

DELAWARE CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

Charter School Name: Newark Charter School

Mailing Address: 200 McIntire Drive
City/State/Zip: Newark, Delaware 19711

Email: gregory.meece@ncs.k12.de.us
Telephone: 302-369-2001
Fax: 302-368-3460
Website: www.NewarkCharter.org

Gregory R. Meece, Sr.
Head of School

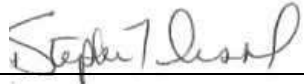


November 18, 2014
Date

Head of School

Date

Stephen Dressel
Board President



November 18, 2014
Date

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: December 1st

All schools submit one (1) signed copy (PDF via email preferred) to the DDOE Charter School Office

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ABSTRACT

Our History

In 1999, a group of Newark parents and teachers committed to providing an educational alternative within the public school system established Newark Charter School (NCS). In 2000, Delaware’s Department of Education with the assent of the State Board of Education approved the school’s charter application.

April 2000	Charter for grades 5-8 middle school approved
Sept. 2001	Middle School opened in trailers, Barksdale Rd. (grades 5-7):
Sept. 2002	Eighth grade added
Sept. 2003	Moved into newly-constructed middle school on Patriot Way
2005	First charter renewal
Feb. 2006	Modification to add grades K-4 and expand enrollment approved
Aug. 2007	Newly-constructed K-4 Elementary School opened, Patriot Way
2009	Second charter renewal
April 2012	Modification to add grades 9-12 and expand enrollment approved
2013	Third charter renewal
Aug. 2013	Moved into newly-constructed jr./sr. high school, McIntire Dr.

Mission

The Mission of the Newark Charter School is to promote high levels of student effort, achievement and decorum for children in grades K-12 in the Greater Newark community by providing continuous, engaging and rigorous academic challenges grounded in a sequential core of common knowledge, delivered in a community of students, educators and involved parents who value scholarship and appropriate behavior.

Vision

The guiding vision and philosophy of the Newark Charter School is that all children can learn when they are challenged, supported, respected and motivated. Newark Charter School will offer an educational alternative within the public school system for families and students seeking a strong academic program that invites family involvement in children’s education.

Targeted Population and Enrollment Demographics

The school’s targeted population is students residing in the Greater Newark Area.

<i>Year</i>	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<i>Enrollment</i>	435	541	621	648	647	648	1289	1286	1286	1336	1344	1347	1760	1949

Enrollment projections and student demographic information are found in Appendix 1.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES THAT WILL DEMONSTRATE STUDENT GROWTH, PROFICIENCY, AND COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS LEVELS AS MEASURED BY THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK? PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH IN THESE AREAS.

Academic Performance Review Rating:

2011-2012 Summary and Overall Rating: EXCEEDS STANDARD

2012-2013 Summary and Overall Rating: EXCEEDS STANDARD

2013-2014 Summary and Overall Rating: MEETS STANDARD

During the past four years, and since the school's inception, NCS's academic achievement results have been consistently excellent. The DDOE gave NCS its highest rating of "Superior School" each year that it gave school ratings. In 2012 and again in 2014 the Department and Lt. Governor cited our school as a *Reward School: Highest Performing School*; in 2013 NCS was named a *School of Continued Excellence*. In 2010 the DDOE nominated NCS for the U.S. Government's Blue Ribbon School designation: our nation's highest recognition for schools based on academic performance. In September 2011, The Global Report Card, a product of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, ranked NCS # 2 on the national list for top performing schools or districts in reading. NCS is designated a Core Knowledge Visitation School by the Core Knowledge Foundation and we were selected as one of the top 10 Core Knowledge schools in the country.

2014 DCAS data show that, overall, NCS's average proficiency level in reading and math (96.8%) was an increase over the school's average proficiency levels in the past two years (95.27% and 96.44%). The State's average proficiency level this year was 70.69%. NCS's percentage of students scoring at the highest level (PL4 - 75%) is more than twice that of the State average (34.63%). With high school assessment, we administered the End-of-Course Integrated Mathematics 3 DCAS this year with remarkable results. Although it is atypical for ninth grade students to take such a high-level course, all forty-one NCS students who took the Integrated 3 assessment (100%) scored a PL4. When the test data is disaggregated by gender, race, low-income status or disability NCS students score significantly higher than their matched peer groups.

