ~~before the First Instructional Day~~ **that was not included in the approved charter**.

It is recommendation that language be added to Title 14, Chapter 5 and/or Regulation 275 that would give additional options to charter school authorizers when a charter school is determined to be in violation of its charter.

