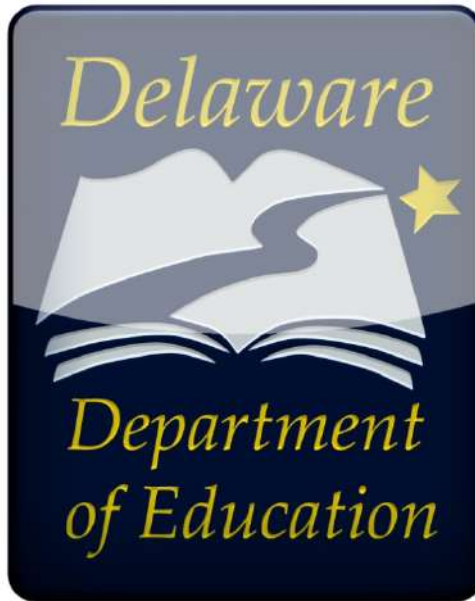


CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



ACADEMY OF DOVER CHARTER SCHOOL FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS APPLICATION TO MODIFY AN EXISTING CHARTER

Opening Date: September 2003

Grades: K - 4

Location: Kent County

September 30, 2012 Unit Count: 282

Date of Report: 2 May 2013

Background

Name Academy of Dover Charter School

Current Enrollment 282

Projected Enrollment The modification request is to add a fifth grade, serving K-5 beginning in the 2013-14 school year, and maintain the school's authorized enrollment at 300. The proposed distribution of students per grade is:

| | |
|--------------|----|
| Kindergarten | 68 |
| Grade 1 | 66 |
| Grade 2 | 53 |
| Grade 3 | 53 |
| Grade 4 | 40 |
| Grade 5 | 20 |

Mission The mission of Academy of Dover Charter School is to open portals of opportunity for children and adults in the community through excellence in public education.

Vision The Academy of Dover Charter School will serve as a community pillar for life-long learning, pride, and self-actualization. Looking to the past to prepare students for the future, the Academy of Dover Charter School will combine the beneficial rigors of a classical education with the latest technology and the best teaching and learning practices worldwide. The Academy of Dover Charter School student will cultivate and promote multi-cultural and global awareness. Students will be prepared and encouraged to be entrepreneurs, well informed, and responsible world citizens with purpose, passion, and proficiency.

The Charter School Accountability Committee (Committee) convened on:

- March 11, 2013 for the Initial/Preliminary Meeting with representatives Academy of Dover (AOD) to review the school's request for a charter modification. At this meeting, the Committee recommended that the modification application not be approved. The school submitted a response to the Committee's preliminary report.
- April 30, 2013 for the Final Meeting to make a final recommendation based on the school's response to the Committee's preliminary report.

At the Final Meeting, the Committee focused on the following statutory criteria which required further clarification:

- Criterion 3: Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives
- Criterion 4: Goals for Student Performance
- Criterion 5: Evaluating Student Performance
- Criterion 6: Educational Program and Student Performance
- Criterion 7: Serving Students with Special Needs
- Criterion 8: Economic Viability

Criterion Three: Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the modification application did not include clearly defined and measurable goals and educational objectives that align to the school's mission. The Committee discussed the school's submitted response to the Preliminary Report and noted the following:

- The school's response did not include goals and educational objectives but was a cut-and-paste from the school's charter renewal application (submitted 2012) which indicated that the Board conducted a gap analysis in preparation for its charter renewal application.
- Based on the gap analysis, the Board concluded that the school's mission, goals and educational objectives would be re-tooled and would continue to align with the legislative intent of the Charter School law.
- The school's response did not include a timeline for when this work would be completed.
- The school's response indicated that the Board will participate in training workshops to improve their capacity for governance and oversight and help them develop annual plans and goals relative to academic performance, school operations, and finances. These workshops will drive the development of the school's new mission, goals and educational objectives but no timeline was provided.