Statewide rankings published in the *News Journal* (July 18, 2014) show the following rankings for NCS in the appropriate tested subjects and grades:

	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies
3rd grade	1st	7th	NA	NA
4th grade	1st	2nd	NA	1st
5th grade	1st	3rd	1st	NA
6th grade	1st	1st	NA	NA
7th grade	1st	1st	NA	1st
8th grade	1st	1st	2nd	NA
9th grade	1st	2nd	NA	NA

NCS placed first in the State in 13 of 18 possible categories and first, second or third in 17 of 18 categories.

The school and DDOE regularly disaggregate data to see how demographic subgroup populations (such as race, income status, special education, etc.) perform compared to similar groups and to the total population. At NCS the data show that its demographic subpopulation groups not only outperform the same subpopulation groups statewide but they also consistently outperform the general population of students as well. The Delaware Academic Performance Framework rates NCS’s demographic Subgroup Summary as “Exceeds Standard” in Reading and Math.

- NCS’s Low Socio-Economic students’ 2013-14 proficiency rates (84.6% in Math, 95.5% in ELA) are significantly higher than the State average proficiency rates (58.7% in Math, 61.4% in ELA) and even comparable to or higher than the State proficiency rate for it 90th percentile students (84.6% in Math, 83.4% in ELA).
- NCS’s Students with Disabilities’ 2013-14 proficiency rates (61% in Math, 72.7% in ELA) are significantly higher than the State average proficiency rates (30.3% in Math, 30.2% in ELA) and even higher than the State proficiency rate for it 90th percentile students (58.6% in Math, 57.2% in ELA).
- NCS’s African-American students’ 2013-14 proficiency rates (91.8% in Math, 94% in ELA) are significantly higher than the State average proficiency rates (56.5% in Math, 60.5% in ELA) and even higher than the State proficiency rate for it 90th percentile students (83.1% in Math, 83.3% in ELA).
- NCS’s Hispanic students’ 2013-14 proficiency rates (91.7% in Math, 85.8% in ELA) are significantly higher than the State average proficiency rates (64.8% in Math, 64.5% in ELA) and even higher than the State proficiency rate for it 90th percentile students (87.7% in Math, 88.3% in ELA).

- NCS's Multiracial students' 2013-14 proficiency rates (91.4% in Math; 94.3% in ELA) are higher than the State average proficiency rates (77.8% in Math; 83.1% in ELA).

The Delaware Academic Performance Framework also shows that NCS students' performance in 2013-2014 (96.0% in Math; 97.6 in ELA) compares favorably to Home District Proficiency (61.7% in Math; 63.5% in ELA). NCS students' performance in 2013-2014 (96.0% in Math; 97.6% in ELA) also compares favorably to schools that are statistically similar (83.8% in Math; 84.9% in ELA).

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth

Strengths: NCS's greatest strength in supporting both academic proficiency and growth for its students derives from an unwavering commitment to its mission and vision. Since NCS was established, State standards, performance benchmarks have changed. State assessments have changed from DSTP to DCAS to SBAC; from paper and pencil tests to tests on computers. Teacher evaluation systems have changed. NCS, too, has changed; growing from a middle school with 435 students to a K-12 program with 1,949 students located on two campuses. But NCS has been able to maintain, and improve, its academic performance through all these changes because it has not wavered from its continuous, engaging and rigorous academic challenges grounded in a sequential core of common knowledge, delivered in a community of students, educators and involved parents who value scholarship and appropriate behavior. As pointed out in a study of Delaware's public middle schools, NCS and other "beating the odds" schools succeed because of its common culture and shared vision of excellence among all stakeholders. NCS believes that all children can learn when they are challenged, supported, respected and motivated. No child falls through the cracks because every student, regardless of background or disability, can be successful at NCS.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth: NCS's expansion presents both challenges and opportunities. A larger student body increases the importance of sustaining a school culture that has been successful in the past. New students, parents and teachers will need to be educated, coached and mentored so that they can integrate into this culture. Maintaining a "small feel" to a large school will be a priority, requiring strong communication among all stakeholders. Past success does not ensure future success. Staff must continue to work hard, keep abreast of emerging best practices, transitioning from DCAS to Smarter Balanced testing, Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. As our high school prepares to admit its first upperclassmen in 2015 we must ensure that programs align with post-secondary readiness goals. We must learn from other successful programs and never take for granted our "customers'" trust in our school or our accountability to the State of Delaware's citizens and taxpayers.

