

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence
Section 1 - Executive Summary

1.1 Executive Summary

14 Del. C. §§ 512(1)-(3). And (5)-(6)

The purpose of the Executive Summary is to provide a high-level overview of the application. The Executive Summary does not receive a rating and is to contain the following. The page limit for the Executive Summary is 5 pages.

1. Mission and Vision Statements

- a. Provide a mission statement and a vision statement that will give the reviewers and interested members of the public an overview of the proposed charter school. The mission and vision statements should be specific, clear, and brief and provide the foundation for the entire school proposal and operational plan. Accordingly, the mission and vision statements must be aligned with the legislative intent set forth in 14 Del. C. § 501, the approval criteria in 14 Del. C. § 512 and the restrictions on charter schools in 14 Del. C. § 506.

VISION: To foster critically conscious individuals who are self-empowered leaders and advocates for change in our community.

MISSION: To create pathways, through proximity, for our students, their families, and our community.

2. Educational Need and Target Population

- a. Identify the target population, grade levels, and school district(s) that the school will serve. Briefly describe the intended effect on the existing community and provide a rationale for the chosen location.
- b. Explain how the proposed charter school, including the grade levels chosen, will clearly meet the identified needs of the community and the targeted student population.
- c. Identify how many families have indicated their intent to enroll in your school.

[Recent studies indicate](#) that many students who graduate from Delaware public high schools are not adequately prepared for post-secondary opportunities. Approximately half of Delaware’s 11th-grade students fail to meet state and national College and Career Readiness requirements. Even more troubling, the discrepancies for students that are low-income and with disabilities have fallen even farther considering the pandemic. The challenges facing students in rural Sussex County are especially acute. The majority of school districts here are performing below the state average in College and Career Readiness measures.

These same districts are also home to some of the largest populations of students from low-income households, students with disabilities, English-Language Learners, and students of color. Although Sussex County contains some of the most diverse rural school districts in the country, the state has still not closed the gaps for the educational outcomes of its rural students.

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BASSE was explicitly designed to help increase Sussex County's students' college and career readiness through a service-learning curriculum that will provide students with rigorous academic and real-world learning experiences. Students' access to opportunities to practice their knowledge and skills and develop their identities as citizens of Sussex County, Delaware, and the world will improve their outcomes.

To date, we have had 75 parents fill out our interest survey, 10 of which had eligible children and indicated that they intend to prioritize sending their students to BASSE. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have been unable to host as many in-person events as we had imagined. However, we have recently hired an Executive Director and Director of Development. A key component of their roles will add on-the-ground capacity to our parent and community outreach efforts. We plan to continue collecting parent intent signatures during the application process through various virtual events and in-person events.

3. Community Engagement

- a. Describe how the applicant has assessed demand and solicited support for the school.
- b. Describe any relationships the applicant currently has or plans to build to engage students, parents, and the community in support of the school.

BASSE has hosted various community events to assess demand and solicit support for the school, including community focus groups at many public libraries in Sussex County, a virtual webinar series informing the community about the school, and offering space for feedback on several parent-focused webinars. We have also partnered with other community organizations to host joint virtual and in-person events to reach more community members and families. These events have been positively received by the community and helped us to refine the school's design.

BASSE currently has several engagement opportunities planned to continue to engage students, parents, and the community in support of the school. The first is that BASSE hired a Public Ally to be our Community Outreach Coordinator (COC). Our first COC led our parent webinars and virtual parent and family-focused events. The COC also planned and successfully executed an education conference to engage the community around their vision for education. Our current COC is continuing the work that our first began.

Secondly, we have hired a Director of Development, who's role, in addition to fundraising, will be to further build relationships with the community and families. For instance, she has already connected with several childcare centers in the state and plans to engage with the Boys and Girls Clubs in Sussex County this winter and spring on a weekly basis.

We have also built strong relationships with community organizations and held joint events with the Lewes Public Library, First State Community Action Agency, and Peace Week Delaware. In addition, the Kim and Evans Family Foundation hosted a joint fundraiser with us this Spring. We have also participated in service events where we handed out over 200 backpacks and tabled at local community gathering places, such as the Movies at Midway theater in Rehoboth Beach.

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Additionally, we have letters of support from a wide range of individuals and organizations who support our school's vision and mission and whom we intend to engage with throughout the application process and the school's opening. There are also developing opportunities for student engagement, such as a social media internship, a book club, and participation in BASSE's inaugural Youth Leadership Lab, a student youth development program.

4. Educational Plan

- a. Briefly describe the most important characteristics of the educational program, including any specific educational philosophy, instructional methods, educational model, or other important features of the proposed school.
- b. Briefly describe the learning environment and culture.
- c. Briefly describe the plan to improve student learning for *all* students, including exceptional children, English language learners, gifted learners, migrant and homeless children, and any other special student populations.
- d. Briefly describe how the school will use assessment to improve student learning.

BASSE will be an innovative free public high school in Sussex County, providing students with countless opportunities to learn through a community-focused, service-learning lens. With a strong focus on academic rigor, BASSE will offer students a unique chance to make a lasting impact on their own lives, school, and community.