The Committee determined that Criterion Three remains not met. The Secretary and State Board will consider additional information submitted on or before the May 7, 2013 public hearing.

Criterion Four: Goals for Student Performance

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the school did not include student performance goals for grade five. The Committee discussed the school's submitted response to the Preliminary Report and noted that the performance targets were incomplete. The response states that AOD will seek to meet the standards set forth by the Department of Education. This statement does not demonstrate an understanding of performance goals or performance targets or the expectations that can and should be set for students by the administration and Board.

The Committee determined that Criterion Four is met with a condition.

On or before May 31, 2013, the school will submit student performance goals and targets for grade five.

Criterion Five: Evaluating Student Performance

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the school did not submit any information in the modification application relative to this criterion. The Committee discussed the school's submitted response to the Preliminary Report and noted that the school included a copy of its academic results on the Charter Performance Framework provided by the Charter School Office. However, the response did not include any analysis or interpretation of the data indicating how the data is being utilized to inform decisions at the management level of the

charter school.

The Committee determined that Criterion Five is met with a condition.

On or before May 31, 2013, the school will submit an analysis of its student performance data and how it will be utilized to inform decisions.

Criterion Six: Educational Program

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the school did not meet this criterion. The Committee discussed the school's submitted responses to the following sub-criteria:

- Scope and Sequence
- Curriculum Basis
- Memoranda of Understanding
- Units of Instruction

Mathematics

Scope and Sequence- Approved

Units of Instruction- Approved

- The school has prioritized the amount of time spent on certain domains, clusters, and standards as set forth in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The majority of the instructional time is spent on number and fraction concepts.
- Essential questions are included and are appropriate for the content being taught
- Formative assessments are included that should be able to gauge student learning
- The school intends to utilize Go Math as an instructional resource.

English Language Arts

Scope and Sequence- Approved

- Scope and sequence documents submitted aligned to the Common Core State Standards

Units of Instruction- Does Not Meet Approval

- Targets are mostly at identification level - these do not match the rigor of the CCSS.
- Not a range of reading or writing conducive to the grade levels or the NAEP percentages on p. 5 of the CCSS.
- ***On or before July 31, 2013 the school will submit for review units of instruction for English Language Arts.***

Science- Approved

- The school submitted documentation dated 9/21/12 indicating that the school is a Science Coalition member.
- ***On or before July 31, 2013 identify the school contact that will coordinate professional development training for school personnel.***

Social Studies- Approved

- The school submitted documentation dated 4/16/13 indicating that the school is a Social Studies Coalition member

Health

Scope and Sequence- No documentation was submitted

Units of Instruction- Approved

- ***On or before July 31, 2013 the school will submit for review scope and sequence documents for Health.***

Physical Education - Approved

Scope and Sequence- Approved

Units of Instruction- Approved

World Languages – Not applicable

Visual and Performing Arts

Music

Scope and Sequence- Approved

- All nine music standards appear as learning targets in the Music Framework.
- Appropriate Essential questions and an appropriate timeline are also identified.
- Solfege is a pedagogical technique used by music educators to help students understand tone. It is very much determined by the post-secondary training of the educator and may or may not be the technique embraced by your music educator.
- Quizzes and more likely a formative assessment measure. Summative assessments should be performance based.

Units of Instruction- No documentation was submitted

- ***On or before July 31, 2013, the school will submit for review units of instruction for Music.***

Art

Scope and Sequence- Approved

- Formative assessment measures- to check for student understanding- were submitted in revised documentation.
- In revisions the school submitted, Visual Art Standard 3 or Standard 6 appear with the other 4 art standards in the scope and sequence document as learning targets.

Units of Instruction- No documentation was submitted

- ***On or before July 31, 2013, the school will submit for review units of instruction for Art.***

Technology – Approved

- Internet Safety Policy – The school has submitted an Internet Safety Policy that is pending Board approval. The policy meets required criteria.
- Internet Safety Curriculum – DDOE's Wendy met with the Curriculum Director at Academy of Dover. She has developed a Scope and Sequence for the required Internet Safety Curriculum and has assured DCET that she will move forward with providing professional development for the faculty and 2013 rollout.