Out of approximately 27 separate criteria associated with the Academic Framework, NCS Met or Exceeded 25 of them in 2014. We will focus on the growth of our lowest quartile math students. In 2013 staffing changes reflected a shift in human and financial resources to work more with students at a younger age who are struggling in math. In

2014 the jr./sr. high school daily schedule was changed from a seven-period to an eight-period day so students could receive an extra period of math.

On the other hand, our expansion is also a great opportunity. Being able to work with many of the same students and their families from Kindergarten through high school graduation is an opportunity to build upon success. Focusing our high school curriculum on our world's future (Global Studies and STEM) will enable our students, prepared with a solid foundation of K-8 content and skills, to apply what they have learned in meaningful ways directed toward college and career goals. In 2013 our STEM program launched a four-year Engineering Pathway as part of its STEM Academy and in 2014 this was expanded to include a Biotechnology Pathway. Currently, the school is investigating a new Computer Science Pathway. A relationship with the University of Delaware and nearby businesses such as DuPont and W.L. Gore has been developed and the school plans to grow these relationships in future years to provide many opportunities for our students in grade 7-12 to explore research opportunities, internships, guest speakers and dual-enrollment courses.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE:

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS THAT WILL DEMONSTRATE VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY AS MEASURED BY THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK? PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH IN THESE AREAS.

Financial Performance Framework: 2013-2014
Overall Rating: MEETS STANDARD

External auditors have audited NCS's finances for 13 years with no findings during that period. The school has operated with a financial surplus for 13 consecutive budgets. In 2011 Standard & Poors conducted investment grade ratings of 123 charter schools nationwide. NCS was one of only four charter schools to have earned a BBB+ rating.

With the school's enrollment projected to grow each year through 2022 the school will realize the benefit of economies of scale. The most challenging years may well be the current ones because the high school growth plan was to add a grade each year. Despite this challenge, we had a balanced budget for FY 2014 and project the same for FY 2015. Should the need arise, the school has a reserve fund sufficient to address unanticipated negative occurrences such as fluctuations in state, local or federal revenue, demographic trends or wear on buildings.

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth

The school's financial future is secure. The large waiting list of students is the best sign of financial stability since most of our funding is a function of enrollment. The population in the Greater Newark area is growing. New apartments and townhouses are being developed near the school. The growth of the nearby University of Delaware at the former Chrysler site will create hundreds of new jobs in the immediate area. The expansion of Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland is expected to add 60,000 federal and private sector jobs. As NCS's McIntire Drive Campus is literally located on the Delaware/Maryland state line, we are the closest Delaware school for BRAC families looking to establish residence in Delaware.

The school will continue to do everything it can to supplement its revenue stream through fundraising and promoting capital funding for charter schools. These funds are needed for the school to improve its facilities and programming in future years. For example, if the school desires to expand its athletic offerings, provide computer tablets for all students, or increase the number of parking spaces, it cannot go to a public referendum as most public school districts would. At this time, the school's Board of Directors is considering renovating unused space in the Junior/Senior High School to increase the school's science lab capacity and adding a building for music classes. A minor modification request for this purpose is being submitted.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE:

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS IN MEETING ITS ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS, REPORTING, AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS MEASURED BY THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK? PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH IN THESE AREAS.