The proposed education program at BASSE is an innovative and rigorous model designed to help students discover who they are and who they want to be as citizens of their local communities, country, and the world. The BASSE model roots challenging academic experiences in real-world experiences with a unique combination of service-learning, the International Baccalaureate curriculum, and interdisciplinary cross-curricular thematic units. The BASSE educational model is student-centered; each student will complete a Personalized Learning Plan (in collaboration with their families and school staff). The lesson planning materials require teachers to consider students' interests and identities since social-emotional learning is a school-wide focus. BASSE students will have the opportunity to develop their ability to think independently and apply their knowledge to the real world in partnership with local community organizations and businesses to complete service projects that will positively impact and empower their ability to be community leaders. BASSE will ensure post-secondary readiness for all students. Our school's two pillars are the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and the service-learning requirement for all students. The BASSE model will use the IB curriculum, Dr. Ghody Muhammad's equity framework, cross-curricular themes, and service-learning projects to build a rigorous and collaborative curriculum that encourages students to make connections across subject areas and enhance their understanding of the world outside of the classroom.

BASSE will implement the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Framework to assess all students' comfort and success, especially students from special populations, such as exceptional children, English language learners, gifted learners, migrant and homeless children. The MTSS process focuses on multiple levels of support for all students to ensure that students receive services to support them academically, behaviorally, and socially-emotionally. The MTSS process will also support the school in analyzing its policies, practices, and programs to ensure

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that all student needs are met. Through consistent assessment of student performance via the MTSS process, students' in-class formative and summative assessments, the evaluation of the impact of the service projects, and the consistent check-ins with students and families about students' Personalized Learning Plans, BASSE will evaluate student learning and develop ways to improve the effectiveness of our learning model for student success.

Additionally, BASSE will infuse trauma-informed care as conveyed by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) developmental framework. BASSE believes a trauma-informed school requires knowledge and infusion of principles of trauma-informed care with a commitment to implement with fidelity. Implementing a trauma-informed approach will be an ongoing organizational evolutionary process across the entire educational platform. BASSE will perform specific activities to ensure full integration of trauma-informed care, including but not limited to social-emotional learning, professional development, student training, family and community awareness, self-care for staff, mindfulness, expressive therapies, wraparound services, and best practice trauma treatment models as appropriate.

5. Leadership and Governance

- a. Briefly outline the role of the Board in regards to school governance, academic oversight and fiscal oversight.
- b. Highlight the strengths of the School Leadership team and the proposed Board.
- c. Explain how the governance and management structures will provide for stable, effective governance and leadership throughout the five-year charter term and thus fulfill the school's mission and vision.
- d. Identify the critical qualifications, credentials and attributes you have identified for your School Leader.

A successful charter school must provide an innovative solution to education in the community where it will open. Additionally, a successful charter school must practice sound financial decision-making, have an effective governance structure, and provide oversight to the school leadership. The school's primary goal must be student-centered and focused. The goal of a charter school is to educate students and provide the best educational options for students and families in the community where it is founded.

The Board will primarily be responsible for ensuring the school follows the rules and regulations of the state and federal government, and will focus on, but not be limited to, oversight of leadership, fiscal viability and monitoring, the hiring and evaluation of school leadership, the relationship between community and school, fundraising, governance, and community engagement. The Board has set up processes to successfully fulfill these duties, including monthly meetings, quarterly retreats, policy development, and a requirement of ethics training.

The Board of BASSE was formed as a diverse group of community members with ties to Sussex County and the life and work of Bryan Stevenson to fulfill these duties. The Board has representation from across the State of Delaware. We believe this representation is critical to the long-term success of our school, providing valuable resources to people, funding, and networks. Sixty percent of the Board is from or currently lives in Sussex county, and the other

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forty percent of the Board lives and works in Kent or New Castle county. Each founding group member was selected based on their alignment with the vision and mission of the school and the contributions they can make to the success of the school as reviewed in their specific qualifications, such as their expertise in education, safety, fiscal responsibility, and the rule of law.

Our inaugural director of development, Crystal Timmons-Bryant, has extensive local and statewide experience with non-profits, government, and private businesses. Kirsten Croner is the founding instructional school leader of The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence. And Dr. Julius Mullen, our inaugural executive director, brings over twenty years of executive leadership and non-profit management experience, most recently as Chief Clinical Officer of Children and Family First and previously with Delaware Guidance Services. The BASSE team is inspired by the potential of our leadership team.

6. Business Plan

- a. Provide a brief overview of the business plan that includes facilities, financial management, transportation, prospective partners, and access to financial resources.

It is the intent of the Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence that the operating costs of the school, primarily personnel costs and fringe benefits, contracts, facility lease, and transportation, be paid through State and Local Appropriations unless otherwise specified by federal law in the case of federal funding. Private funds will be used to provide specific programming (for now, foundation contributions in the startup year and year 1 of operations to defer the cost of rent.) and can be changed if funding does not materialize so that the academic fidelity of the program does not suffer. A 2% contingent reserve will be available in each of the four projection years.

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence has created a fundraising plan to cover the total cost of the school's budget for the first five years of operation.

Money raised through fundraising activities will be collected by a Fundraising Committee of the BASSE board and deposited into the school's fundraising bank account according to required procedures. Decisions for the use of these funds will become part of the overall financial planning process for the school, subject to review by the Board, and will be included in the school's annual financial audit. BASSE recognizes a significant investment will be required to open by the Fall of 2023, BASSE has prepared an appropriate financial and development plan that outline the appropriate pathways to funding prior to opening. A working draft of our development plan is included in the attachments.