- Federal eRATE requirement - AOD was unable to meet this federal requirement until it was a required part of their charter modification. School administrators were notified in January 2012 and implementation was to occur by July 1, 2012. Four subsequent reminders were emailed to the school. It is hopeful that a more timely response to federal requirements can be achieved in the future.

In addition to the content areas the Committee reviewed the following areas of the educational program:

- **Plans for at-risk students** – The Committee noted that the school’s response includes a process for data collection when referring a student for eligibility for special education services. However, the response includes the following statement.

“The parent(s) will then be contacted as to whether their child will require services. If the parent agrees they will sign an initial placement consent. The IEP will then be created with any parent or teacher input, and an IEP meeting will take place.”

This statement does not follow the procedures as outlined in IDEA for eligibility for special education services.

- **Student-teacher ratio** – the school's response was adequate.
- **Unique features of the school** – the school’s response was adequate.
- **High quality professional development** – The school’s response was adequate. The Committee recommended that the school consider how it would differentiate high quality professional development based on its instructional model.
- **School calendar, master instructional schedule** – the school’s response was adequate
 - The school submitted a school calendar. The calendar notes 200 student instructional days and 9 additional days for staff development.
 - No master instructional schedule was submitted.

The Committee determined that Criterion Six was met with the following conditions:

On or before July 31, 2013,

- *the school will submit for review units of instruction for English Language Arts*
- *identify the school contact for the Science Coalition who will coordinate professional development training for school personnel.*
- *the school will submit for review scope and sequence documents for Health.*
- *the school will submit for review units of instruction for Music.*
- *the school will submit for review units of instruction for Art.*

Criterion Seven: Students with Special Needs

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the school did not meet this criterion. The Committee discussed the school's submitted response to the Preliminary Report and noted that the response did not include a description of how the school will be in full compliance with current federal and state statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities. However, the response did include a description of the employment of certified special education teachers, how a continuum of educational placements will be available to serve students with special needs in accordance with IDEA and that the principal will be responsible for assuring compliance with IDEA in providing special education services.

The Committee determined that Criterion Seven remains not met. The Secretary and State Board will consider additional information submitted on or before the May 7, 2013 public hearing.

Criterion Eight: Economic Viability

At the Preliminary Meeting, the Committee determined that the school did not meet this criterion. The Committee discussed the school's submitted response to the Preliminary Report and noted that the response was adequate.

The Committee determined that Criterion Eight was met.

Summary and Recommendations

| Criterion | Charter School Accountability Committee's Recommendations |
|--|---|
| (3) Mission, Goals, Educational Objectives | Not Met |
| (4) Goals for Student Performance | Met with a condition |
| (5) Evaluating Student Performance | Met with a condition |
| (6) Educational Program | Met with conditions |
| (7) Students with Special Needs | Not Met |
| (8) Economic Viability | Met |

The Charter School Accountability Committee recommended that the modification application from the Academy of Dover Charter School **not** be approved.

Appendix A

List of Attendees

Final Meeting of the Charter School Accountability Committee

29 April 2013

Modification Application from the Academy of Dover Charter School

Members of the Committee

- Mary Kate McLaughlin, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Chief of Staff, Delaware Department of Education
- Debora Hansen, Education Associate, Visual and Performing Arts, Charter Curriculum Review
- Paul Harrell, Director of Public and Private Partnerships
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM
- Barbara Mazza, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources
- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter Schools Network (Non-voting)

Staff to the Committee

- Catherine T. Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee
- John Carwell, Director, Charter School Office
- Dr. Patricia Bigelow, Education Associate, Charter School Office
- Chantel Janiszewski, Education Associate, Charter School Office

Representatives from the Academy of Dover Charter School

- Dr. William H. Lane, Board member
- Cheri Marshall, Curriculum Director