Organizational Performance Framework: 2013-2014 Overall Rating:

MEETS STANDARD

All 13 of the school's organizational performance targets were met in 2013-2014 (100% "Meet Standard"). Additional evidence of the school's compliance with operational expectations can be found in the compliance monitoring reports for NCS issued by DDOE in past years. Monthly reports issued by the DDOE Charter Schools Office this year indicate that the school meets all public reporting requirements: Monthly Financial Statements, Financial Audit, Online Checkbook Link, Bylaws, Board meeting dates, times, and locations, Board meeting agendas, Board meeting minutes, Citizen Budget Oversight Committee meeting dates, times, and locations, agendas and minutes. A June 2014 DDOE report states that the school "meets requirements" in implementing the regulations of IDEA. A September 2014 Division of Public Health Food Establishment Inspection Report states that there are no violations. A September 2014 DDOE Title I monitoring report states that "all areas are in compliance." The most recent reports state that NCS is fully in compliance with all monitored regulations, including but not limited to: McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, Child Abuse Reporting Training, immunization audit, policy regarding release of students to persons other than parent/guardian, Career Cruising. The school has been similarly monitored, and compliance has been demonstrated, in such areas as chemical safety storage, asbestos, transportation of students, Title I programs, etc. Annually, the school receives special education (IDEA) audits and there are no findings. As a participant in the National School Lunch program we meet both State and Federal guidelines on all nutritional requirements and we are in compliance with the Department of Health regulations. The school receives annual financial audits and these show no findings each year.

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth

The school will build on its past success in this area. Our strength lies in the school's past performance record and low staff turnover. We have built internal capacity for meeting organizational performance expectations. The challenge is the ever-changing regulations that keep coming up. Charter schools were supposed to be free of most of these regulations. They are not. The growth opportunity lies in the fact that our staff has grown significantly over the years. This enables us to operate with built-in redundancy for many operational areas such as of finance and human resources (PHRST, FSF, DEEDS), assessment (DCAS), evaluations (DPAS II), facilities, and technology (e-school), etc.

STATUS OF CONDITIONS PLACED UPON THE CHARTER:

Include:

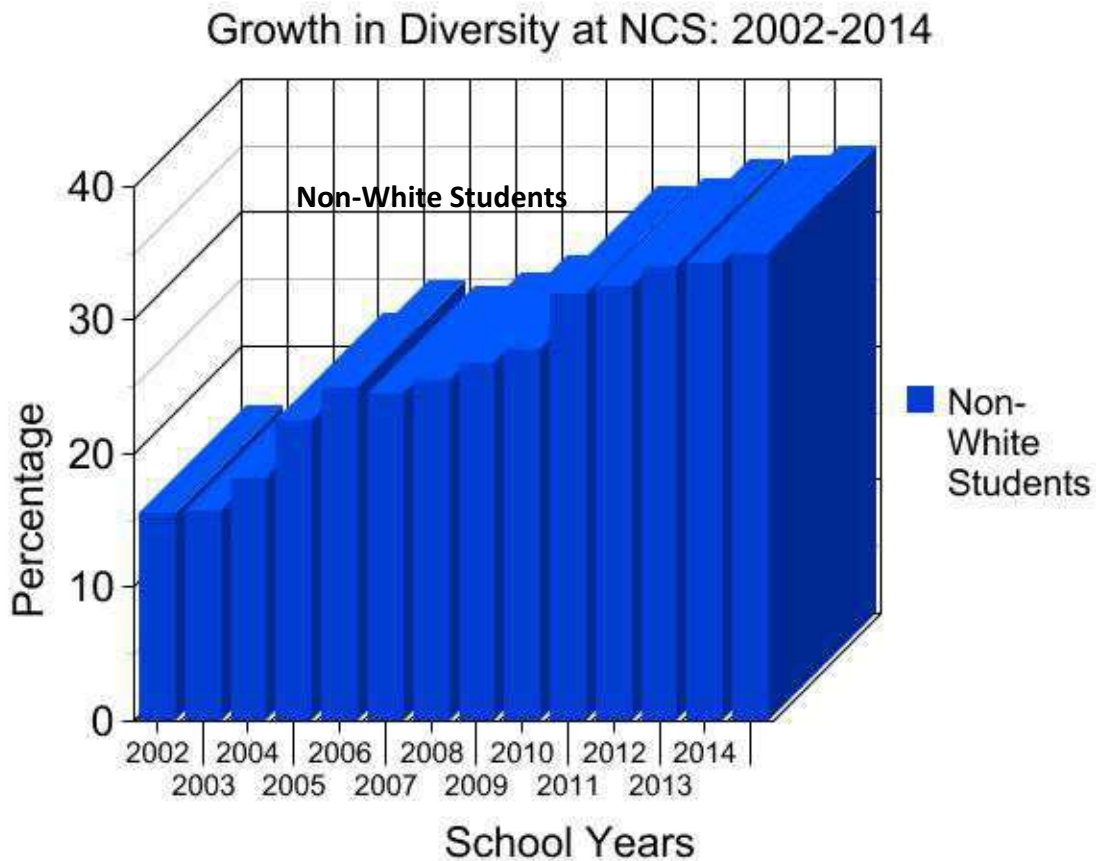
- A status update of any conditions imposed upon the school’s charter,
- Your plan to meet any conditions that are currently “not met”.

There were two conditions the Secretary of Education and State Board of Education placed on NCS as part of their unanimous approval of our major modification of 2011:

(1) “As a result and to that end, the Department approves the application for modification but conditions that approval on: (1) the development, approval and implementation of an outreach plan to significantly increase, consistent with the public school population it serves, the diversity of NCS going forward.”

All of the Outreach Plan’s action plans have been completed or are ongoing. With two years of experience behind us we have reexamined the plan for continued improvement during the 2014-2015 school year. Due to the page limitation on this report, the Outreach Plan Report is available upon request.

The Outreach Committee implements the plan with fidelity and enthusiasm. Below is a graph showing how NCS has become more diverse every year.



The second condition given to our school was:

(2) NCS providing a free and reduced lunch program for all grades starting in the fall of 2012.

NCS established this food service program in the Fall of 2012 and is in full compliance with all state and federal regulations regarding the school nutrition program.

As a participant in the National School Lunch program we meet both State and Federal guidelines on all nutritional requirements. We use a vendor who has a state of Delaware license and whose menus are in compliance with the new food regulations stipulated by the National School Lunch program. We have successfully finished our second year with the National School Lunch program and are now into our third year serving grades Kindergarten thru 10th grade. NCS's program has been renewed annually with the Department of Education.

This school year we have added the Breakfast program in all three buildings and are offering a Grab and Go Style breakfast that meets both State and Federal Guidelines. We are in compliance with the Department of Health regulations, we have had five health inspections since the start of the program in 2012, and all inspections passed without issue.

STUDENT RETENTION GOALS AND TARGETS:

Include:

- The percentage of students who have re-enrolled from the prior year according to ESEA demographic categories,
- The number of students who have left your school before the year is over or before the end of the charter school’s grade configuration per ESEA demographic category,
- A summary of why students chose to leave,
- The percentage of students who did not pass from one grade to the next,
- Your plan to improve student retention and average daily attendance if less than your stated targets.

The percentage of students who have re-enrolled from the prior year according to demographic category.

97.5% of the students enrolled in FY 14 returned in FY 15. Retention for students remaining in New Castle County schools is 98.24% (as 12 students relocated out of the State of Delaware and 1 moved to Kent County). The number and % of those who re-enrolled at the start of school year 2014-2015 are:

Race	Total	Attrition	% Re-enrolled
Caucasian	1159	27	97.67
African American	194	2	98.97
Asian	235	12	94.89
Multiracial	99	2	97.98
Hispanic	70	1	98.57
Native American	4	0	100
Total	1761	44	97.5
Low-Income	245	5	97.96
Special Education	131	1	99.24

This past summer, NCS had 44 students withdraw at the end of the school year. Twelve (12) of those students moved out of State, one (1) student moved to Kent County and 31 chose another High School option for their student. We believe the number of high school withdraws is unique. This is the second year that NCS enrolled 9th grade students. We believe that this will stabilize over the next 2 years based upon historical data from the K-8 program.

The number of students who have left your school before the year is over or before the end of the charter school's grade configuration, by demographic category.

99.6% of the students who were enrolled on Sept 30, 2013, remained enrolled through the end of the school year (excluding the 6 who left due to family relocation.) NCS had a total of 13 students withdraw during the school year, 6 of which left due to a family relocation, 3 withdrew to a Home School environment and 4 entered another New Castle County School (both public and private). These 13 students included 7 Caucasian, 5 African American and 1 Multi-Raced student.

A summary as to why students leave.

The majority of withdraws since the school's inception have been a result of family relocation or moving out of the State of Delaware. Since 2001, a typical year's attrition (excluding those who move out of state) is about 1%. With the opening of high school, however, NCS experienced additional student turnover as students matriculate from 8th to 9th grade. While this is not an enrollment concern, due to the large waiting list, it did cause us to internally examine the reasons some students chose other high schools. Internal data based on exit interviews with parents indicates that this may be a temporary situation. Since a NCS high school was not an option until now, some 8th graders already had siblings enrolled in other high schools. Also, NCS invited to its campus 17 different high schools in each year to help families select a high school for their child. Therefore, some families already were committed to other schools. As NCS adds 11th and 12th grade, we believe that we will still have some attrition, but it will become more in line with what has been experienced in the K-8 program.

The percentage of students who did not pass from one level grade to another.

12 students were retained at the end of FY 14 – eleven KN students and one 2nd grade student or .7% of the student population. 58% of retentions were Caucasian (7 students), 17% of the retentions were African American (2 students), 17% were American Indian (2 students) and 8% was Hispanic (1 student).

Plan to improve student retention and average daily attendance if less than your stated targets.

Average daily attendance goals have been met each year and they have been consistently higher than the state average. Student retention goals have been met every year with average attrition being insignificant. The waiting list is more 3,000 students long. What little attrition there is does not appear to be linked to any demographic categories or to a student's achievement. Attrition of students going from 8th grade to 9th grade will continue to be an area that is scrutinized. While attrition at this grade level is expected to decrease each year it is a fact that there are many more options at the high school level (e.g., military, vocations, performing arts, etc.) than in the younger grades. NCS believes many options for parents are good, but it also means that this is an area where extra attention is needed.

INNOVATION:

Include:

- A discussion of innovation occurring at the school in areas including, but not limited to, curriculum development, instructional strategies, school culture and climate, community and parent engagement, professional development, operations and management practices, and extra-curricular programming.

NCS (NCS) was conceived by a group of Newark parents and teachers interested in an alternative, rigorous and academically challenging curriculum for children. A community-based school with continuity from grade to grade and strong site-based management is the best model to foster parental involvement, improve the school environment and motivate the students. The school's theme is "Emphasizing Excellence in Academics and Decorum." Our philosophy is 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. Features of the school that are considered innovative, unique or integral to fulfilling the school's mission and philosophy include the following:

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. Public and private schools throughout the country 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, and featured our school both in its nationwide publicity campaign and at its national conferences. Our Dean of Instruction is a certified Core Knowledge trainer. 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 share Core Knowledge in-service training for teachers.

Emphasis on Decorum

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. 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.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (S.T.E.M.) Academy and Global Studies/ Leadership Academy (9-12)

The high school's STEM Academy and the Global Studies/ Leadership Academy are 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. Four-year programs of study in Engineering, Biotechnology and Business are provided, with Computer Science being planned. 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.

Emphasis on Parent Involvement

As a school established by parents, there is a high degree of parent involvement and parent satisfaction each year. NCS is recipient of the Delaware Department of Education Parent Partnership Award. 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. A total of 500 different parent volunteers served the school this past year.

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 DCAS, 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 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.

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. NCS was one of the first schools in Delaware to offer its teachers and staff members merit pay. School choice is vital for a charter school to provide a focused learning community where administrators, teachers, parents and students share common values and expectations.

Appendix 1

Enrollment Projections, Demographics

<i>grade</i>	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
k	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
1	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
2	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
3	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
4	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
5	162	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
6	162	162	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
7	162	162	162	190	190	190	190	190	190
8	162	162	162	162	190	190	190	190	190
9	162	162	162	162	162	190	190	190	190
10		162	162	162	162	162	190	190	190
11			162	162	162	162	162	190	190
12				162	162	162	162	162	190
TOTAL	1760	1950	2140	2330	2358	2386	2414	2442	2470

Gender (2014)

Grade	Male		Female		
K		102	53.7%	88	46.3%
1		108	56.8%	82	43.2%
2		92	48.4%	98	51.6%
3		98	51.6%	92	48.4%
4		97	51.1%	93	48.9%
5		91	47.9%	99	52.1%
6		83	50.6%	81	49.4%
7		90	55.6%	72	44.4%
8		83	51.2%	79	48.8%
9		70	43.8%	90	56.3%
10		78	48.4%	83	51.6%
		992	50.9%	957	49.1%

Racial Categories (2014)

Grade	Caucasian		Afric. Amer.		Asian		Hispanic		Native Amer.	
K	117	61.6%	28	14.7%	15	7.9%	15	7.9%	1	0.5%
1	130	68.4%	23	12.1%	21	11.1%	6	3.2%	1	0.5%
2	129	67.9%	19	10.0%	23	12.1%	8	4.2%	1	0.5%
3	124	65.3%	12	6.3%	35	18.4%	7	3.7%	1	0.5%
4	123	64.7%	22	11.6%	22	11.6%	12	6.3%	0	0.0%
5	126	66.3%	21	11.1%	24	12.6%	6	3.2%	0	0.0%
6	100	61.0%	22	13.4%	27	16.5%	8	4.9%	0	0.0%
7	109	67.3%	15	9.3%	21	13.0%	4	2.5%	2	1.2%
8	107	66.0%	19	11.7%	22	13.6%	6	3.7%	0	0.0%
9	99	61.9%	21	13.1%	23	14.4%	8	5.0%	0	0.0%
10	108	67.1%	21	13.0%	19	11.8%	6	3.7%	0	0.0%
	1272	65.3%	223	11.4%	252	12.9%	86	4.4%	6	0.3%

Hawaiian		Multi-Race	
0	0.0%	14	7.4%
0	0.0%	9	4.7%
0	0.0%	10	5.3%
0	0.0%	11	5.8%
0	0.0%	11	5.8%
0	0.0%	13	6.8%
0	0.0%	7	4.3%
0	0.0%	11	6.8%
0	0.0%	8	4.9%
0	0.0%	9	5.6%
0	0.0%	7	4.3%
0	0.0%	110	5.6%

District of Residence (2014)

Grade	Christina		Red Clay		Colonial		Brandwine		Appoquin.		Smyrna	
K	177	93.2%	5	2.6%	2	1.1%	0	0.0%	5	2.63%	1	0.5%
1	180	94.7%	1	0.5%	2	1.1%	1	0.5%	6	3.16%	0	0.0%
2	181	95.3%	4	2.1%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	4	2.11%	0	0.0%
3	177	93.2%	4	2.1%	4	2.1%	1	0.5%	3	1.58%	1	0.5%
4	184	96.8%	1	0.5%	3	1.6%	0	0.0%	2	1.05%	0	0.0%
5	178	93.7%	1	0.5%	5	2.6%	1	0.5%	5	2.63%	0	0.0%
6	158	96.3%	3	1.8%	2	1.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.61%	0	0.0%
7	150	92.6%	5	3.1%	2	1.2%	0	0.0%	5	3.09%	0	0.0%
8	154	95.1%	4	2.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	2.47%	0	0.0%
9	152	95.0%	3	1.9%	2	1.3%	0	0.0%	3	1.88%	0	0.0%
10	151	93.8%	2	1.2%	4	2.5%	1	0.6%	2	1.24%	1	0.6%
	1842	94.5%	33	1.7%	27	1.4%	4	0.2%	40	2.1%	3	0.2%

Students with Disabilities (2014)

Code	Special Education	2014
100	mild intellectual disability	2
300	learning disabled	60
400	trainable mental disability	1
601	phys. Impaired-other	25
602	phys. Impaired-ortho.	2
700	hearing impaired	3
800	blind	1
900	visually impaired	0
1000	Autism	6
1300	Traumatic Brain Injury	1
1400	Developmental Delay	9
	TOTALS	110
1200	speech therapy	30
1600	speech delay	3
	TOTAL IEPs	143
	504 Plan	122

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligible (2014)

2014	269	13.8%
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English Language Learners (2014)

ELL	44
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